Central Community College
Systems Appraisal Feedback Executive Summary
April 7, 2014

This report summarizes the key feedback provided in the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The key factors to be summarized include (category) executive summaries, category opportunity and strength statements, accreditation issues, and strategic issues. The majority of the systems appraisal consists of the opportunity and strength statements in the nine AQIP categories and will be the first summary of this report.

<u>**Category Opportunity and Strengths Feedback:**</u>
For the purpose of brevity this report, only Strengths (S & SS) and Opportunities (O, OO) with significant impact are shown, as these represent the most high and low performing processes. Additionally the summary statement for each category is included.

Category 1: (Summary comment from the review team):
<u>As CCC has stated, the maturity of its approach to processes in Category 1, Helping Students Learn, is systematic. The college considered input from its last systems portfolio review and quality checkup visit to develop action projects with a focus on assessment of student learning. Processes have been defined, data collected, and some improvements made in this area; the college realizes it is an ongoing process and is committed to initiating future plans for improvement. The college has an opportunity to place the same emphasis on student support services (advising, registration, etc.) in the future. In addition, clearly identifying effectiveness measures for all processes will assist the institution in further developing their culture of continuous improvement.</u>

1P5, SS. The process for determining the preparation required of students for specific courses and programs is determined by faculty. This preparation is demonstrated through student performance on standardized assessments, transcript analysis, and completion of prerequisite math and writing courses. In 2011-2012 the college fully implemented the Mandatory Assessment and Placement Plan (MAP) for all certificate, diploma, and degree seeking students. The college recently received a Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant (TAACCT) which will provide additional developmental education opportunities at the satellite campuses. This process could be strengthened with the identification of effectiveness assessment measuring retention and success rates for those students participating in the training.

1P9, O. While a variety of delivery modalities and three courses for students explore their preferred learning styles are offered, CCC has an opportunity to foster student success through a more comprehensive approach to detecting and addressing students' learning styles. This approach might include proactive assessments of student learning styles and training for faculty and student support staff.

1P11, SS. CCC clearly identifies multiple systematic approaches regarding communications of expectations. These approaches appear to be comprehensive and well integrated into their operations.

1P18, SS. The Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) Committee is responsible for assessing student learning and has an annual review process. Rubrics are in place to analyze student success. General assessment observations are categorized by the institution into Ss and Os and then presented to academic departments for consideration. The institution is encouraged to continue this recursive review process.

1R2, O. CCC is in a transition period for this process area. The institution recently improved and expanded its process for determining and assessing common learning objectives across all college programs. As a result, the institution has limited performance results and no trend data under the new process. The new process presents a unique opportunity to compile analyzed more meaningful data in a manner that informs continuous quality improvement.

1R5, O. CCC asserts that placement and transfer rates present a valid indicator of effectiveness of learning support services. This measure is at best indirect and the institution has an opportunity to develop clearer objectives and effectiveness measures for the learning support efforts.

Category 2 (Summary Comment from the review team):
<u>Central Community College has a vast service area of twenty-five counties in a rural state. With this geographic reality, CCC has focused on providing educational and cultural enrichment opportunities to communities in its service area that would otherwise not be available. The college provides educational opportunities beyond its own classroom experiences for high school students. The college has also used surveys effectively to receive feedback on how it can best serve its communities and student body. From these surveys, the college now has a greater focus on serving the veteran population and expanding membership in its alumni association. The college will also help the surrounding physical environment and serve as a symbol for other institutions to follow with its</u>

sustainability initiative. CCC reports dedicating considerable effort to review and align Category 2 with the overall objectives in the current Strategic Plan. This includes clarification of current distinctive objectives and ensuring they are based on improving processes.

2P1, S. Central Community College does appear to have strengthened and increased initiatives in this area. They have defined a process for determining the importance of possible new non-instructional efforts for the institution and assessing requests based upon three priority areas: sustainability, serving veterans, and maintaining contact with alumni. They have demonstrated how they have undertaken new initiatives to address these areas. They have strategies for designing and operating approved projects. The college has the appropriate personnel in place to lead the efforts in the three distinctive objectives: Sustainability Coordinator, Veteran Student Coordinator, and Alumni personnel.

2P4, S. The veterans' program has several stakeholders engaged in a variety of assessment and review processes for the program including an external evaluator for the grant.

2P6, O. Mechanisms in place to determine faculty and staff needs in the three priority areas are informal and indirectly related to the topic. Most come through informal interaction with staff or surveys designed to serve multiple purposes or to be very broad in their application (such as the suggestion box). Changes are also implemented informally. A more direct approach might lead to better accountability and decision making. The college may explain how they determine the need for coordinators for each service and how each service is assessed.

Category 3 (Summary Comment from the review team):
Central Community College gathers information on the needs of students and stakeholders from a variety of sources. The group whose primary task in understanding these needs is the forty-five member strategic planning committee. The committee is selected in a way to reflect the geographic diversity of the college. Administrative summits are held to analyze data and develop future plans. Standard reports are widely distributed according to a regular schedule and integrated in both annual planning and five-year strategic planning.

3P6, OO. CCC indicates that it has elements in place to monitor complaints. The institution has an outstanding opportunity to more clearly delineate a comprehensive and systematic process that identifies how the complaints are captured, how they are resolved, how those actions are communicated to the re-affected parties, and how those actions are logged, monitored, and analyzed for future action.

3R1, S. The college regularly collects measures of students' and other stakeholders' satisfaction and provides evidence that data is being compiled and analyzed. The institution presents an example of this data which indicate use of these measures in a manner that supports the ongoing development of a culture of continuous improvement.

3R4, O. Although CCC presents information regarding developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, an opportunity exists to integrate the information provided into a systematic and comprehensive process.

Category 4 (Summary Comment from the review team):
CCC's need to retain quality faculty and staff is exacerbated by its geographic location. Professional development and satisfaction are, therefore, of greater importance than at other institutions. The college has demonstrated its understanding and concern for this issue with multiple programs designed to improve communications, increase satisfaction, and to further the professional skills of both faculty and staff. The have also taken steps to "grow their own" as part of a succession planning movement. Improvements have also been made in new employee orientation, including the New Faculty Institute, and in opportunities for part-time employees.

4P2, S. The college has added on to its extensive mechanisms to identify skill sets to now include internal policies on credentials for its instructors. The Position Review Committee strengthens and supports this process.

4P5, O. The College is proactive in its recognition that it will be facing a number of retirements in the near future which provides the opportunity for a review of needs and function. It is unclear what kind of succession planning is in place. Considering this area could help to minimize problems as the retirements occur. The institution has an opportunity to present these elements in a systematic manner that includes effectiveness assessment.

4R1, S. CCC systematically collects multiple measures, regarding valuing people, that are reviewed and analyzed and help inform the decision-making processes of the institution. The institution shows a commitment to helping employees develop professionally.

4R3, O. The college collects evidence regarding employee and staff productivity through several means: employee evaluation process, assessment of student learning process, key performance indicators (KPI) for instructional and non-instructional programs, CCSSE Support for Learners performance measure, and distribution of faculty workload. The institution does not fully clarify how the data is analyzed and how it Contributes to their improvement efforts. Identifying and prioritizing measures, targets, trends and external benchmarks may help the institution interpret data and gain insights for decision making.

Category 5 (Summary Comment from the review team):
Central Community College acknowledges that this is a category that needed improvement based on feedback from its last peer review. The college identifies four opportunities in which to focus on for overall improvement to the college: identifying needs of external stakeholders, increased documentation, clarification on decision making, and professional development. In response to these four opportunities, CCC has involved more external stakeholders in the strategic planning process, it has integrated a SharePoint 10 system for increased documentation, and it has emphasized recording all activities of professional development for all employees.

5P2, S. The college's planning and leadership structures facilitate the alignment of goals and action projects with the institution's mission, vision, and values. Workflow timelines that link planning and budgeting processes are clearly stated. CCC has developed a Continuous Quality Improvement Team (CQIT) that assist with identifying action projects, mentoring performance, data collection requests, and to manage the suggestion box submissions from employees and students.

5P3, O. While CCC has a number of mechanisms in place for gathering student and other stakeholder input, it is not clear how this information is directly utilized in planning and decision-making. A more formal system of stakeholder data utilization in the planning process might help to support priorities and action projects.

5P9, O. CCC identifies several activities that serve to share leadership knowledge, skills, and best practices throughout the organization. An opportunity exists to identify how these efforts serve to strengthen and encourage leadership among faculty and staff.

5R2, S. CCC shows performance results in a variety of ways including monitoring of KPIs, survey comparison data regarding relevant priorities, and use of other data to make informed decisions. They have documented workflow for input sources such as the suggestion box. They show how they utilize data to make changes addressing areas of concern.

Category 6 (Summary Comment from the review team):
CCC has a mature system of services to support student learning. They have updated their master plan, looked at alternative funding options, and focused upon sustainability efforts in recent years. The sustainability effort has become a priority undertaking for the college. The college has made changes to its support services as a result of its last Systems Portfolio, indicating that the college has utilized the peer review process in a positive way. It has since implemented surveys to measure student satisfaction with support services. Key Performance Indicators have been established for student services. In 2010, CCC established KPIs for all non-academic programs to assess overall performance and the institutional research office assists with compiling and analyzing data.

6P3, SS. CCC identifies a dynamic process designed to address threats and maintain a safe learning and working environment. This process includes systematic and informal feedback and individual campus safety committees who identify issues that result in appropriate corrective action. The college's safety and security efforts align with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). It has implemented the CCCAlerts emergency notification system and has developed key performance indicators from the Cleary data.

6R2, S. CCC provides evidence of a comprehensive approach to collecting and analyzing performance results for student support services.

6R3, O. CCC provides evidence of an evolving approach to collecting and analyzing performance results for administrative support services. The institution has an opportunity to develop additional measures and benchmarks for administrative support services. A more comprehensive assessment in this area will facilitate the institution's quality infrastructure in a manner that manages and balancing resources dedicated to all support services.

Category 7 (Summary Comment from the review team):
CCC has initiated three major action projects since its last Systems Portfolio that are related to utilizing data in its decision making processes: developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for instructional programs, developing KPIs for non-instructional programs, and utilizing benchmarking data in the measurement process. As a result, KPIs are in place to assess both instructional and non-instructional programs. The academic area is currently

focusing on integrating core abilities/competencies with the philosophy of education. With respect to benchmarking, CCC continues to add and strengthen its sources for comparative data to identify areas of improvement. Benchmarking data is gathered from the following sources: National Community College Benchmarking Project, National Higher Education Benchmarking Institute, Voluntary Framework of Accountability and Nebraska Community Colleges Coordinating Commission. Additionally, the college's strategic plan, action plans, and nine
categories use data to align priorities. The Institutional Research office has developed a tracking system to support all data requests. Trends are reviewed annually. Several types of reports are created to help communication and inform decisions.

7P1, SS. CCC has a systematic approach to selecting, managing, and distributing data and performance information to support its instructional and non-instructional programs and services. A multi-tier system is used for data selection, capture, and distribution. Data sets are selected by end-users based on three institutional needs: 1) operational decision making, 2) internal/external reporting, and 3) continuous quality improvement projects. CCC's administrative data system, Colleague, and a SharePoint repository comprise the main access points for data. Numerous external data sources are also utilized. The Institutional Research department works with Information Technology Services to compile, analyze, and report on required data to meet institutional needs and improves data management systems based upon internal and external data usage requirements.

7P6, O. While CCC has a number of processes in place for the analysis of data and their defined purposes, these reviews are recognized as being primarily at the initial development and approval stage. It is not clear if there is a direct review of connections to the strategic plan and other formal planning efforts. The institution has an opportunity to identify appropriate review processes of current measures which would include criteria to determine that a measure or report no longer aligns with institutional goals. Making these connections may enhance the institution's overall quality journey.

Category 8 (Summary Comment from the review team):
Central Community College utilized feedback from the 2010 Systems Appraisal to add three new projects related to planning continuous improvement. The projects include aligning college processes (strategic plan, AQIP, and three-year process), blending non-integrated planning processes, and integrating the Systems Portfolio. The college also launched initiatives to celebrate AQIP successes and standardize the publishing of annual reports. In addition, the college has improved the conversation with both college administration and the Continuous Quality Improvement Team regarding prioritization of possible improvement actions.

8P1, SS. Central Community College has a strong infrastructure in place to support planning. Some examples of this infrastructure include annual updates of the Master Facilities Plan, college-wide technology initiatives, and three-year plans for instructional programs. The planning process is inclusive involving all stakeholders openly sharing information.

8P4, S. The CCC Strategic Plan is the foundation of the planning process of the institution. It is updated annually and includes input from all stakeholders. Projects generally originate from the Strategic Plan but additional projects can be forwarded to the CQIT. Initiatives can originate at the department-level and are aligned with goals and within the budgeting process.

8R2, O. While successful completion of projects is one indicator of success, the college does not adequately assess if the project specifically addressed the problem it was intended to consider. A systematic method for reporting and communicating performance results will facilitate the institution in achieving continuous improvement.

8R4, O. The college utilizes several state and national benchmarking tools. A challenge exists for the college in interpreting this data due to variations in reporting. While this has been mentioned in other areas of the portfolio, an opportunity exists to synthesize the data and utilize it in ways that are most meaningful for the institution.

Category 9 (Summary Comment from the review team):
CCC has maintained the student focus through its strategic planning processes. The institution has systematically focused on building collaborative relationships since its last Systems Portfolio. These efforts align with the college's mission and vision and its Category 9 primary objective. They have added to the college's mission statement the direction for partnerships: "To provide access to quality student-centered instruction and learning support systems for individuals desiring higher learning." Seven action projects have been initiated since its last Systems Portfolio in this category. The college has unique demands with its twenty-five county service area in rural Nebraska. With this geographic reality the relationships the college builds with area businesses and

communities will be vital for future growth. The focus on health sciences and alternative energy sources are indicative of ways to enhance the future of both the college and its external stakeholders.

9P2, O. CCC utilizes many methods to build relationships with the educational organizations and employers that depend on the supply of its students However, a more formal means of gathering data would strengthen this section for future reviews.

9P3, O. CCC describes multiple relationships with organizations that provide services to its students However; the college does not appear to have a systematic and holistic approach to creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with organizations that provide services to its students. Systematically creating, prioritizing, and building relationships may help the institution gain insights for decision making and inform continuous improvement.

9P7, S. CCC has many improvements in this area and has identified key commitments. They have a well aligned system founded in its strategic planning process and sustained through committees. They describe a systematic process for creating and building relationships between and among departments and units.

9I1, O. While CCC is to be commended for implementing multiple improvements in this category, the institution does not address how systematic and comprehensive its processes and performance results are for building collaborative relationships and if these processes and performance results informed the decision to make these improvements. Leveraging systematic and comprehensive processes that facilitate meaningful analysis of performance results is fundamental to continuous quality improvement.

Accreditation Evidence Central Community College:
Upon review of the college's systems portfolio the Higher Learning Commission's Systems Appraisal team defined that "No evidence issues were noted by the team" that is equivalent to saying that Central Community College has presented sufficient evidence that it complies with each of the five Criteria for Accreditation and each of their Core Components. The report also provides guidance on how the institution answered the 21 Core Components in the five accreditation criterion. Seventeen of the core components were defended as having strong, clear and well presented evidence provided in the portfolio. The remaining four components were defined as "Adequate but could be improved" meaning they evidence provided shows CCC is meeting the requirements of these components but the evidence could be improved upon. The list below shows those core components that the appraisal team suggests could be improved:

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	1A	1B	1C	1D	
Strong, clear, and well presented	X	X		X	
Adequate but could be improved			X		
Unclear or incomplete.					

Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
Strong, clear, and well presented	X	X	X		X
Adequate but could be improved				X	
Unclear or incomplete.					

Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
Strong, clear, and well presented	X	X	X	X	X
Adequate but could be improved					
Unclear or incomplete.					

Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	4A	4B	4C	
Strong, clear, and well presented	X	X	X	
Adequate but could be improved				
Unclear or incomplete.				

Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	5A	5B	5C	5D
Strong, clear, and well presented		X		X
Adequate but could be improved	X		X	
Unclear or incomplete.				

Strategic Issues
From the review of the colleges Systems Portfolio the Systems Appraisal team identified several factors that have the potential to impact future institutional planning. The following topics not defined in the category sections include:
- Increasing the systematic nature of how data is analyzed and most effectively informs continuous quality improvement.
- Expanding comparative data on more factors impacting college operations.