The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the
North Central Association
of Colleges and Schools

NCA

30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400 | Chicago, IL 60602-2504 | 312-263-0456
800-621-7440 | Fax: 312-263-7462 | www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org

Serving the common good by assuring and enhancing the quality of higher learning

March 18, 2010

Gregory P. Smith
President
Central Community College
3134 West Highway 34
Grand Island, NE 68802-4903

Dear President Smith:

Attached is a copy of Central Community College's amended *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. Please destroy any previous copies.

Your institution was wrongly faulted for not responding to the appropriate nine Overview Questions, which was noted as one of five Strategic Issues for the institution to focus on within the report.

Due to errors discovered within several AQIP Documents combining the eight original Overview questions with the newly revised Categories, Central Community College could not be at fault for a mistake that is clearly AQIP's.

We have consulted with the Appraisal Team and it is in agreement with our decision to remove this Strategic Issue from Central Community College's Systems Appraisal Feedback report.

Please accept our sincere apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Spangehl
Vice President

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

March 10, 2010

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

In response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Academic Quality Improvement Program

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

March 10, 2010

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight **Central Community College**'s achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

Category One - While the Portfolio indicates an understanding of the key elements of assessment of student learning, it does not demonstrate a comprehensive and systematic use of processes and performance results to set clear targets for improvement in student learning as a result of assessment activities at the course and program levels. CCC should be encouraged to use the results of its assessment data to identify these improvement targets. The College should also be encouraged to continue its efforts to identify and use comparative results to demonstrate that students achieve the common learning objectives and attain the desired program outcomes.

Category Two - CCC has an opportunity to refine the institutional approach to setting and assessing distinctive non-instructional objectives. The institution presents processes for determining these objectives, though it is unclear how this approach resulted in the four overarching objectives identified or how those objectives will be monitored. This very general description of processes related to key institutional non-instructional objectives appears to result in a loss of focus such that, for example, the portfolio fails to differentiate between institutional objectives, unit objectives, and individual employment objectives. Further, the portfolio would benefit from a clearer definition of the distinctive objective related to access.

Category Three - CCC uses multiple sources of information to identify student needs, including assessment of student learning, advisory boards, CCSSE, and graduate surveys. This information is reviewed by multiple groups, including AQIP action teams, instructional leaders, College Cabinet, and individual faculty, advisors, and counselors. CCC analyzes other stakeholder needs through multiple means, such as employee satisfaction surveys, advisory committees, employer surveys, and ongoing communications with partner organizations. However, the College does not demonstrate in this section of the portfolio how it uses this information to identify areas in need of improvement. It appears that as a by-product of writing this portfolio, the College has identified a need for more aggregate, actionable reflection on the data – in other words, more critical analysis that will in turn guide decision making.

Category Four - CCC is actively working to improve processes in the area of Valuing People, including a revised employee satisfaction survey and an improved communication system. The College also has opportunities to further clarify and communicate its recruitment, retention, and reward processes and to further integrate them. The College has the opportunity to "integrate cultural competency," a stated distinctive objective, into the processes within this category. The heavy emphasis on long-term retention of more than 50% of the College's employees does not fully illustrate process, results, and continuous improvement in this category. Inclusion of part-time employees in the satisfaction survey, improvements in direct benchmarks with other institutions, and investigation and use of an externally validated satisfaction instrument might bring the College closer to its desired outcomes in this area.

Category Five - CCC has established processes for strategic and operational planning. The College has opportunities to further its work in the areas of leading and communicating by clarifying performance measures, further documenting specific aspects of its decision-making processes, developing a college-wide succession plan, and continuing the institution's work on improving communication. With newly developed planning models and revised survey instruments, CCC appears to be on course for quality improvements in this area. Greater transparency and dissemination of data is an appropriate foundational step.

Category Six - CCC has identified multiple improvement goals for numerous support services, including career services, registration, financial aid, assessment and advising, recruitment and admissions, business services, human resources, and physical plant. The College has acknowledged the need to more clearly identify the data/measures it uses to improve its support services, as well as its process(s) for analyzing and using this data for improvement.

Category Seven - CCC has developed an infrastructure to collect and distribute information and performance data. The College has also defined key performance indicators and uses some information from these measures to guide improvements. The College has opportunities, however, to clarify processes related to prioritizing data requests, ensuring data reliability and usefulness, and aligning data analysis with organizational goals, so that the data collected is used to guide decision making. The College can also develop a more systematic approach to measuring the effectiveness of its data collection, analysis, and distribution systems. The latter is especially important in ensuring that processes for measuring effectiveness continually improve to meet stakeholder needs.

Category Eight - CCC has several key elements of a planning system in place, including processes for collecting stakeholder input, annual reviews of plans and budget needs, and tools and processes for encouraging collaboration across the multiple campuses. The College may further enhance its effectiveness in this area by clarifying how it aligns planning at different levels, how it defines its measures of effectiveness, how results are used to prioritize improvements, and how it provides employee development opportunities specific to its quality campaigns and action projects.

Category Nine - CCC has established a number of successful partnerships with other educational and community institutions to serve students and encourage workforce development. The College can continue to enhance its effectiveness in this area by developing a more systematic approach to measuring effectiveness in terms of student learning and other identified student needs.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for **Central Community College** are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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: Accreditation Issues Analysis, Critical Characteristics Analysis, and Category Feedback. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team 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.

Executive Summary: Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team 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 challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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.

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 into 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's systems and processes 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:

- **Setting improvement targets for student learning and development**

  CCC's strategic priorities list included only two items that focused on student learning (1I2). The portfolio does not document many improvements in teaching and learning resulting from assessment. This item appears to have been identified as a strategic issue in the previous portfolio. CCC should be encouraged to use the results of its assessment data, in alignment with College priorities, to identify improvement targets. The College should also be encouraged to continue its efforts to identify and use comparative results to insure that CCC's student outcomes are comparable to those achieved by other colleges.

- **Clear differentiation between context and process**

  In many categories, process questions had contextual responses. Confusing context (what) with process (how) contributes to the difficulty in identifying relevant and aligned data for use in documenting process and subsequent process improvements. This resulted in unevenness of portfolio reporting and in the ability of the appraisal team to

provide succinct feedback. With common and well-communicated processes, data needs for future analysis can be identified.

- **Alignment of data with process**

    A number of opportunities and vulnerabilities mentioned in the overview failed to connect with eventual discussions in the categories. For example, CCC identified competition for students and declining enrollment as vulnerabilities in the Overview without any suggested strategic response in the remainder of the Portfolio. CCC has an opportunity to address this declining student market share as CCC's competitors recruit more students from CCC's region. As another example, completion of online courses and degrees was mentioned in the Overview as a vulnerability and distance learning was mentioned as a distinctive feature of the College, but the two were not linked in any meaningful way in the remainder of the portfolio. CCC has an opportunity to proactively plan, implement, and improve its strategic response in the area of distance education, especially in light of its geographically large service area.

- **Analysis and Use of Data**

    The Portfolio as a whole reflects gaps in the way the College understands cycles of improvement through clearly identified processes and measures of these processes, as can be seen in 2I2 and 3I2. In the Results section throughout the Portfolio, emphasis should be upon reporting relevant results, trends, and comparative data. With ample information accessible, CCC is encouraged to use data systematically and in accord with its clarified context-aligned processes. CCC has begun to assemble significant amounts of data. The College now has an opportunity to proceed with the analysis of this data and the use of their findings to promote institutional improvement.

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.

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

O1a   Central Community College (CCC) is a locally governed public, nonprofit, comprehensive community college supported by tuition, fees, and property taxes from a State of Nebraska allocation.

O1b   CCC's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles, 25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O2   CCC offers 32 applied technology and occupational programs, a transfer curriculum (A.A. and A.S.), business and industry training, avocational courses, and foundations education.

O3   Of 25,000 students attending annually, approximately 52 percent enroll in credit classes and the remainder enroll in noncredit industrial training, ABE, and avocational courses. Seventy-one percent of the credit students have financial need, and over 60 percent require developmental education. Enrollment has remained relatively flat since 2002, with a 3.5 percent decrease in headcount and a 3.2 percent increase in credit hours taken; an increase in student diversity is noted.

O4   CCC maintains collaborative relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions in the state, with advisory committees for all of its career-technical programs, with business and industry through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and with bargaining units that represent full-time faculty and contract and hourly staff.

O5   CCC identifies maintaining qualified faculty and staff as a key vulnerability; it currently employs 152 full-time faculty (52% have doctoral or masters degrees), 252 part-time faculty (24% have doctoral or masters degrees), 116 administrators/support staff (47% have doctoral or masters degrees), and 139 classified staff.

O6   CCC operates under the standards of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. It holds specialized accreditation in four areas: nursing, health information management, dental hygiene, and medical laboratory technology. The College is also subject to state law, including guidelines for state and local funding.

O7   The College's competition includes two universities and one other community college in the service area; the universities attract over 50 percent of the first-time freshmen and the other community college attracts almost 20 percent of first-time freshmen as compared to CCC's 19 percent.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, via web delivery, and through new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles, 25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O2   CCC offers 32 applied technology and occupational programs, a transfer curriculum (A.A. and A.S.), business and industry training, avocational courses, and foundations education.

O3   Of 25,000 students attending annually, approximately 52 percent enroll in credit classes and the remainder enroll in noncredit industrial training, ABE, and avocational courses. Seventy-one percent of the credit students have financial need, and over 60 percent require developmental education. Enrollment has remained relatively flat since 2002, with a 3.5 percent decrease in headcount and a 3.2 percent increase in credit hours taken; an increase in student diversity is noted.

O5   CCC identifies maintaining qualified faculty and staff as a key vulnerability; it currently employs 152 full-time faculty (52% have doctoral or masters degrees), 252 part-time faculty (24% have doctoral or masters degrees), 116 administrators/support staff (47% have doctoral or masters degrees), and 139 classified staff.

O6   CCC operates under the standards of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. It holds specialized accreditation in four areas: nursing, health information management, dental hygiene, and medical laboratory technology. The College is also subject to state law, including guidelines for state and local funding.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
1P1,1P2	S	Faculty and faculty teams develop, review, and monitor common student learning outcomes and program-specific learning objectives in consultation with program advisory committees, local industries, professional groups, and program-specific accrediting agencies. The World Wide Instructional Design System (WIDS) aids in standardization of curricular development and revision.
1P1,1P2	OO	Opportunity exists for CCC to clarify the criteria it uses to develop and implement the processes it delineates for determining common objectives for learning and development within degrees and at particular levels. Clarification of the criteria used to identify common outcomes is foundational to student learning assessment in its entirety.
1P3	S	CCC identifies systematic approaches and processes for developing, implementing, and assessing new programs, including needs

assessments and evaluation of resource needs, use of advisory committees, monitoring of local employment trends, and attention to feedback from NDE, Labor, and students and employees.

| 1P4 | S | CCC uses third year course reviews, annual program reviews against key performance indicators, and a comprehensive program review every seventh year to ensure that its learning expectations, practices, objectives, and programs align with the College's mission. |

| 1P5 | S | CCC faculty defines the preparation required of students in each course and program in their area of study, and designs and develops curricula, programs, courses, and learning paths for students using input from steering committees, advisory committees, accreditation agencies, discussions with other faculty, and professional organizations. Indicators of readiness include success in prerequisites, admission test results, placement test results, locally developed instruments, and transcripts. |

| 1P5 | O | Many CCC students require remedial courses in key areas such as math, reading, and writing, providing opportunity for CCC to examine the effectiveness of the processes and assessments it has in place to predict student success in subsequent academic courses. |

| 1P6 | S | CCC communicates program and course requirements to students through admissions personnel and college publications such as the catalog, admissions material, program brochures, and advising, and guides students at several points to appropriate courses and programs. |

| 1P6 | O | CCC has an opportunity to monitor, and possibly to integrate, the many diverse processes it uses to communicate to students the level of preparation required and the learning and development objectives desired by the College. |

| 1P7-9 | S | The formation of the Foundations Education team is a step toward improving placement testing, assessment, and advising processes, including keeping the same advisor throughout students' programs. The College has clearly identified relevant scores for advising and has self- |

identified the need to strengthen the processes utilizing these scores to help students select programs of study.

1P7-9	O	CCC recognizes a need to improve its advising and placement systems.
1P10	O	Clarifying how students acquire assistance related to placement, academic advising, registration, and support services would help to make the case that CCC is meeting the special needs of all student groups.
1P11	S	CCC uses nine major processes for determining, communicating, and documenting effective teaching and learning, including assessment, program review, and annual review of key performance indicators for each program. The college also conducts surveys of students, graduates and employers to guide curriculum changes to improve learning outcomes.
1P11	O	CCC has an opportunity to integrate its nine teaching and learning processes into a comprehensive system that includes monitoring, reporting results and identifying clear targets for improvement.
1P12	O	With a two-year course schedule to assist students in planning, to provide flexibility in course delivery based on student demands, and with distance learning technology, CCC has an opportunity to demonstrate that it meets the needs of students and to identify clear targets for improvement.
1P13	S	CCC clearly identifies the processes used to monitor the currency and effectiveness of the curriculum, including employer satisfaction surveys, program review, graduate surveys, and job placement of graduates. These processes include a description of how the College uses results to implement changes at both the course and program levels.
1P14	S	The College describes a three-year review cycle for programs. Several inputs inform this process, including advisory meetings, assessment of student learning, accreditation organizations and professional associations.
1P14	O	CCC has an opportunity to create transparency in the processes it uses to scale down or discontinue courses or programs. Along with clarity of

process and available results, the institution will be well positioned to explain efficiencies and prioritize existing resources.

| 1P15 | S | The College actively solicits student input on the adequacy of its support services, and has dedicated resources (an Educational Services Committee and 13 full-time staff) to assist faculty in curriculum development and to provide technical support. |

| 1P15 | O | While CCC describes using a series of surveys and having a full-time professional support staff, it does not explain how it uses data to identify learning support needs and to respond to these in a systematic, sustainable way. |

| 1P16 | O | The College has an opportunity to describe how it helps students develop through its co-curricular programs and services. |

| 1P17 | O | Opportunity exists to explain what data the institution collects and how it analyzes and uses this data to make improvements in its programs and College-wide or General Education outcomes. |

| 1P17 | S | CCC has developed a standardized evaluation process that aids faculty and College leadership in developing assessment processes, initiatives, and tools. Table 1P17-1 indicates that the College is tracking many programs and is taking action to improve student learning. |

| 1P18 | O | The College has an opportunity to make its student learning assessment data available for use at the department and system level to set clear targets for improvement. |

| 1R1-3 | S | CCC surveys employers to assess the quality of CCC graduates, and reports favorable results (above 3 on a scale of 1-4, and with 77% of the graduates employed in their fields, according to Tables 1R1-3 and 1R1-4); faculty and administrators use these results to improve the learning process. |

| 1R1-3 | O | The College has an opportunity to demonstrate that faculty proposals to improve student learning outcomes have been implemented and are producing positive results. |

1R4	O	While CCC has data suggesting that students have acquired the knowledge and skills employers want, trend data and/or benchmarks would be useful for monitoring program effectiveness.
1R5	O	The College has an opportunity to demonstrate how it monitors and uses performance results to improve learning support services.
1R6	S	Table 1R5-1 data demonstrates CCC compares favorably to the 112 participating institutions in the Community College Benchmark Program.
1R6	O	The College is currently seeking institutions with which it can share comparative results for common as well as program specific learning objectives.
1I1	OO	CCC has an outstanding opportunity to use its data on student learning and institutional operations to set realistic, attainable, and specific improvement targets.
1I2	S	CCC's processes, results, and targeted improvements (referenced in process descriptions) track to KPI standards.
1I2	O	CCC has an opportunity to show that the processes it used to develop its ten goals related to student learning have helped it to set clear targets for improvement. Only two of the ten goals listed relate to student learning, and the processes used to develop these goals have not been specified; nor have measures and targets for improvement been clearly identified.

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

O1b   CCC's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles and 25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O2   CCC offers 32 applied technology and occupational programs, a transfer curriculum (A.A. and A.S.), business and industry training, avocational courses, and foundations education.

O4   CCC maintains collaborative relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions in the state, with advisory committees for all of its career-technical programs, with business and industry through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and with bargaining units that represent full-time faculty and contract and hourly staff.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item   S/O   Comment

2P1-2   O   The College identifies several mechanisms by which it solicits feedback from internal and external stakeholders, and it identifies "general

overarching objectives," but it does not clarify what is distinctive about those objectives, all of which could reside in other categories. There seems to be a lack of understanding of the purpose of Category 2 and of the college-wide level at which these objectives reside.

2P3	S	The College communicates other distinctive objectives through traditional mass media, including newspaper, radio and television; through newsletter and other publications, including numerous brochures and other promotional material; through regular e-mail communication to employees; in group settings conducted by the College, including campus forums and president's advisory committee meetings; through College employee memberships in community groups; and interpersonally.
2P4	S	Specific surveys and ongoing feedback provide CCC senior leaders with information for an annual review of distinctive objectives. Advisory committees, groups, and students review and assess the College's other distinctive objectives.
2P5	S	The College determines its other distinctive objectives in the context of its mission and overall structure, with opportunity for input during all stages of their formulation and at all levels of the system.
2R1-2R2	O	CCC outlined several processes directed to increase enrollment, yet the results reported indicate a decrease in headcount and FTE over the past 8 years. Specifically, CCC highlights Extended Learning Service Enrollment as an example of improving access; however, the duplicated headcount and FTE shown demonstrate a decline from 2002 to the present. The institution has an opportunity to examine and report how processes have been changed to address this problem. Many of the results focus on enrollment, but the processes listed previously would allow for other measures. CCC lists several diversity and community activities, but does not report findings relevant to these activities.
2R3	O	The institution has an opportunity to identify how the instruments listed provide comparable measures of non-instructional, non-support service

objectives; additionally, the CCSSE measures provided are aligned with instructional rather than non-instructional college objectives.

2R4	O	Results presented include those for student clubs, access rates, partnerships, and economic growth, and showcase activities measures without trend data or tie-in to the processes of data collection and analysis or comparisons. As an example, the Quality Improvement Campaign structures have recommended and/or implemented several measures aimed at improving college communication that should have a positive effect on campus communications, but no results are reported. The institution has an opportunity to move beyond listing actions to complete analyses that lead to measurable improvements.
2I1	O	CCC has an opportunity to connect the improvement actions taken with the identified stakeholder need being addressed and to connect both of those to the identified distinctive objective.
2I2	OO	While CCC addresses the potential of its culture and infrastructure for setting specific processes and targets for improvement in its other distinctive objectives, the Portfolio provides no examples of such processes or targets.

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

O1b   CCC's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles and 25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O2   CCC offers 32 applied technology and occupational programs, a transfer curriculum (A.A. and A.S.), business and industry training, avocational courses, and foundations education.

O3   Of 25,000 students attending annually, approximately 52 percent enroll in credit classes and the remainder enroll in noncredit industrial training, ABE, and avocational courses. Seventy-one percent of the credit students have financial need, and over 60 percent require developmental education. Enrollment has remained relatively flat since 2002, with a 3.5 percent decrease in headcount and a 3.2 percent increase in credit hours taken; an increase in student diversity is noted.

O4   CCC maintains collaborative relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions in the state, with advisory committees for all of its career-technical programs, with business and industry through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and with bargaining units that represent full-time faculty and contract and hourly staff.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
3P1	S	CCC uses multiple sources of information to identify student needs, including assessment of student learning, advisory boards, CCSSE, and graduate surveys. This information is reviewed by multiple groups, including AQIP action teams, instructional leaders, College Cabinet, and individual faculty, advisors, and counselors.
3P2	S	CCC builds and maintains relationships with students through student support and instructional services personnel. CCC builds relationships with online students through services that can be accessed online.
3P3	S	CCC analyzes other stakeholder needs through multiple means, such as employee satisfaction surveys, advisory committees, employer surveys, and ongoing communications with partner organizations (such as school districts).
3P3	O	The portfolio does not explain how CCC prioritizes among the many stakeholders and among the needs of each stakeholder group. Clarifying such a process may help the College select courses of action that will meet the most vital stakeholder needs.
3P4	S	CCC builds relationships with stakeholders through such means as open forums for faculty and staff, through business advisory committees, and through hosting community events.
3P5	S	CCC seeks to identify programs and services of interest to new students and stakeholder groups through various means, such as advisory committees and community partnerships.
3P6	O	CCC solicits input from students and other stakeholders. However, the College does not answer the question about how input is analyzed or how courses of action are selected to promote the goal of continuous improvement.

3R1	S	The College uses various methods to assess student and stakeholder satisfaction, including CCSSE, the Student Survey of Instruction, and employer surveys.
3R2	O	Sections 3R1-2 of the portfolio demonstrate that CCC has begun to analyze available data regarding student satisfaction. It would be beneficial to the College to set targets for improvement and to analyze trends in survey data, which are not reported.
3R4	S	A large percentage (98 percent) of CCC graduates are employed or continue their education. Employment data suggest that employers are satisfied with the performance of CCC graduates.
3R5	O	The College would benefit from expanding its measures of stakeholder relationships beyond market penetration (percent of population served) in the College's service area. Expanding the measures (e.g., stakeholder satisfaction with College services) would better enable the College to evaluate and continuously improve the effectiveness of its relationships.
3R6	O	The College acknowledges that it could benefit from working with other Nebraska community colleges to collect and compare benchmark data.
3I1-2	O	The primary focus of this section of the portfolio is on improvement of processes vs. improvements achieved. There is one exception: The College has made some recent improvements in student testing, placement, and Foundations Education. The College would benefit from identifying additional areas in need of improvement, and setting targets for improvement, based on the analysis of student and stakeholder needs.

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

O5   CCC identifies maintaining qualified faculty and staff as a key vulnerability; it currently employs 152 full-time faculty (52% have doctoral or masters degrees), 252 part-time faculty (24% have doctoral or masters degrees), 116 administrators/support staff (47% have doctoral or masters degrees), and 139 classified staff.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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

4P1-2   S   The college uses several mechanisms – professional organization and accreditation standards, state licensing requirements and supervisor review of specific work assignments – to identify skill sets required of employees; additionally, the six chief instructional officers have developed consistent guidelines for faculty requirements and credentials.

4P3-4   O   While CCC has an employee orientation that includes basic college procedures and an overview of the College's mission, history, and culture, the college has the opportunity to document how it strategically recruits

and retains qualified employees. Documenting these processes may help the College overcome its identified vulnerability of recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff. Additionally, while the college has identified cultural competency as a distinctive objective, it makes no mention of any special focus on recruitment and hiring of minority staff and faculty, nor does it address the challenge of recruiting and retaining faculty in general.

4P5	O	CCC notes that 53.2% of its employees have been with the institution for ten or more years, and the College is aware of its need to plan for changes in personnel. CCC recognizes that it needs a more developed process for addressing changes in personnel. The College is encouraged to continue its work in this area to overcome its identified vulnerability of retaining its faculty and staff.
4P6-7	S	College policies and procedures clarify employee expectations and contribute to cooperation and high performance as exemplified in the recent improvements in the College organization at the mid- and senior-level leadership positions.
4P6 - 7	O	Although CCC has several key processes for assessing employee satisfaction and aiding productivity, the college has the opportunity to systematize these processes, which may help to ensure that improvements like in-service days and common meeting times increase both satisfaction and productivity.
4P8	S	The college determines training needs through input from internal and external stakeholder groups, and further refines those needs through the annual employee evaluation process. It has hired a Professional Development Coordinator to oversee training activities, and it also supports and encourages continuing education on the part of its employees.
4P8	O	CCC has an opportunity to develop the process by which the training needs identified are aligned with short- and long-range college plans and how these training needs strengthen college programs and services.

4P9   S   CCC has several sets of processes and resources in place to identify training and meet needs, including annual employee evaluations, annual employee goals, and professional development personnel. However, it is unclear how faculty training needs are determined. The recently hired Professional Development Coordinator/Trainer may help with this in the future.

4P10   O   CCC trains and develops employees through annual evaluation, annual setting of goals and objectives, and through providing internal training and development funds and promotion. However, there is an opportunity to document the processes used for faculty evaluation, development and training.

4P11   O   CCC has an opportunity to develop a College-wide process for recognizing, rewarding, and compensating employees beyond the current five-year interval recognitions, and the current benefits package. One campus has established a small award, which, if it proves to be effective, could be expanded upon to college-wide recognitions.

4P12   S   The College determines issues relating to faculty and staff motivation through employee satisfaction surveys and formal and informal meetings. Employee feedback is addressed by the leadership teams of the College and the Continuous Quality Improvement Team.

4P12   O   The portfolio does not address processes whereby it incentivizes and spurs desired motivation nor how the college addresses those items that have priority but are not "reasonably achievable."

4P13   S   CCC has a variety of committees and services in place to address employee satisfaction, health and safety, and employee well being.

4R1   S   Performance measures for Valuing People include perception surveys, an on-line suggestion box, retention data, training initiatives and budget, and professional development funds. CCC recognizes a need to make its employee satisfaction process more transparent.

4R2	O	CCC infers that its low employee turnover rate indicates a high degree of workforce satisfaction. However, the College has the opportunity to study employee satisfaction to determine reasons for the low turn-over rate which will provide the institution with more actionable data upon which to focus its improvements.
4R3	O	In addressing evidence of effectiveness in this category, the college discusses mechanisms by which it gathers information (processes), but little in the way of results or analysis of that information. Additionally, the college includes results that are only indirectly related to this category.
4R4	O	CCC has an opportunity to gather and use comparative performance results in its processes for Valuing People. With the identification of meaningful benchmarks, analysis of results and trends against comparable higher education institutions will provide CCC with usable indicators of its own performance.
4I1	S	Recent improvement activities include a revised employee satisfaction survey with targeted questions on leadership, communication, and co-workers; expanded participation on teams and committees; refinement of CQI; new evaluation forms and process for faculty and staff; and development of electronic timesheets.
4I2	S	Targeted improvements include enhancing the systems for defining and measuring processes related to valuing people, adding cultural sensitivity training, increasing diversity in the workforce, expanding mentoring and training for new employees, continuing awareness of ethical practices, considering a formal reward process, publishing suggestion box data and analysis, and reporting data findings and analysis to critical stakeholders.

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

O5   CCC identifies maintaining qualified faculty and staff as a key vulnerability; it currently employs 152 full-time faculty (52% have doctoral or masters degrees), 252 part-time faculty (24% have doctoral or masters degrees), 116 administrators/support staff (47% have doctoral or masters degrees), and 139 classified staff.

O6   CCC operates under the standards of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. It holds specialized accreditation in four areas: nursing, health information management, dental hygiene, and medical laboratory technology. The College is also subject to state law, including guidelines for state and local funding.

O7   The College's competition includes two universities and one other community college in the service area; the universities attract over 50 percent of the first-time freshmen and the other community college attracts almost 20 percent compared to CCC's 19 percent.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item   S/O   Comment

5P1	S	CCC has implemented a systematic process for strategic planning with clear goals for the process, including broad stakeholder engagement, transparency, and identification of external opportunities and threats.
5P2	S	The College clearly illustrates how its project planning and priority-setting processes are aligned with its mission and goals, and it has established timelines that link planning and budget development.
5P3	O	The College seeks to define the needs of internal and external stakeholder groups in the initial stage of its planning model. While CCC identifies performance measures as a key mechanism by which needs are identified, these measures are not identified in the portfolio. Identifying the College's performance measures can encourage a shared understanding across different stakeholder groups about what matters most to the college leadership.
5P4	S	CCC describes the College Planning Model used to determine viability of future actions to create a sustainable learning environment with CQI principles.
5P4	O	CCC has the opportunity document the processes used to maintain awareness of trends in the external environment and how the trend data are regularly collected and analyzed. Analysis and use of this information can help different stakeholder groups assess where the leadership is and is not following developments in the external environment.
5P5	O	CCC has developed an extensive set of standing and ad hoc committees and teams that participate in decision making at the College. While organizational charts can communicate vertical and horizontal lines of communication, they do not communicate how decisions are made. CCC has an opportunity to further clarify its processes for prioritizing goals and activities, assigning resources, and using teams, task forces, and committees to make decisions. Having more fully articulated processes for decision making can support the College's priority of making its internal processes more transparent.

5P6	S	Institutional Research has been charged with the responsibility of transparency of performance information while SPARKS allows all full-time employees to provide input on issues.
5P6	O	The challenge of identifying key performance indicators and of making the measurement of those indicators transparent and public is an opportunity that the college recognizes; attention to this important project should enhance the leadership's effectiveness and credibility.
5P7	S	CCC recognizes the importance of communication and has made internal communications a working project. The College has a number of informal mechanisms through which it communicates vertically and horizontally, including published minutes, websites, College-wide briefings, and monthly newsletters.
5P9	S	The College shows a commitment to developing the leadership skills of administrators by sending them to the Chair Academy in Colorado and of employees by sending them to AQIP training.
5P9	O	The College is encouraged to also send faculty and staff to the Chair Academy or elsewhere to create leaders at all levels of the organization. The college acknowledges that it often promotes employees from within and that it faces a potential leadership shortage in the near future, so it has an opportunity to expand leadership development opportunities for faculty and staff that may or may not be part of a formal succession plan. Offering broad leadership development that includes the expectation to share learning can support the College's aspiration to be a Learning College.
5P10	O	CCC has an opportunity to build a College-wide leadership succession plan into its training, planning, employment processes. It currently provides leadership succession processes such as job shadowing, cross-training, mentoring, discussions, and proposals. It recognizes that it needs to review and address its lack of a leadership succession plan to avoid loss of institutional knowledge.

5R1	O	While CCC identifies a variety of instruments through which it examines the perceptions of internal and external stakeholders, some of these instruments, like the CCSSE, do not provide direct measures of leading and communicating. Having clear performance measures for leading and communicating can provide guidance to College leadership on how it can improve and model a CQI culture.
5R2	O	The 2009 redesign of the employee survey, which focuses on *sources* of employee satisfaction and employee perception of leadership effectiveness, should give the institution valuable data, though none is reported in this item. Although CCC mentions results from past employee surveys and feedback from constituency groups, these results are not provided. Sharing this information can help stakeholders understand how initiatives like the college-wide suggestion box were identified.
5R3	O	The data extracted from the 2009 CCSSE survey do not seem to be directly related to results for this category. The opportunity exists to collect, analyze, and use relevant results congruent with this category to set meaningful improvement targets in support of leading and communicating.
5I1	S	The College identifies several recent improvements in the area of leading and communicating that seek to clarify its planning process and make it more transparent.
5I2	O	Although CCC has identified appropriate next steps in this area, the results and targeted improvements are not yet evident. CCC has an opportunity to define specific communication issues and determine approaches to share results systematically.

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

O1b   CCC's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles and25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O3   Of 25,000 students attending annually, approximately 52 percent enroll in credit classes and the remainder enroll in noncredit industrial training, ABE, and avocational courses. Seventy-one percent of the credit students have financial need, and over 60 percent require developmental education. Enrollment has remained relatively flat since 2002, with a 3.5 percent decrease in headcount and a 3.2 percent increase in credit hours taken; an increase in student diversity is noted.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community.

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

6P1   S   CCC uses a variety of surveys and test results to assess student support service needs, including CCSSE and ACT, ASSET, and COMPASS tests.

6P2	S	CCC uses multiple approaches to assess the administrative support needs of faculty and staff, including open forums with the President, Campus Cabinet meetings, and monthly meetings with faculty and staff.
6P3	S	Support processes to promote physical safety and security are developed through Campus Safety Committees, annual safety training, and use of technology.
6P4	O	The effectiveness of support services is monitored through program oversight by College personnel, regular feedback from student groups, and inter-departmental meetings. CCC recognizes this opportunity has begun to develop key performance indicators.
6P5	O	CCC produces multiple annual reports about institutional support services. However, the portfolio does not identify the process used to evaluate and apply the findings of these reports. The College would benefit from promoting campus-wide dialogue about these reports to facilitate the process of continuous improvement.
6R1	S	CCC identifies measures of enrollment, computer usage, financial operations, and business and industry training. The College would benefit from measuring and evaluating the outcomes of additional support services, for example, human resources.
6R2	O	CCC reports CCSSE results on student support services, as well as means for all community colleges, for purposes of comparison. However, the portfolio contains no analysis or commentary on this data. Analysis of the data could help identify areas in need of improvement.
6R3	S	CCC reports performance data on net assets, percent of budget allocated to instruction, tuition increases, campus crime, and professional leave activity. The portfolio includes some commentary on this data.
6R4	O	The College has acknowledged the need to more clearly identify the data and measures it uses to improve its support services, as well as its process(es) for analyzing and using this data for improvement.

6R5   O   CCC reports some comparison data from the National Community College Benchmark Project, but the College does not explain how this data helps with the evaluation and continuous improvement of institutional support services.

6I1   S   CCC reports on two areas of improvement: (1) decreasing processing time and eliminating paper in the leave form process and (2) developing non-academic key performance indicators. These are good examples of the many improvement initiatives that should follow.

6I2   S   CCC has identified improvement goals for numerous support services, including career services, registration, financial aid, assessment and advising, recruitment and admissions, business services, human resources, and physical plant.

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

O3   Of 25,000 students attending annually, approximately 52 percent enroll in credit classes and the remainder enroll in noncredit industrial training, ABE, and avocational courses. Seventy-one percent of the credit students have financial need, and over 60 percent require developmental education. Enrollment has remained relatively flat since 2002,

with a 3.5 percent decrease in headcount and a 3.2 percent increase in credit hours taken; an increase in student diversity is noted.

O6   CCC operates under the standards of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. It holds specialized accreditation in four areas: nursing, health information management, dental hygiene, and medical laboratory technology. The College is also subject to state law, including guidelines for state and local funding.

O7   The College's competition includes two universities and one other community college in the service area; the universities attract over 50 percent of the first-time freshmen and the other community college attracts almost 20 percent compared to CCC's 19 percent.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
7P1-7P2	S	CCC has in place an Institutional Research office; a central data collection, storage and distribution system that includes access to an internal warehouse (Colleague) and to external databases (e.g. Nebraska State Department of Education); and a mechanism for sharing data reports with the campus community (Sharepoint).
7P1-7P2	S	CCC has several practices in place for selecting, managing, and distributing data and performance information, including consultation with internal and external stakeholders, and a protocol for determining whether such information should be integrated in college planning and reporting processes.
7P1-7P2	S	CCC has dedicated past and present improvement initiatives to defining performance measures and improving the management of performance

information. The College has identified ten college-wide actions to expand data collection and distribution.

7P1 - 7P2	O	While CCC has identified purposes for collecting data and performance information, the College has an opportunity to clarify how it uses this data to support planning and improvement, including how it prioritizes data requests. Having a process for prioritizing data requests may help the College manage the increasing demands for data to support decision making.
7P3	O	CCC has an opportunity to document how it determines the needs of departments and units for collecting, storing, and accessing data and performance information. Having such processes in place can guide an institution in ensuring that data collected is useful to decision makers.
7P4	S	At the institutional level, CCC collects and analyzes Key Performance Indicators or externally mandated performance measures and shares the results in multiple ways. Revision of the College's Systems Portfolio has encouraged data sharing, with 27% of full-time employees participating in action projects and/or Quality Improvement Council work.
7P5	O	While CCC lists possible sources of comparative data, including the Community College Benchmarking Project and Kansas Study, the College could further clarify several aspects of this process, including how priorities for data are determined, how appropriate comparative data are identified, and how these data elements are used to focus improvements. Clarifying these aspects of the process would help to ensure comparisons are meaningful for decision makers.
7P6	O	While CCC describes its processes for ensuring that measures are viable, it has an opportunity to further clarify how the analysis of data is aligned with organizational goals. Clarifying this aspect of the process recognizes that analysis is a key component of data-based decision making that needs to be communicated among stakeholders.
7P7	S	The College has processes in place for regularly updating its technology for storing and accessing data.

7P7	O	CCC has an opportunity to clarify its processes for ensuring that the data available to decision makers is timely, accurate, and reliable. With such processes in place, stakeholders will be able to assure the integrity and usefulness of the College's data.
7R1-7R2	O	While CCC identifies several measures of effectiveness for institutional information services, it has an opportunity to clarify how such data provides effectiveness measures of the College's systems for planning, continuous improvement, and evaluation.
7R3	O	The College has an opportunity to clarify how the CCSSE data points provided indicate the effectiveness of processes for Measuring Effectiveness. Having more direct measures of the systems for collecting, analyzing, and using data in decision making can enable the College to identify meaningful comparison groups.
7I1	S	CCC has made several recent improvements in this area, including hiring an Institutional Research Coordinator, completing the first phase of key performance measures for non-academic programs, and revising the CCC website to include all major College reports.
7I1	O	CCC has an opportunity to develop a more systematic approach to improvement in this area so it is clear how the improvements described are identified and prioritized.
7I2	S	CCC has three teams in place to define performance measures and improve processes in the area of 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*

O5   CCC identifies maintaining qualified faculty and staff as a key vulnerability; it currently employs 152 full-time faculty (52% have doctoral or masters degrees), 252 part-time faculty (24% have doctoral or masters degrees), 116 administrators/support staff (47% have doctoral or masters degrees), and 139 classified staff.

O7   The College's competition includes two universities and one other community college in the service area; the universities attract over 50 percent of the first-time freshmen and the other community college attracts almost 20 percent compared to CCC's 19 percent.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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.

Item   *S/O*   *Comment*

8P1   S   CCC describes an extensive planning process that includes annual reaffirmation of the College's mission, vision, values, goals, and quality improvement initiatives; annual updates of the Master Facilities Plan, college-wide technology initiatives, and three-year plans for instructional and support services; annual budget development; regular monitoring to implement planning initiatives; and regular strategic forums and action project reports to the Higher Learning Commission. These processes

deliver results that allow CCC to adjust priorities based on employee needs.

8P2	S	CCC describes an active and responsive planning process that includes short- and long-term goals. This process includes the use of multiple data sources, goals related to each of the AQIP categories, one-year action projects, and multi-year quality improvement campaigns. The institution also uses the Continuous Quality Improvement Team to address issues as they are identified.
8P2	O	Although CCC has identified sources of data it uses in short-term planning—including national surveys of student engagement and satisfaction, internal performance reports, and a suggestion box—the College has an opportunity to clarify how it prioritizes possible improvement actions, including those which rise to the level of a quality campaign. Having clearly articulated processes for prioritizing projects may encourage campus support for decisions.
8P3-8P4	S	Action projects are developed in response to college-wide data and input from employees. Action plans include considerations of technology support, facilities, and budget. CCC has also implemented processes for supporting communication about these plans and other improvement opportunities across campuses and levels of the institution.
8P3-8P4	O	While CCC has identified a variety of processes for soliciting input and volunteers for its committees and teams, the College does not describe how planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans are coordinated and aligned across levels of the college. Documenting how planning aligns may help to ensure that various levels work collaboratively and effectively.
8P5	O	While some aspects of CCC's process for defining objectives, selecting measures, and setting performance targets are described (e.g., the Board, Cabinet, CQIT, and action team members are responsible for defining objectives, measures, and targets), the College has an opportunity to document how measures and performance targets are

established. Clarifying this process can help to ensure stakeholders that measures are relevant and targets are appropriate.

8P6	O	While CCC describes processes through which action teams can request technical or financial support, the College can further clarify how it determines strategy in light of priorities, resource levels, and future needs. The College can further clarify how ad hoc resource requests are anticipated in the annual budgeting process.
8P7	S	The College seeks to mitigate risk in several ways, including the use of insurance, grants, and contracted partnerships to anticipate financial hardship; the budgeting of contingency funds to account for changes in revenue; the use of scans and SWOT analyses to anticipate risks within the higher education sector; and the collaboration of employees across campuses to anticipate losses of personnel in key areas.
8P8	S	CCC provides a variety of opportunities for employees to be involved in planning and professional development, including the use of in-services, community activities, teams, AQIP processes, and a variety of meeting documents.
8P8	O	While CCC has a variety of professional development opportunities and resources in place, the College has an opportunity to document how these opportunities and resources are aligned with the requirements of organizational strategies and action plans. Such alignment will help to ensure those strategies and plans are successful.
8R1	O	While CCC does describe some measures of planning effectiveness that are embedded in the college's quality improvement projects (e.g., continued involvement of team members), the College has an opportunity to clarify a) how the list of data instruments provided addresses the measures of effectiveness for planning processes and systems, and b) how the embedded measures align with college-wide key performance indicators. Providing clear measures of planning effectiveness is important as CCC works to align planning and budgeting and improve communication structures.

8R2-8R3	S	CCC has in place action projects and measures within the context of its four quality campaigns that demonstrate that progress is being made.
8R2-8R3	O	While CCC does identify the measures associated with its quality campaigns, it has an opportunity to further clarify how other organizational strategies are performing, its targets for the four quality campaigns, and how the measures identified align with institutional goals and KPIs.
8R4-8R5	O	While CCC has sources for comparative data like the Nebraska Community College Association and the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, it has a further opportunity to identify comparative benchmarks for performance results. The College describes reporting variations within the state as a barrier to meaningful comparison within Nebraska.
8I1	O	Beyond listing improvements, CCC has an opportunity to explain how it uses measures and results in Planning Continuous Improvement to target improvement goals for its planning processes. The College also has an opportunity to demonstrate that these improvements are part of a systematic approach to continuous process improvement.
8I2	S	CCC has some infrastructure in place to promote collaboration and collection of stakeholder input; this feedback is used to make refinements in its planning processes.

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

O1b   CCC's service area encompasses 14,000 square miles and 25 counties with a population of over 300,000. With an emphasis on individualized instruction, continuous enrollment, and ethnic diversity, the College meets its service needs through three full-service campuses in Grand Island, Hastings, and Columbus; limited service sites in Kearney, Lexington, and Holdrege; and several learning centers and distance learning sites.

O4   CCC maintains collaborative relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions in the state, with advisory committees for all of its career-technical programs, with business and industry through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and with bargaining units that represent full-time faculty and contract and hourly staff.

O6   CCC operates under the standards of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. It holds specialized accreditation in four areas: nursing, health information management, dental hygiene, and medical laboratory technology. The College is also subject to state law, including guidelines for state and local funding.

O7   The College's competition includes two universities and one other community college in the service area; the universities attract over 50 percent of the first-time freshmen and the other community college attracts almost 20 percent compared to CCC's 19 percent.

O8   CCC identifies several key opportunities and vulnerabilities, including internal communication, budget and planning process alignment, strategic planning process, student success in developmental courses, recruitment and development of qualified faculty and staff, expansion of learning centers (on site, web delivery, and new facilities) and competition from a neighboring community college.

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*
9P1	O	While CCC has formed a number of partnerships, the institution has an opportunity identify processes for how these partnerships are prioritized to help ensure that the College's resources are not overextended and that partners' needs are met.
9P2	S	CCC has processes in place for monitoring needs, services, and programs in this area, including a three-year survey of employers who hire the College's graduates.
9P3,9P5	O	The institution has an opportunity to identify the processes use to create, prioritize, and evaluate the partnerships it has developed.
9P6	O	While CCC has several processes in place to collect input on how partnerships meet the needs of stakeholders, the College has an opportunity to make the processes more systematic, clarifying what student needs are met through these partnerships, what measures are taken that assess how well those needs are being met, and what decision-making processes are in place for analyzing feedback, prioritizing opportunities to improve, and implementing improvements.
9P7	S	CCC has several processes in place for collaborating among departments and units within the institution.
9P7	O	CCC has an opportunity to assess how well the processes in place for communicating across departments and units are meeting stakeholder needs. The College has recognized this opportunity in a quality campaign.
9R1	S	CCC provides an extensive list of resources and programs through which it can assess the effectiveness of external and internal collaborations.
9R2	S	CCC identifies several examples of data supporting effective partnerships, including increases in the number of schools participating in the Tech Prep program, the FTE enrollments generated by the Training Cluster, and enrollments generated through the Mechatronics and Nebraska Department of Labor grant initiatives.

9R2	O	CCC has an opportunity to align these different pieces of data with the stakeholder needs these partnerships are intended to serve, both to ensure that the right measures of effectiveness are being used and to ensure that stakeholder needs are being met.
9R3,9I1	O	CCC recognizes that it has an opportunity in this area to build measures with which it can compare performance with other postsecondary institutions. The measures of collaborative relationships identified in 9I1 may be an excellent start for building this capacity.
9I2	S	CCC has processes in place for assessing student learning and has identified specific areas for improvement.
9I2	O	The institution has an opportunity to demonstrate whether the opportunities to improve that are listed (e.g., access to learning) are intended to shape how the college creates, prioritizes, and builds partnerships. This would be an excellent strategy since these identified student needs could serve as a meaningful basis for establishing measures of partnership effectiveness.