

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

March 14, 2006



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Systems Appraisal conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement Program of The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools provides a comprehensive examination of Central Community College conducted by a trained team composed primarily of higher education peer reviewers. In order to provide fresh and objective insights and perspectives the team also included reviewers from outside higher education.

The complete Systems Appraisal Feedback Report contains evaluation of the processes, performance results, and improvement strategies under each of the nine AQIP categories, pointing out where the team sees Central Community College's current activities and practices as strengths and where it sees in them opportunities for improvement.

As you study the results of this Appraisal, do *not* ignore your strengths and focus *solely* on the possibility of improvements. Your strengths offer significant opportunities as well: they can be celebrated as model practices, deployed or imitated in programs throughout the institution, and used to inspire new approaches to performance enhancement in other areas.

ELEMENTS OF Central Community College's FEEDBACK REPORT

The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* provides AQIP's official response to your *Systems Portfolio* by a team of readers trained in evaluation. After appraisers independently reviewed your document, the team reached consensus on essential elements of your institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by Category, and significant issues for your institution. These are presented in three sections of the Feedback Report: Critical Characteristics Analysis, Category Feedback, and Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

Each member of the Systems Appraisal Team devoted many hours to analyzing and reacting to your *Systems Portfolio*, first individually and then via a consensus process. There are no one-person idiosyncratic, or subjective opinions here. Most of the team's members have had executive responsibilities in colleges and universities, but the team also included at least one person whose work and experience lie outside of higher education, and who could help the

team maintain perspective on the work higher educators still have to do to bring quality principles into all areas of the Academy. All team members are committed to promoting continuous quality improvement in higher education and have received training in quality processes. We know that you and your colleagues will find the astuteness of their perceptions, as embodied in this report, useful in your commitment for continuous quality learning.

Good as the team was, however, it is important to remember that they had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If the team was unsure about an area, we urged it to err on the side of giving your institution the best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your Organizational Overview and the feedback it provided for each Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

Critical Characteristics: Your Systems Portfolio's Organizational Overview provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals,

and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

Category Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build.

Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report. At the end of the list of strengths and opportunities for each Category is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Category. This section consists of a series of statements reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution in jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*.

An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's

Criteria, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institution under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Central Community College has presented evidence that it complies with each of the five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the *Criteria* will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies.

The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Central Community College in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Central Community College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

- Only two of the ten priorities targeted by CCC deal directly with student learning
- Work processes that contribute to communications, cooperation and high performance are present throughout the organization; however, there is no explanation of the relationship of these processes to the goals, vision, and mission of the institution.
- The institution lacks a model to compare data and to measure valuing people.

- The institution has established complex organizational processes that lead to paralysis rather than prompt action; there appears to be multiple layers of bureaucracy involving far too many individuals, committees, and programs in an ultimate decision making process.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The AQIP *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* is intended to initiate action for improvement. It is therefore important that the Report produced by the Systems Appraisal Team stimulate review of organizational processes and systems. Though decisions about specific actions are each institution's, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement. At the next Strategy Forum an AQIP institution attends, its peers will examine in detail how it is using the feedback from its Systems Appraisal.

An organization needs to examine its Report strategically to identify those areas that will yield greatest benefit if addressed. Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of the Report may be: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned?

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration and integrity. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal

(and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

The body of your feedback report contains two elements: a Critical Characteristics Analysis, and an exploration of your institution's Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement as perceived by the Systems Appraisal team.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Central Community College, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Central Community College distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

Item Critical Characteristic

- 01a CCC, one of only 5 publicly funded community colleges in the state, serves a large, sparsely populated geographic area – 14,000 sq miles w/300,000 population
- 01b CCC relies on distance learning and alternative delivery modes of instruction to support constituencies throughout their service area.
- 01c The 25-county service area is experiencing significant changes in ethnic profile. 2000 census report indicates the largest group is Hispanic (4.7%). White non-Hispanic represents 88.1% of the service area population.

- 01d CCC has an articulated vision supported by strategic directions and goals guided by 5 strategic processes to assist faculty, staff, students and administrators to achieve the college's mission at 3 campuses and 80 learning centers.
- 01e The Mission of CCC is to facilitate access to quality post-secondary education (certificates, diplomas, associate degrees).
- 01f The first "value" of CCC is "Diversity among Central Community College's students, Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and administrators"
- 01g CCC is public higher education institution governed by a regionally elected eleven member governing board.
- 01h Central Community College is a locally governed, Nebraska public, non-profit, multi campus comprehensive community college, derives approximately 40% of its support from property taxes levied in the 25-county service area. The college receives an additional 40 % of its funds from a State of Nebraska allocation and the remaining 20% from tuition and fees.
- 01i The College provides three full-service campuses to serve its large geographic area. The Extended Learning Services department cooperates with on-campus faculty and staff to provide credit and non-credit opportunities in 80 area communities.
- 01j The 25-county area has seen an increase in ethnic diversity. Lexington and Schuyler communities have 64% Hispanic student in the public schools and Grand Island has over 22 ethnic groups represented in its schools.
- 02 CCC offers four associate degrees (AAS, AA, AS, ADN); it provides academic offerings in 32 applied technology and occupational programs using multiple program delivery methods including individualized, competency based, lecture, and Web methods of delivery. It offers non-credit business and industrial training courses, avocational courses, and foundation education courses
- 03a Since 1995, overall headcount has dropped from 32,376 to 25,588 (a drop of 21%).
This is mostly due to a drop from 23,094 to 13,784 in part-time students (a drop of 40%).
Meanwhile, full-time enrollment has increased from 1,910 to 2,858 (a 50% increase).

This shift in demographic has resulted in an overall increase in Full-time equivalent students (Fig. 7R2-2)

- 03b Around 25,000 to 30,000 students attend CCC each year. Approximately 59% of the student body enrolls in credit programs. Although our diversity report indicates 88.1% of students identify as white, non-Hispanic, 11% of students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Demographics indicate a wide range of ages. Forty-two percent of credit students are younger than 25, fifty percent are between ages 25-55, and eight percent are over 55.
- 03c Widely distributed population and large distances in the CCC service area make distance learning with local service centers a prime means by which the organization provides access to post-secondary education.
- 04 CCC relies on business, industry, and educational partners; it is involved in a large number of cooperative and collaborative relationships.
- 05a CCC has an area-wide committee structure involving students, faculty, administrators, and community members.
- 05b Configuration of full-time and part-time faculty and staff indicate a heavy reliance on part-time employees. Faculty: 145 FT, 653 PT. Admin/Support: 116 FT. Classified: 139 FT, Non-faculty: PT 573.
- 06 CCC has all of its programs regulated by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, medical and health service programs by specialized accrediting agencies, and the HLC for comprehensive institutional accreditation.
- 07a CCC has the smallest market-share of its defined competition.
- 07b CCC uses a number of external and internal data sources to analyze and track effectiveness and links all key performance measures directly with current planning goals.
- 08a CCC has identified a number of Opportunities: to increase enrollment share of traditional students, improve the cohort graduation rate, improve decision-making processes, and improve student learning by using delivery methods that support student learning styles.

08b Vulnerabilities: Items note cohort graduation rate and course completion rate. CCC has identified as a vulnerability the ability of employees to measure the effectiveness of processes.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these “strengths and opportunities” sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1b CCC relies on distance learning and alternative delivery modes of instruction to support constituencies throughout its service area.
- 01d CCC has an articulated vision supported by strategic directions and goals guided by 5 strategic processes to assist faculty, staff, students and administrators to achieve the college's mission at 3 campuses and 80 learning centers.
- 01e The Mission off CCC is to facilitate access to quality post-secondary education (certificates, diplomas, associate degrees).
- 02 CCC offers four associate degrees (AAA, AA, AS, AND); it provides academic offerings in 32 applied technology and occupational programs using multiple program delivery methods including individualized, competency based, lecture, and Web methods of delivery. It offers non-credit business and industrial training course, avocational course, and foundation education courses.
- 03b Around 25,000 to 30,000 students attend CCC each year. Approximately 59% of the student body enrolls in credit programs. Although our diversity report indicates 88.1% of students identify as white, non-Hispanic, 11% of students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Demographics indicate a wide range of ages. Forty-two percent of credit students are younger than 25, fifty percent are between ages 25-55, and eight percent are over 55.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 1, Helping Students Learn.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1C1 | S | For all graduates awarded associate degrees, CCC has established four specific, universal competencies: communication, solving problems, personal development and humanities, and social and behavioral sciences. |

- 1C2e S CCC has a 3-year review structure that assures all program offerings meet the mission of the College, including its instructional service priorities, student learning objectives, geographic focus, values, and vision.
- 1C3 S CCC offers 34 applied technology and occupational programs leading to an Associate of Applied Science degree. The programs use multiple program delivery methods and incorporate technology, at least at a medium level, in each program.
- 1C4a S CCC recognizes a need to provide greater ethnicity experiences for its students via cultural experiences and enhanced course offerings. In order to increase a more proportional ethnic distribution within its student body, CCC has employed three part-time Hispanic recruiters.
- 1C4b O The advanced age of students with 31.5% between the ages of 35-64 creates unique support and teaching scheduling needs.
- 1C5 O CCC has developed procedures that place faculty at the heart of curriculum change and has established procedures for intellectual property. These processes are limited to syllabi only and do not address the college climate or student involvement in such intellectual activities.
- 1P1 S Faculty member teams, such as the General Education Team, develop and monitor common and program-specific student learning objectives with input from colleagues, program advisory committees, key performance measures, and external stakeholders. These objectives are then reviewed by the College Educational Services Committee, the College Cabinet, and the College Board of Governors.
- 1P2a S CCC has a formal process to design and approve new programs that introduces new programs based on centrality to mission, environmental scan, and appraisal of resources needed. An approval process provides guidance for the faculty and administration to develop the programs through collaborative efforts with consultants.

- 1P2b S CCC uses both direct and indirect measures of student learning to adjust and improve student learning experiences. Measures include working with program advisory committees, using assessment of student learning findings, encouraging feedback from students, and monitoring student success in curriculum courses and in capstone courses.
- 1P3 O The preparation required of students is defined using input from steering committees, advisory committees, accreditation agencies, professional organizations and faculty. Multiple measures, such as SAT/ACT, ASSET/COMPASS tests, locally developed test scores, and transcripts, are used to determine student academic preparedness for programs and courses; however, the description of the process for determining student readiness for a program does not specify who decides whether a particular student may or may not enter a program.
- 1P5 S In recognition of the variety of student home and work situations and learning styles, CCC makes courses available via four delivery methods: lecture, individualized instruction, video, and Web.
- 1P6a SS CCC developed and implemented eight major processes for assessing general education and program-specific learning objectives.
- 1P6b S CCC has endorsed the use of World Instructional development Systems (WIDS) software to assist in curriculum and course development with a seven-year timeline for each course to have undergone the WIDS planning process by 2009.
- 1P6c O CCC regularly surveys alumni and employers of alumni to obtain feedback on critical thinking, problem solving, verbal and written communication, and program improvement needs; however, these indirect methods need to be offset by direct measures of student learning.
- 1P7 S CCC increased its focus on decision-making at the cluster level using ongoing processes which resulted in processes that improved its ability to meet student needs, reduce institutional costs, and improved efficiency.

- 1P8a S CCC has developed 12 Key Performance Indicators which are measured annually as part of measuring the currency and effectiveness of the curriculum.
- 1P8b O CCC uses a variety of methods to monitor the currency and effectiveness of the curriculum including assessments, community/industry feedback, alumni feedback and WIDS review; however, it is unclear how the college systematically uses this data to evaluate programs and set performance targets.
- 1P8c O If faculty seek their assistance, staff at the Teaching Learning Center on each campus assist faculty in course delivery improvement.
- 1P9a S CCC conducts annual student surveys along with faculty and student forums regarding adequacy of support services.
- 1P9b O To determine student and faculty learning support needs, CCC used student surveys, program advisory committees, and faculty and student forums; however, it is unclear how the college systematically uses this data to evaluate support programs and set performance targets. Using a national standardized test with established norms can enhance the quality of this information.
- 1P9c O The dominating use of surveys to determine student and faculty support need neglects the data gathered in the assessment of student learning.
- 1P10 O CCC aligns co-curricular goals with 5 specific strategic processes; however, the process for the alignment of co-curricular development goals with curricular learning objectives is vague and does not specify any person or persons responsible for the actual coordination of all these functions and processes.
- 1P11 O CCC established a standardized evaluation process to assist faculty and leadership to gather information about student learning based on the assessment of student learning rubric (ASL). The relationship to common learning objectives is not stated.

- 1P12a S CCC surveys graduates and their employees to determine strengths and weaknesses in the various instructional programs.
- 1P12b S CCC conducts a limited analysis of graduates and their employers who transfer to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Graduates, or their employees, are surveyed on a cyclical basis to determine strength and weaknesses in the various instructional programs. For example, analysis of transfer student reports show that CCC students who transfer to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln perform well at that institution.
- 1P13 O Measures of student performance do not include specific assessment of established common learning objectives.
- 1R1/1R2/1R3 S CCC collects data to demonstrate the degree to which learning outcomes are met by outcome group and student learning competencies. Data include state licensure and certification board tests. Advisory groups and surveys also provide input on student learning. Specific actions are taken to address concerns as indicated by the data. CCC uses comparative data to determine if students have acquired the knowledge and skills required by the institution.
- 1R4 O In 2004, CCC joined the Community College Bench Mark Project; however, while CCC became an active partner with 112 other community colleges, it has yet to collect comparative data on common or program specific student learning objectives.
- 111a O CCC improves process by comparing results against Key Performance Indicators; however, much of the data presented lacked definable targets for performance.
- 111b O Review processes are identified and implemented; however, the use of comparatives data is not listed.
- 112 OO Areas designated as priorities are indicated, however, the data sources are unclear. Only two of the ten priorities targeted by CCC deal directly with student learning.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a CCC, one of only five publicly funded community colleges in the state, serves a large, sparsely populated geographic area—14,000 square miles with 300,000 population.
- O1b CCC relies on distance learning and alternative delivery modes of instruction to support constituencies throughout its service area.
- O1f The first “value” of CCC is “Diversity among CCC’s students, Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and administrators.”
- O2a CCC offers four associate degrees (AAS, AA, AS, AND); it provides academic offerings in 32 applied technology and occupational programs using multiple delivery methods including individualized, competency based, lecture, and Web methods of delivery. It offers non-credit business and industrial training courses, avocational courses, and foundation education courses.
- O3c Widely distributed population and large distances in the CCC service area make distance learning with local service centers a prime means by which the organization provides access to postsecondary education.
- O4a CCC relies on business, industry, and educational partners; it is involved in a large number of cooperative and collaborative relationships.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 2C3a | S | Recent agreements provide transfer pathways in the areas of construction management, early childhood education, information technology, and industrial technology. CCC, however, does not indicate how many students transfer to four-year colleges and universities. |
| 2C3b | S | Along with reasonable tuition rates, CCC has developed multiple modes of instruction delivery – self-paced instruction, Tech Prep, early entry, flexible scheduling, online instruction, to make postsecondary education accessible to geographically remote students. |
| 2C3c | S | CCC has partnerships with other colleges to offer educational opportunities not otherwise available in central Nebraska. These partnerships include programs such as dietetic technology, health information management, radiology technology, respiratory care, and surgical technology. |
| 2C3d | S | CCC helps business and industry assess their training needs, develops customized training programs to meet those needs, and delivers the programs at times and localities that best serve the company. |
| 2P1,2P2a | S | CCC has four clear “other distinctive objectives” that are derived from its mission, formulated by a college-wide, cross-functional planning team using environmental scans, and communicated/developed in collaboration with six groups of stakeholders. |
| 2P1,2P2b | S | CCC has an established process with a continuous input/feedback loop to set and review expectations and progress toward objectives with internal and external constituencies. |
| 2P1,2P2c | O | Findings from the College Employees’ Issues Questionnaire indicate a need to improve processes for communicating expectations to internal and external stakeholders. |

- 2P3a O Processes are in place to determine faculty and staff needs relative to four “other distinctive objectives”—access, partnerships, diversity, and economic growth; however, no evidence or examples are listed along with the objectives.
- 2P3b OO Although cultural diversity is identified as a “first value” for CCC, individual campuses determine needs rather than having a college-wide mechanism.
- 2P4a O The process for developing, reviewing, and revising three-year objectives is a very labor-intensive one that goes through a lot of hands and levels; rather than intensifying a sense of ownership at the “ground level,” this arrangement diffuses it and complicates lines of communication.
- 2P5, 2R1a SS CCC has signed Tech Prep agreements with 63 of the 72 schools in its 25-county service area. With an increase in the number of agreements, the Tech Prep program has grown roughly 30% from 2002-03 to 2004-05.
- 2P5, 2R1b SS The CCC Training and Development and Grants Departments wrote more than 60 grant proposals that collectively garnered \$226,000 to provide training for 13,544 (there is a duplicated headcount) local workers.
- 2P5, 2R1c OO CCC does not formally collect data on frequency or size of participation in its cultural diversity events.
- 2R1a O CCC is exceeding both national and state averages for In-Area population served (total area and target population); however, this datum shows a slight decrease (Table 2P5-1), as do the number and percent of extended learning and early entry courses (Table 2P5-2).
- 2R1b S CCC’s Learning Centers account for roughly one-fourth of off-campus headcount and nearly one-half of off-campus credits.
- 2R1e O Data on economic growth in the service area show some gains. The directness of CCC’s impact on this has to be more clearly established; there are many intervening variables involved in this objective.

- 2R2a O CCC has begun to compare its results with a peer group of community colleges (cf., references to the National Community College Benchmark Project); but the initial comparison lacks relevant information about the selected peers as well as comparative data on the peer institutions.
- 2I1 OO CCC intends to improve systems and processes relative to Category 2, but this improvement is not yet under way.
- 2I2 O The College has set priorities for improvement; however, it has not identified specific qualitative and quantitative measures of effectiveness.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

Item Critical Characteristic

- 01c The 25-county service area is experiencing significant changes in ethnic profile. 2000 census report indicates the largest group is Hispanic (4.7%). White, non-Hispanic represents 88.1% of the service area population.
- 01f The first "value" of CCC is "Diversity among CCC students, Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and administrators."

- 01j The 25-county area has seen an increase in ethnic diversity. Lexington and Schuyler communities have 62% Hispanic students in the public schools and Grand Island has over 22 ethnic groups represented in its schools.
- 03a Since 1995, overall headcount has dropped from 32,376 to 25,588 (a drop of 21%). This is mostly due to a drop from 23,094 to 13,784 in part-time students (a drop of 40%). Meanwhile, full-time enrollment has increased from 1,910 to 2,858 (150% increase). This shift in demographics has resulted in an overall increase in full-time equivalent students (Fig 7R2-2).
- 03b Around 25,000 to 30,000 students attend CCC each year. Approximately 59% of the student body enrolls in credit programs. Although our diversity report indicates 88.1% of students identify as white, non-Hispanic, 11% of students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Demographics indicate a wide range of ages. Forty-two percent of credit students are younger than 25, fifty percent are between ages 25-55, and eight percent are over 55.
- O5b Configuration of full-time and part-time faculty and staff indicate a heavy reliance on part-time employees. Faculty: 145 FT, 653 PT. Admin/Support: 116 FT. Classified: 139 FT, Non-faculty: PT 573.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 3C1 | S | CCC identifies a broad base of student groups and community stakeholders to which it responds. |
| 3C2 | S | CCC has identified long-term and short-term expectations it believes are universal for all students. CCC has also identified universal expectations for its various stakeholder groups (See Figures 3C2-1 & 3C2-2). |
| 3P1a | O | CCC's multi-campus structure and determination to use cross-functional teams often encumbers the change process, and employees frequently do not know the hierarchy of decision-making bodies, nor do they have a |

clear understanding of the hierarchy of decision making, or how the college identifies, or meets changing needs of students.

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| 3P1b | S | CCC identifies changing student needs through feedback mechanisms such as recruiting visits to high schools, assessment of student learning and surveys, and uses feedback information to make recommendations for action. |
| 3P1c | S | CCC has set up an elaborate system for identifying the changing needs of its students. |
| 3P2 | S | CCC maintains relationship with current students through participation in the Quality Council and Action Teams and a variety of activities, such as providing access to life-time college email accounts, real-time grades and transcripts, college-wide announcements. |
| 3P6 | S | CCC tracks data short- and long-term, analyzing trends and comparisons against internal and external standards such as student satisfaction, enrollment trends, community feedback, employee issues and feedback. CCC also employs dashboards that compile significant measures available to key groups and individuals. |
| 3R1 | S | Student satisfaction at CCC is at or above the comparison data of students from other colleges for measures of “Acquiring a broad general education,” “Acquiring job or work related skills,” and “Developing clearer career goals” (CCSSE). |
| 3R2 | S | Table 3R2-2 indicates that CCC students have a higher than average of satisfaction in relationships with instructors and administrative personnel and offices than the other colleges in their study. In terms of building relationship with students, it is notable that the percent of cohort graduates has increased from 20% in 00/01 to 38.5% in 03/04. This indicates a stronger focus on viewing students who enter at the same time as a collective group rather than merely a collection of individuals. |
| 3R4 | S | Graduates of CCC are increasingly located in the CCC area (70% in 00/01 to 78% in 02/03). |

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| 3I1 | S | CCC has developed the SPARKS process to better define and help the College understand the needs of stakeholders and students. |
| 3I2a | S | CCC is using data and the CLARUS Marketing Analysis to improve student services. |
| 3I2b | OO | CCC may have set up too many data gathering mechanisms, processed too many planning models, so that prompt, effective, and well-targeted responsive action is difficult - all of which hinder rather than facilitate planning. |
| 3I2c | OO | CCC does not indicate how the status of action items is communicated to faculty and staff during the review and recommendation process. |
| 3I2d | S | CCC is improving its communication tools to better understand student (and prospective student) needs. Improvement initiatives include feedback cards on campus, uniform marketing tools (postcards, web) available for recruiters, and increased student participation in college committees. |

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all of your faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 4, Valuing People:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1f The first “value” of CCC is “Diversity among Central Community College’s students, Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and administrators.”
- O4 CCC relies on business, industry, and educational partners; it is involved in a large number of cooperative and collaborative relationships.
- O5a CCC has an area-wide committee structure involving students, faculty, administrators, and community members.
- O5b Configuration of full-time and part-time faculty and staff indicate a heavy reliance on part-time employees. Faculty: 145 FT, 653 PT. Admin/Support: 116 FT. Classified: 139 FT, Non-faculty: PT

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, Valuing People.

| Item | S/O | Comment |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 4C1a | S | CCC organizes its work environment based on geography and functions. Area-wide responsibilities for “clusters” and other centralized administrative process (e.g., human resources and purchasing) unify the functions of 3 campuses and 80 learning centers. There are three job classifications: administration, faculty and staff. |
| 4C1/4C2a | O | CCC does not indicate how communications between learning center managers and on-campus faculty is organized or scheduled in order to assist students. |
| 4C1/4C2b | O | The portfolio states that adjunct faculty workload guidelines are one of four issues related to adjunct faculty that needs to be addressed. One hundred thirty-nine adjunct faculty teach 27% of the credit hours offered (Portfolio: Category 4, Page 2). This falls below the 10th percentile in comparison with other colleges in the National Community College Benchmark Project 2004. (Portfolio: Overview Page 6, 653 PT faculty are |

listed). Other issues related to adjunct faculty include: Adjunct Faculty Handbook, comparison of pay to other institutions, workload guidelines, and adequacy of paid prep time.

- 4C3a OO CCC is aware of the change in age demographics in the service area which will impact the size of the hiring pool and number of potential students available to the College. The aging workforce offers critical challenges for the college and the service area. The College could face a hiring crisis in the not-too-distant future. Currently almost 50% of its employees are 50 years old or older (See Table 4C3-1).
- 4C3b O CCC needs to hire bilingual faculty and staff to meet the increasing cultural diversity of the students.
- 4C3c O CCC will need to broaden the scope of job searches beyond its service area (regional and national) to identify and attract faculty and staff needed to replace an aging College workforce.
- 4C4 S Training initiatives are varied and available for faculty, staff and administration. In 2003-04, the College expended \$123,000 for travel and allotted \$55,000 for course work at other institutions. In addition, CCC offers all full-time faculty, staff, and administrators free tuition for CCC courses; however, CCC does not indicate how many individuals participated in key training initiatives or professional development activities.
- 4P1 S CCC employees a variety of ways to identify and ensure job requirements are adhered to and communicated to candidates. Standard operating procedures are in place to identify specific credentials, skills and values required for jobs. However, CCC does not indicate how many of the candidates (administrators, staff, or faculty) meet or exceed the minimal guidelines.
- 4P2a OO CCC conducts employee orientations; however, specific mentoring or training is not widespread. Recruiting, hiring and orienting of new employees does not mention anything about the priority value of diversity.

- 4P2b S CCC states that 49.4% of CCC employees have been with the college 10 or more years which contributes to the knowledge, consistency, and stability of college operations.
- 4P3a OO CCC notes that interpreting and administering some policies across multiple campuses can be confusing and reports that policies are sometimes interpreted and administered differently resulting in inefficiency and inconsistency across campuses and sites. The portfolio states there is some confusion regarding ethical practices, policies, and procedures.
- 4P3b O CCC has improved the phone and email system and redesigned the website. The Annual All-College In-Service Day, Common Bi-Weekly Meeting Time, and the 10 non-teaching contract days appear to provide opportunities to use processes and activities that may contribute to communication, cooperation, high performance, innovation, empowerment, organizational learning, skill sharing, and ethical practices. Some activities are listed, but the associated processes are not clearly stated.
- 4P4 S CCC reinforces training and development in the following three ways: 1) through annual evaluation processes, 2) assisting continued education, and 3) professional advancement by offering an interview to qualified internal candidates.
- 4P5 S CCC determines stakeholder training needs through formal channels such as the Continuous Quality Improvement Council and periodic surveys, as well as through informal channels such as impromptu phone calls and casual conversations.
- 4P6 OO CCC is in the process of updating its 25-year old personnel evaluation system by forming three committees (one for each campus) comprised of faculty, staff, and administration to review and improve the evaluation processes.
- 4P7 O Employee recognition systems are not consistent throughout the organization and are limited to chronological (increments of 5-year

anniversaries) versus quality based characteristics. Compensation appears to be routine. There is no mention of recognition for part-time employees.

- 4P8 OO The college determines “key issues” related to motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators and shares them with all personnel; however, it is reliant on the “presumption of trust and attentive listening on the part of all involved” for there to be follow-through, if any.
- 4P9 O CCC refers to a variety of employee evaluation methods, employee satisfaction instruments, and assessment of student learning techniques; however, there seems to be no comparative analysis of results or integration among these various tools.
- 4R1 S CCC has two statistical results that measure how it values people. Over a period of three years, 49.4% of employees have stayed at least 10 years and a low annual turnover rate of 7%.
- 4R2 O The institution lacks a model or process to measure and compare data related to valuing people beyond reporting statistics about retention of employees.
- 4R3 O A number of measures of effectiveness are gathered such as assessment of student learning, student evaluations, employee evaluations, program reviews, review of key performance indicators, advisory board feedback, employment rates. It is unclear how this information is used to improve programs.
- 4R4a O Comparative data is limited to CCSSE results, comparisons of employee benefits and some internal tracking of key performance indicators.
- 4R4b S CCC students rate higher satisfaction scores than the national average for relationships with other students, administrative personnel and offices, help in coping with non-academic responsibilities, academic advising, and transfer credit assistance (CCSSE).

- 411 O The systematic process to improve valuing people is under development. However, information is shared through data analysis, open forum formats, suggestion boxes and action committees. It is unclear if an action is taken and if there is an accountability system for that action.
- 412 O Although CCC identifies targets for improvement and posts them electronically, there is no indication of a formal, systemic method for defining concrete targets, rewarding or acknowledging indicators at or above target, and addressing indicators below target.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading And Communicating addresses how your institution’s leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 5, Leading and Communicating:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1d CCC has an articulated vision supported by strategic directions and goals guided by 5 strategic processes to assist faculty, staff, students and administrators to achieve the college’s mission at 3 campuses and 80 learning centers.
- O1f The first “value” of CCC is “Diversity among Central Community College’s students, Board of Governors, faculty, staff, and administrators.”

- O1g CCC is a public higher education institution governed by a regionally elected eleven member governing board.
- 04 CCC relies on business, industry, and educational partners; it is involved in a large number of cooperative and collaborative relationships.
- O5a CCC has an area-wide committee structure involving students, faculty, administrators, and community members.
- 07b CCC uses a number of external and internal data sources to analyze and track effectiveness and links all key performance measures directly with current planning goals.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, Leading and Communicating.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 5C2a | S | CCC has a well organized, area-wide committee structure involving students, faculty, administrators, and community members that support the mission, vision, and strategic goals of the College and that requires all leadership practices to define how any issue or needs ties into the mission. It includes components related to resources, planning, cabinet, staff, quality control check points, and documented follow-up. |
| 5C2b | O | The planning model, while comprehensive, is overly complex making it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of such a system. The planning model appears to be a highly bureaucratic system disconnected from the individual campuses, lacking an overall unity for and among the campuses. |
| 5C3a | S | CCC states a number of practices that indicate wellness and community service are valued. |
| 5C3b | O | CCC has no published policy for college-wide consistency relating to social responsibility and community service for employees. |

- 5P1 O CCC has created a central planning model (Figure 5C2-1) that is grounded on institutional mission and provides for stakeholder input at multiple points; however, it is difficult to assess its effectiveness regarding student-learning results.
- 5P2 OO Conversations by college leaders was the main action identified to demonstrate how leaders seek future opportunities. The use of data to maintain “ongoing awareness of relevant trends” in these discussions and planning efforts is unclear.
- 5P3 S CCC indicates both a formal and informal process in a multi-tiered system to enable the college to make decisions for both short-term and long-term operation with the short-term decision making process the clearer of the two.
- 5P4 O CCC has piloted the SPARKS process which permits all full-time employees to provide input on key issues; however, there appears to be no formal process for input from the large number of part-time employees working at CCC.
- 5P5/6 O CCC lists a variety of communication strategies and documents (formal and informal), which facilitates communication at all levels of the College; however, while communication between and among individual levels is defined, it is primarily informal and the extent to which it is effective is unclear.
- 5P7 S CCC has supported sending administrators to the Chair Academy and sending faculty, staff, and administrators to AQIP training. CCC’s best practices in leadership, however, are shared through informal means; it is unclear how the training and professional experiences are implemented.
- 5P8 OO Some planning models are identified to assure consistent sharing of mission, vision and values; however, CCC has no college-wide succession plan and ultimately may lose much institutional knowledge. .
- 5P9a S CCC conducts focus events with internal and external stakeholders where teams use the nominal group process to define critical issues and suggest solutions.

- 5P9b O CCC has 3 key measures of leading and communicating; however, it is unclear how these measures are used to improve the institution.
- 5R1 S CCC has invested over 7,000 employee hours (100% of Full-Time and 15% of Part-Time) towards improving communication, using the AQIP and Continuous Quality Improvement training, resulting in the College forming a Communication Team consisting of 11 members including the College President. In addition, common meeting times were scheduled to facilitate better communication and collaboration across all campuses and a college-wide suggestion box was added in 2003; however, while the effort is applauded, it is unclear how AQIP and Continuous Quality Improvement training will specifically address the communications need.
- 5R2 O CCC has no higher education institution comparison data for leading and communicating. CCC has selected a new measurement tool offered through Noel-Levitz or ACT to gather comparative information.
- 5I1 O CCC has identified 6 items that would strengthen leading and communicating; however, it remains unclear what definitive steps are being taken to address a perceived lack of communication and universal understanding of CCC policies and decision-making procedures.
- 5I2 O Plans are underway to change the Issues Questionnaire and to contract with an external agency to gather data for analysis and improvement efforts.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations:

Item Critical Characteristic

- 01d CCC has an articulated vision supported by strategic directions and goals guided by five strategic processes to assist faculty, staff, students, and administrators to achieve the college’s mission at three campuses and 80 learning centers.

- 01i The College provides three full-service campuses to serve its large geographic area. The Extended Learning Services department cooperates with on-campus faculty and staff to provide credit and non-credit opportunities 80 area communities

- 03b About 25,000 to 30,000 students attend CCC each year. Approximately 59% of the student body enrolls in credit programs. Although our diversity report indicates 88.1% of students identify as white, non-Hispanic, 11% of students come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Demographics indicate a wide range of ages. Forty-two percent of credit students are younger than 25, fifty percent are between ages 25-55, and eight percent are over 55.

- 07b CCC uses a number of external and internal data sources to analyze and track effectiveness and links all key performance measures directly with current planning goals.

- 08a CCC has identified a number of opportunities: to increase enrollment share of traditional students, improve the cohort graduation rate, improve decision-making processes, and improve student learning by using delivery methods that support student learning styles.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations.

Item S/O Comment

- 6C1 S CCC has established key support and business processes and measures to evaluate fulfillment of the college's mission.
- 6P1a S CCC students rated their student services equal to or above the average ratings students assigned to student services at their respective institutions, according to the 2004 CCSSE survey (Table 6P1-1).
- 6P1b O CCC is in the process of developing student satisfaction feedback cards for student service processes.
- 6P2 S CCC uses multiple tools, methodologies and techniques to collect data used in the analysis of internal stakeholder needs, including those described in Figure 6P2-1.
- 6P3a S Student services personnel are available on each of the three campuses to meet the daily needs of the different student populations.
- 6P3b S Student involvement may include areas such as membership or participation in the Educational Services Committee; the Student Senate; the Student Activity/Advisory Committee; Student Ambassadors' the College Cabinet or teams.
- 6P3c O CCC reports the student support systems are designed to continually monitor the needs of its stakeholders; however, it gives no indication as to how these systems are monitored or documented, what systems are in place to address changing needs, and what level of autonomy service personnel have to address specific needs.
- 6P1a-6P5 O CCC expends a great deal of effort in soliciting feedback from students and other stakeholders; however, it does not actually indicate what it has identified from all of this effort.
- 6R1a S CCC reports above-average satisfaction and frequency-of-use of many of its student support services (academic advising, financial aid advising, transfer credit assistance, and job placement assistance CCSSE).
- 6R1b/6R2 S CCC's level of net assets has remained steady over the past two years indicating fiscal stability.

- 6R3 O Limited comparison data is available due to inconsistent data definitions among the other community colleges.
- 6I1a OO Both Student Services and Business Services Departments need to develop systematic processes for using the large amounts of data that is generated about their performance.
- 6I1b O CCC will assess the results of the 2005 CCSSE survey and determine areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement in Business Services and Student Services.
- 6I2 S Student Service Teams have identified specific key items for improvement for the upcoming year.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

Item Critical Characteristic

- 01d CCC has an articulated vision supported by strategic directions and goals guided by 5 strategic processes to assist faculty, staff, students and administrators to achieve the college's mission at 3 campuses and 80 learning centers.
- 03a Since 1995 overall headcount has dropped from 32,376 to 25, 588 (a drop of 21%). This is mostly due to a drop from 23, 094 to 13,784 in part-time students (a drop of 40%). Meanwhile, full-time enrollment has increased from 1,910 to 2, 858 (1 50% increase).

This shift in demographics has resulted in an overall increase in full-time equivalent students (Fig 7R2-2).

- 06 CCC has all of its programs regulated by the Nebraska coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, medical and health service programs by specialized accrediting agencies, and the HLC for comprehensive institutional accreditation.
- 07b CCC uses a number of external and internal data sources to analyze and track effectiveness and links all key performance measure directly with current planning goals.
- 08a CCC has identified a number of opportunities: to increase enrolment share of traditional students, improve the cohort graduation rate, improve decision-making processes, and improve student learning by using delivery methods that support student learning styles.
- 08b Vulnerabilities: Items note cohort graduation rate and course completion rate. CCC has identified a vulnerability as the ability of employees to measure the effectiveness of processes.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 7C1a | O | CCC is in the process of developing a dashboard system that will provide data users direct access to commonly used data reports. |
| 7C1b | S | CCC has access to multiple external databases improving the availability of data for decision-making, and information relating to students, human resources, and financial services. |
| 7C2 | S | CCC uses the College Issues Questionnaire as one of its key performance measures for performance tracking. These studies directly involve stakeholders and the findings provide vital information central to the data-based decision making and the planning process to determine quality improvement goals (e.g., effectiveness such as revenue sources, |

prioritized planning, enrollment management, leadership development, improved teaching, learning, and infrastructure).

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| 7P1-7P4 | S | CCC expends considerable energy in gathering data for internal and comparative studies of institutional effectiveness. |
| 7P1a | S | In the past three years, CCC has revised its college level planning process to require process improvement proposals to be quantified or qualified with supporting data prior to being approved. |
| 7P1b | S | CCC selects data management processes based on: college level mid-range and long-range planning; campus and department level planning; quality improvement activities; and support of the improvement of teaching and student learning. |
| 7P1c | O | CCC should continue to seek ways to improve current projects, improve data-based decision-making, and focus on how to improve the collection, distribution, and use of relevant data. |
| 7P1d | S | Data needs are identified from internal and external stakeholders. The data needs must be linked to long and short range planning, campus and department-level planning, quality improvement activities, or teaching and learning; collected data may then be accessed by various relevant individuals or groups of individuals. |
| 7P2a | S | CCC uses a Data-Based Decision Making Team that focuses on determining the data needs of departments and divisions and on improving the use and distribution of data and performance indicators to be used in decision-making. |
| 7P2b | OO | While having a central authority to remove data collection duplication, redundancy and wasted effort is commendable, there is concern this could further inhibit rapid-response action and confuse a bureaucratic system that is acknowledged to be extremely complex and confusing to employees. |
| 7P3 | S | CCC has increased its participation in national and state level standardized studies that provide the College with comparative data. |

- 7P4a S The planning process integrates a data analysis process and is based on the College Program Core Performance Measures and the College Key Performance Indicators databases, which use performance standards and reflect performance trends over multiple years.
- 7P4b S Full-time employees (35%), representation from students, and part-time employees are in place and are involved on one or more of the College's action project teams or the Quality Improvement Council.
- 7P4c S CCC shares the results of its College level data analysis in multiple ways: web based shared files, review of findings in small groups and campus based meetings, monthly and annual reports, and College wide newsletters from the Quality Improvement Council.
- 7P5 S The SPARKS process integrates CCC's systems portfolio with the data contained within and with employee involvement in the College's data analysis and planning process.
- 7P6 S The technology aspects of the information system are continuously reviewed; CCC has committed considerable resources to safeguard the systems from hacking and intrusion.
- 7P7 O The College appears to have an evolving system in place to ensure meaningful measures of effectiveness that support the mission; however, this is not clearly apparent.
- 7R1a O While it is commendable to realize a slight improvement in data collection/sharing satisfaction (Figure 7R1-2), there is no indication from the graph of the meaning of the scale (e.g., Does CCC score a '2' on a scale from '0' to '3' on Question 40?).
- 7R1b OO The judgment that effectiveness measures generally do meet CCC's needs is not referenced to any indicated selected standards of performance.
- 7R2 S Results shared from the CCSSE 2004/2005 environmental and National Community College Benchmark Project show that CCC ratings are above

the ratings from other institutions participating in the study in areas reported.

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|-----|---|---|
| 711 | S | The CCC College Planning Model is based on a continuous improvement model, which is designed for evaluating current measures of effectiveness and developing new performance measures. The model provides a basis for planning and assessment across the institution. |
| 712 | S | CCC has identified the steps to take in 2005-06 to improve its systems for measuring effectiveness. |

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:

Item Critical Characteristic

- 05a CCC has an areas-wide committee structure involving students, faculty, administrators, and community members.
- 07b CCC uses a number of external and internal data sources to analyze and track effectiveness and links all key performance measures directly with current planning goals.

- 08a CCC has identified a number of Opportunities: to increase enrollment share of traditional students, improve the cohort graduation rate, improve decision-making processes, and improve student learning by using delivery methods that support student learning styles.
- 08b Vulnerabilities: Items note cohort graduation rate and course completion rate. CCC has identified a vulnerability as the ability of employees to measure the effectiveness of processes.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement.

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|-------------|------------|--|
| 8C1 | S | CCC has a five to ten year vision with eight established priorities to support this vision. |
| 8C2 | S | CCC has aligned its short and long-term strategies and three-year goals with the mission statement. It has upgraded its planning process to a comprehensive master plan. |
| 8P1a | S | CCC has integrated more data-based decision making and CQI methods into the planning process. For this reason, CCC formed a new planning team to create the plan. |
| 8P1b | OO | The planning process steps involve much back-and-forth sharing of documents. This seems burdensome to the process, and could be streamlined by making the planning committee more inclusive from the start. |
| 8P1c | O | CCC has identified a need for a broader-based planning team with more equally distributed membership. CCC has also developed a database decision-making continuous improvement planning process for 2005-2008. CCC put the process |

and plans in place; it is important that the College continue, follow through, and fully implement the process.

- 8P1d OO The planning process steps involve much back-and-forth sharing of documents. This seems burdensome to the process, and could be streamlined by making the planning committee more inclusive from the start.
- 8P2a OO CCC has a clear strategic process in place to monitor stakeholders' needs and trends and analyzes these against the college role and mission; however, the recommendations coming from the planning team involve few actual actions. Most items listed involve collecting more data and/or redefining organizational groups. Other action-items are very broad in scope (e.g., connection of planning process to budgeting; eliminate sense of internal competition), but offer no specifics.
- 8P2b OO It is unclear how the AQIP-style recommendations crosswalk with the College Planning Goals (Figure 8P2-1).
- 8P3 S Team champions and Action Teams are assigned to build action plans with appropriate timeliness, assigned responsibilities, and identified resource needs.
- 8P4a O Employees are randomly assigned to areas of improvement. They are given a one-hour orientation at the All College In-Service. Three months later teams are given their assignments after Cabinet has reviewed reports and resources are aligned.
- 8P4b S A piloted comprehensive master plan is the basis for all planning. The SPARKS model provides for greater participation in the planning process.
- 8P5a O The expanded use of data has necessitated more effective distribution to people, divisions, and departments which has resulted in the development of a "Dashboard" of key performance data useful to all teams.

- 8P5b O CCC has begun expanding its use of specialized studies to measure successful performance and increasing the use of data in decision making within departments and divisions. The challenge now remains to build up longitudinal data and to connect planning to acquire data.
- 8P6 O There are too many persons, teams, councils, boards, etc, involved that the exact process of planning for continuous improvement is not clear.
- 8P7a O Analysis of collected data identified the need for communications training.
- 8P7b O CCC Quality Council has accepted the responsibility to develop the CCC Leadership College initiative and has identified and creates development programs to ensure capabilities of institutional staff to meet the goals.
- 8P8 OO CCC gathers measures of effectiveness; however, the analysis and use of data is unclear.
- 8R1 OO The planning goals in Figure 8P2-1 are truly strategic in nature; but the list of accomplishments in 8R1 and the numbers in Table 8R1-1 are of a different cast, capable of accomplishment in one year. Many of the institutional strategies and action plans are vague and/or involve minimal effort on the part of the college (e.g., hire a consultant, upgrade the College web page, establish a President's Advisory Committee). There is no apparent link between these strategies and defined, expected outcomes. Success is defined here simply by doing tasks, rather than by measuring the effectiveness or outcomes of those tasks.
- 8R2a OO The historical accomplishment of 80-90% of its objectives does not take into account the outcomes of those objectives, merely that action was taken.

- 8R2b OO The college focuses on outcome improvement through the continuous improvement process.
- 8R2c OO Although CCC reports participation in a numbers of benchmark projects, no comparison data is given.
- 8R4a OO As evidence that the continuous improvement is effective, CCC provides a list of those involved in the continuous improvement processes. While the scope of participation is to be lauded, this data does not demonstrate the effectiveness of the continuous improvement efforts.
- 8R4b S CCC has involved significant numbers of internal and external stakeholders in the AQIP continuous improvement planning process.
- 8I1 S CCC uses the Continuous Improvement Planning Model that incorporates ongoing review and improvement of the planning system.
- 8I2a S CCC sets targets for improvement using multiple processes. CCC uses multiple processes to improve the institution. CCC identifies specific improvement priorities. However, the priority targets for improvement are couched in language that is impressively vague, in comparison with existing data (e.g., Table 7R2-1 and Table 6R1-1) that pinpoint precise areas where there is room for improvement.
- 8I2b O Student Services programs have developed KPIs with trends data, but the programs still need to develop and implement performance standards for the KPIs.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Central Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships:

Item Critical Characteristic

- 3C Widely distributed population and large distances in the CCC service area make distance learning with local service centers a prime means by which the organization provides access to post-secondary education.
- 04 CCC relies on business, industry, and educational partners; it is involved in a large number of co-operative and collaborative relationships.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships.

Item S/O Comment

- 9C1 S CCC has established key collaborative relationships based on the instructional and service priorities stated in the college mission. The major focus is to serve

those companies, businesses, communities, agencies, schools, organizations, and individuals within the legislated 25 county area of Nebraska.

- 9C2 S CCC has integrated community leadership, industry representatives, and educational advisory groups into the planning process, ensuring CCC maintains state of the art equipment, facilities, and instructional methods.
- 9P1 S CCC uses both formal and informal processes to create, prioritize, and build relationships through advisory boards and committees, transfer agreements with other institutions, and partner organizations.
- 9P2 O CCC uses student/staff evaluations of classes and workshops, and “direct and frequent communication with constituents to define concerns about services and programs.” It is unclear, however, what such communication entails and how it is systematically used to define and address concerns.
- 9P3a S CCC is building a college-wide articulated curricula and course competency through WIDS formatting creating an active dialogue among most program faculty.
- 9P3b S The College is focused on improving (and should continue improving) communication with its collaborators, so as to foster improvements in their relationships.
- 9R1a O While the example of the Tech Prep program’s success in building partnerships with 63 schools is commendable; there is a lack of evidence of the success of more broad-based, institution-wide partnership development efforts. No hard data given.
- 9R1b S There are many successes in partnership to be lauded, including partnerships with 63 high schools, an award of \$1.6 million to deliver high schools training for

high demand jobs and \$1.9 million to strengthen the Transportation, Distribution, Warehousing, and Logistics training in central and western Nebraska.

- 9I1 O CCC recognizes the need to collect data relevant to its relationships and to analyze the value of those relationships; however, CCC should systematize its processes to ensure consistency.
- 9I2a O CCC has indirect measures but few direct measures of student learning in place based on local, state and national targets. CCC established targets in terms of improving teaching and learning.
- 9I2b O Six targeted systems for improvement in 2005-06 are more internal in their focus than external.
- 9I2c OO There is emphasis on analyzing and improving teaching, learning, diverse cultural issues and learning styles, and other instructional support processes; however, throughout this portfolio, little narrative has been given to improving diversity – which was initially listed as the number-one priority.