

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 15, 2010



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

OCC has shown strong initiative in the development of a culture and infrastructure that supports and utilizes assessment as a core principle. The institution has carefully-designed processes that consider learning outcomes as the basis for program development and that support student needs. While the processes are in place, the Portfolio does not portray communication and completed results. The institution has an opportunity to show how processes align with results and how these process and results have transformed the culture of the institution. While several current test scores lag behind national norms, OCC's culture of assessment, analysis, improvement, and strategy should benefit the institution's students in the future. As OCC continues to prioritize and set improvement processes, it will benefit from communication of the entire assessment process throughout the institution.

OCC's design, development, and improvement of its processes for Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives are heavily dependent upon its strategic planning and quality improvement systems. Standardizing its approach – including benchmarking to set performance improvement goals – in its various units will strengthen the institution.

OCC employs a wide range of methods to build positive relationships with students and other stakeholders. Survey results, however, show decreased satisfaction among recent graduates with regard to personal enrichment, career planning, and job placement. The institution endeavors to build strong relationships with business, industry, and K-12 partners but has few surveys or measures that consider the satisfaction of those groups. A systematic process for analyzing and selecting a course of action based on an analysis of the measures would increase the responsiveness of the institution.

OCC has incorporated a number of initiatives designed to increase employee satisfaction. The institution appears to have strong processes for the recruitment, hiring, orientation, and training for all of its employees; however, many processes seem to be at the departmental level rather than the institutional level. Additionally, much of the information that is cited is based on very indirect measures that may not yield an

accurate picture of what the institution has accomplished or needs to target. It is not clear how training is aligned with organizational plans or how it strengthens programs.

OCC has developed a robust approach to Leading and Communicating. The college has implemented a unified system of planning and continuous improvement that is founded on its mission, vision, and values. This system evolved effective leadership structures such as the APC and the QC that assure a consistent approach to quality improvement. Leadership and communication are further strengthened by the Shared Leadership Model where collaboration and consensus can result in decisions that materially advance the college and the interests of its stakeholders, although the process through which decision making is guided by the Model is unclear. The college has created an impressive stream of data and information from multiple sources and methodologies that is used to analyze its achievements in this Category. Some of these data create opportunities for target setting and for the comparison of OCC's achievements with those of peer institutions, but it remains unclear how other products may be aligned with this Category. OCC does not have a formal succession plan but possesses the leadership development programs that can undergird this necessary process.

OCC has documented a series of impressive process improvements over the last year for category 6; however, it needs to concentrate on developing its measures and using those results in analyses that can lead to the prioritization and targeting of improvement resources. Currently, OCC collects data informally and formally to determine needs and processes for improving services.

OCC's systems are strong for this stage of its development. The PREP initiative has particular promise in applying a consistent set of criteria to determine the extent that programs and services advance institutional objectives. The college needs to work to develop additional measures of its effectiveness and to examine those results in comparison to peer institutions. To the extent possible, incorporating existing stand-alone databases into institutional systems would advance the standardization and reliability of information systems.

OCC has demonstrated substantial progress toward the creation of a culture of continuous quality improvement. The college has deployed and materially supported

planning processes that are fundamentally sound and is now positioned to develop measures and targets for those processes.

There are some potential opportunities for improvement in Category 8. The process that allows employees to self-nominate quality improvement projects will benefit from examination to determine if the intended broad access and utilization is being realized. A formal risk assessment process should be considered for development and implementation. Finally, and importantly, OCC could benefit by identifying, developing, producing, and analyzing data and other evidence that will document its effectiveness in planning continuous development. Collecting this data and other perspective will enable the institution to compare its success with that of comparable organizations.

OCC has developed a significant number of relationships with partners across its service areas. The outcome of these relationships is well documented, but there does not appear to be an institutional system in place to examine these relationships, how they are built, and whether their outcome contributes to the organization accomplishing its mission. Documenting the results of stakeholder satisfaction for key relationships would help OCC to monitor continuous improvement in collaborative relationships.

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

ELEMENTS OF Owens 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 Owens 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 Owens 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 Owens 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:

OCC consistently maintains a quality culture and has consistently demonstrated the use of excellent processes. While the essence of quality and the structuring of solid processes go hand-in-hand, the proof of a distinct quality-based culture rests within the institution's results. The next step in achieving a long-lasting quality culture involves a careful analysis of information, a thoughtful institution-wide discussion about the impact of the information on operations, services, and people, and subsequent actions should accompany each process and translate into meaningful results.

OCC has successfully moved to implement a quality culture through all units and sub-units. To achieve the full benefits of this culture, all units and sub-units should seek similar, high standards of quality within their unique operations. As described in the Portfolio, only some units rely on feedback mechanisms and benchmarking. The quality culture should become apparent through processes and results seen at every level.

Valuing people is one of the essential principals for any academic institution that desires to build a quality-based culture. Even though OCC utilizes a variety of surveys and other information-gathering instruments to gain awareness of employee attitudes and provides employee-centered services, the results of these efforts and any resultant processes are not clearly defined in the Portfolio. Efforts to increase employee satisfaction should permeate each level of the institution.

Diversity is cited as a growing area of focus for OCC and was highlighted as one of the college's three AQIP action projects for 2009. Although OCC has increased efforts to recruit minority employees, increasing formal efforts to achieve diversity at every level will develop the institution.

OCC needs to work to develop additional measures of its effectiveness and to examine those results in comparison to peer institutions. To the extent possible, existing stand-alone databases should be incorporated into institutional systems to advance the standardization and reliability of information systems.

OCC has risk assessment processes that seem very informal and rudimentary. The institution has an opportunity to develop a process that will assign risk determination to the appropriate institutional levels and provide a procedure that uses a consistent methodology to assess situations. By standardizing risk assessment, OCC will achieve more reliable results and will be better able to build a consensus that supports those findings.

OCC has invested considerable resources in planning systems and has created other processes that hinge on the effectiveness of that planning. The college needs to move quickly to develop its measures, apply and analyze those measures, and determine what improvements are needed for the planning function.

OCC has not yet identified targets for the next 1-3 years and reports that it will use the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, in part, to identify new action projects. As important as the Feedback Report can be, OCC has many, many other sources of data, feedback, and insight that should be routinely used to set future targets—especially performance targets keyed to its strategic plan.

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 Owens 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 Owens 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 OCC is one the largest comprehensive state community college in Ohio with a current enrollment of 20,425, campuses in Toledo and Findlay, satellite locations, and a large virtual student population. OCC does not have the support of a tax levy and offers the lowest tuition in Ohio.
- O1b OCC offers associate degrees and certificates through the Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Systems, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Technology schools. The institution also offers certificate and non-credit programs through its Workforce and Community Services division.
- O2 OCC has provided its Foundation and its Alumni Relations initiatives with a central leadership structure and has aligned those efforts with the institution's mission, vision, and goals.
- O3 OCC student and stakeholder expectations focus on securing employment, affordability, credit transfer, and good college/community relationships.
- O4 OCC has 2209 employees comprised of the following: 206 full-time faculty; 466 full-time staff; 90 part-time staff; 1018 adjunct faculty; 102 temporary workers; and 327 student workers. The institution is working to increase the minority representation of faculty and staff through a 2009 AQIP action project.

- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC's strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. "Organizational Vitality" is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O7 OCC collects, stores, and distributes institutional information that focuses on mission, vision, and core values; the strategic plan, AQIP projects and initiatives, and compliance mandates.
- O8 OCC is experiencing challenges in the areas of growth requirements and needs, existing facilities updating, and funding for those updates. Other challenges for the institution at the moment include the national and regional economy, loss of jobs, rising energy costs, and competition from career centers, adult education centers, and two- and four-year institutions.
- O9 OCC has developed a significant partnership with the Ohio Coalition of AQIP colleges and Universities to better utilize resources in continuous improvement.

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 Owens 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

- O1a OCC is one the largest comprehensive state community college in Ohio with a current enrollment of 20,425, campuses in Toledo and Findlay, satellite locations, and a large virtual student population. The institution does not have the support of a tax levy and offers the lowest tuition in Ohio.
- O1b OCC offers associate degrees and certificates through the Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Systems, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Technology schools. The institution also offers certificate and non-credit programs through its Workforce and Community Services division.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1P1	S	OCC integrates its general education core competencies into the curriculum for all students. The institution reviews the competencies

		through its Curriculum Committee and annual assessment results with its Student Learning Assessment Committee and stakeholders. Faculty determine changes in the curricula according to the assessment results.
1P2	S	Specific program objectives are developed and assessed by program specific faculty with the assistance of advisory committees, employers and, where appropriate, occupational accrediting agencies.
1P3	S	OCC utilizes a faculty driven process that is guided by the University System of Ohio (USO) and anchored by a comprehensive assessment process that utilizes both internal and external data.
1P4	S	New program planning is processed by the faculty as they address market issues and advisory committee input; coursework integrates learning goals, career needs and employment opportunities.
1P5	S	In addition to faculty review of pre- and co-requisites for courses, student preparedness is determined via multiple assessment tools prior to and at the time of enrollment.
1P6	S	OCC provides multiple opportunities for prospective and current students to receive information and advice on programs, courses, and the underlying learning objectives. Academic advisors provide specific information and details on the array of support services that are available. OCC recognizes the importance of parents and caregivers in this process and provides a Parent College website to better prepare them for the expectations that college has of its students.
1P7	S	Program selection assistance is available at various stages of the student's tenure at the college. Through the advising process, new students meet with an advisor at the start of the enrollment process. Further engagement is available through an assortment of support services, including their intrusive advising system, their first year experience courses and their student success mentor program.
1P8	S	OCC offers a comprehensive developmental approach for students whose preparation is not adequate as determined by standardized

assessments. This effort is supplemented by student support services such as advising, workshops, and tutoring. Processes are used to integrate all of this into a system.

- 1P9 O A formal learning styles inventory assessment (VARK) is used; however, it is not clear if the tool is used for all students as part of new student assessment or is voluntary. Moreover, the link between assessment results and the program of services and training that enable faculty and students to adapt to different learning styles is not explicit.
- 1P10 S Flexible scheduling, a Learning Center, Disability Services and other entities help ensure that the special needs of students are met.
- 1P11 O Strategic planning, standing committees, the Center for Teaching and Learning, AQIP projects, and other efforts were cited as evidence for communicating expectations for teaching and learning. No mention was made regarding the selection, orientation, and promotion/advancement of faculty or the large group of adjunct faculty.
- 1P12 S OCC utilizes the annual Program Review and Evaluation Process (PREP) to analyze enrollment trends and patterns, student preferences, course delivery modes, and the creation of the OCC's master schedule.
- 1P13, 1P14 S The comprehensive process and schedule for review of ongoing programs provides data to various committees on a consistent basis for program and curriculum improvement. This system also provides a process for change or discontinuation of a program.
- 1P15 O Clear processes are in place to assess the learning needs of students as tracked by Tutor Trac (Learning Center) and LibQual+ (library); however, the college recognizes a need to further identify faculty needs.
- IP16 O An opportunity exists to align a number of co-curricular activities with curricular learning objectives. Creating this alignment will enhance the importance of the co-curricular experience.
- 1P18 S OCC recently completed an AQIP project called "Assessment of Student Learning" that emphasizes student learning outcomes at the program

level and the submission of an annual assessment plan that considers the cognitive domain, the psychomotor domain, and the affective domain. Student learning assessment results are shared with faculty, department heads, and students with action plans created. These action plans are then shared and reviewed with a number of other stakeholders. This process enables OCC to continually learn from its assessment efforts. The entire organization and its stakeholders interpret meaning and create next steps from the measurement of student learning.

- 1R1 S OCC's use of nationally-normed instruments such as The Noel-Levitz SSI, CCSSE, and CAAP has given it the capacity to develop its aspirations for teaching and learning and its subsequent improvement strategies based on sound methodologies that develop appropriate peer data.
- 1R2 O Although OCC students scored above the national norm for critical thinking, the scores for writing skills, essay skills, and math skills displayed some downward trends and were below national norms. The Portfolio does not show results of all defined processes.
- IR3 OO It appears from review of the school and departmental reports that approximately one-third are still under development and several of those shared do not appear to be done annually (several of the last reports were from 2006-2007). The results of student learning assessment are not consistent with information provided with the student learning assessment processes (described in IP18).
- 1R4 S OCC utilizes multiple internal and external sources of evidence to assess if their students have acquired the knowledge and skill sets envisioned for program completers. These sources include licensure pass rates, capstone results, graduate follow-up surveys, and Advisory Committee minutes.
- 1R5 O Although current studies show that students completing OCC first-year experience courses had higher retention rates and that OCC students are performing comparably or better with regard to one-year retention and

transfer rates, employment rates, mathematical and critical thinking skills, and licensure examinations, three-year success rates are slightly below average. No report was provided on library usage, overall advising, laboratory use, etc.

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| 1R6 | S | Benchmarking results indicate that the college is meeting or exceeding in performance categories including but not limited to year to year retention rates, transfer rates, employment rates, and licensure pass rates in the health care field. |
| 111 | S | OCC has made good use of its Action Projects and these initiatives have resulted in the development of an assessment system that, while partially deployed, holds much promise. Progress and improvements are also evident in the college's Title III activities, notably the FYE initiative which producing evidence of a substantial improvement in student retention. |
| 112 | S | OCC has created a culture and infrastructure designed to improve and set targets to enhance student learning. The institution is one of 13 community colleges chosen to participate in the Strategic Horizons Network and has implemented a shared leadership strategy that involves employees in the academic decision-making process. |

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a OCC is one the largest comprehensive state community college in Ohio with a current enrollment of 20,425, campuses in Toledo and Findlay, satellite locations, and a large virtual student population. The institution does not have the support of a tax levy and offers the lowest tuition in Ohio.
- O1b OCC offers associate degrees and certificates through the Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Systems, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Technology schools. The institution also offers certificate and non-credit programs through its Workforce and Community Services division.
- O2 OCC has provided its Foundation and its Alumni Relations initiatives with a central leadership structure and has aligned those efforts with the institution’s mission, vision, and goals.
- O3 OCC student and stakeholder expectations focus on securing employment, affordability, credit transfer, and good college/community relationships.
- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC’s strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. “Organizational Vitality” is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O8 OCC is experiencing challenges in the areas of growth requirements and needs, existing facilities updating, and funding for those updates. Other challenges for the institution at the moment include the national and regional economy, loss of jobs, rising energy costs, and competition from career centers, adult education centers, and two- and four-year institutions.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Owens 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 S The strategic planning and the AQIP review processes which solicit the input of multiple college stakeholders serve as the foundation in developing, designing and ultimately implementing non-instructional programs.
- 2P2 S OCC utilizes annual environmental scans, APC reviews, and updated strategic plan objectives to ensure the meeting of external stakeholder needs and the development of institutional advancement.
- 2P3 S OCC uses a balanced approach in its communication efforts, employing a variety of media to assure that expectations are shared with the different stakeholder groups.
- 2P4 S OCC collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative measures from students, staff, faculty, and community members to assess and review the value of other distinctive objectives.
- 2P5 O The comprehensive process for determining faculty and staff needs is not fully described. Part of this description should include more detail on the Shared Leadership Model and its impact on the assessment of faculty and staff needs.
- 2P6 O The Portfolio does not offer sufficient explanation of the actual process with regard to how feedback is reviewed, analyzed, and translated into improvement.
- 2R1 S Measures used by OCC are varied. These measures include benchmarking, administering surveys, and reviewing compiled data.
- 2R2 S OCC has specific formal documentation indicating the accomplishment of some of the distinctive objectives citing the OCC Foundation, Alumni Association membership and WCS efforts.
- 2R3 O More extensive comparisons with peer institutions will benefit OCC with regard to the rate of giving and the size of the alumni body. Limited comparisons are reported for alumni association membership and WCS activity.

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| 2R4 | O | It is clear that results for OCC Foundation strengthen the entire college, but some actual data is needed to document the extent to which this occurs. Similarly, the focus on the apprenticeship program as a distinctive objective led to the growth of this program, but citing the actual number and growth rate would make these achievements more material. |
| 2I1 | O | Specific recent improvements are described, but the Portfolio does not detail how processes are both systematic and comprehensive. |
| 2I2 | S | OCC's mission, commitment to its core values, emphasis on OCC Foundation and alumni development, and current initiatives suggest a culture and infrastructure that will support continuous improvement. |

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 Owens 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 OCC offers associate degrees and certificates through the Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Systems, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Technology schools. The institution also offers certificate and non-credit programs through its Workforce and Community Services division.

- O3 OCC student and stakeholder expectations focus on securing employment, affordability, credit transfer, and good college/community relationships.
- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC’s strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. “Organizational Vitality” is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3P1	O	OCC uses campus-wide forums, formal surveys, and informal information gathering to determine student and stakeholder needs. The process for selecting a course of action with regard to stakeholder needs is not described.
3P2	S	A variety of services and programs are used to build and maintain relationships with students. A “Strengthening Institutions” grant provides funding for academic support and relationship building.
3P3	S	The changing needs of key stakeholder groups are identified through systematic processes that include student surveys, community surveys, advisory committees and business trend analyses.
3P4	S	OCC builds and maintains relationships with stakeholders as driven by the strategic plan and through a wide variety of community involvement and participation offerings including establishing articulation agreements and Tech Prep programs for K-12 schools, hosting industry events, and offering credit and non-credit coursework.
3P5	S	OCC uses a systematic process to identify needs and address them with proposed educational offerings and services before these proposals enter the new program approval process. OCC uses environmental scans and

- surveys to determine student and other stakeholder needs. The institution analyzes economic trends and demographic changes when targeting partnerships with new groups.
- 3P6 O OCC uses a robust and consistent process to collect and analyze responses by students. The college cites various formal and informal avenues in which student complaints are collected, but it is unclear how faculty complaints are handled. In addition, it is not clear how courses of action are ultimately communicated back to students and stakeholders.
- 3R1 S OCC collects and analyzes several measures of student and stakeholder satisfaction including the recent Foundations of Excellence survey, graduate surveys, and course evaluations. OCC is encouraged to look at all the supporting data such as the Noel Levitz, SSI, and the CCSSE studies reported in other parts of the Systems Portfolio.
- 3R2 O OCC presents results from a student survey conducted by the TRIAD group which provides percentage student satisfaction statistics. Although 2004-2006 OCC graduates had high satisfaction rates with the OCC quality of education, instruction, courses, workforce preparation, and campus facilities, less than 50% of the respondents were satisfied with personal enrichment opportunities, career planning services, and job placement services. The most recent telephone survey of former OCC students showed that only 64% were very satisfied with their OCC experience and that only 74% would recommend OCC to family and friends. There is no insight or perspective from those students who may have dropped out.
- 3R3 S Stakeholder satisfaction is based on continued participation with the college in its programs and services. OCC has demonstrated significant progress in building relationships with students through their FYE program, their Registration Rocks program, and connections to OCC resources.
- 3R4 S Key stakeholder satisfaction is based on participation in relationships, alumni/donor participation and survey results.

- 3R5 S OCC has experienced positive results when working with external stakeholders. Recent survey results showed that 86% of all companies surveyed would be very to somewhat likely to refer employees to OCC. 15% of the surveyed companies were very interested in offering classes and training through OCC while 45% were somewhat interested. While OCC has a number of relationships detailed – with advisory committees, alumni, and transfer student outreach – only one performance result with stakeholders is given (a survey of local businesses on how well OCC builds relationships with local employers). Surveys of advisory board members, for example, would provide information for improving and growing relationships with this very important group of stakeholders.
- 3R6 S When compared to institutions in the same Carnegie class, OCC rated higher on five Foundations of Excellence survey questions and no different on 70 questions. OCC compared favorably with other Ohio Board of Regents institutions with regard to first-year student persistence at the same institution and the number of degrees awarded. The college compares favorably with other institutions based off the comparative results from the FoE self study and a 2006 Ohio Board of Regents state report on higher education.
- 3I1 O OCC’s focus on students’ needs has yielded many student improvements such as the First Year Experience, a new student orientation process, new local high school partnerships, and the creation of a learning center in Toledo. This assortment of cited improvements results from the college’s involvement with the Title III grant and the restructuring of the AQIP council. Although OCC reports numerous partnerships and articulation agreements, the institution has few surveys or studies aimed at other stakeholders. A chart or table of these results and their frequency and actions taken would strengthen the statement about systematic improvement. More detail on the Foundations of Excellence Survey and the actions taken as a result of this survey would show how this information has informed relationship building with students.

3I2 S Being a CQI institution has benefited the college as it strives to make its mission, vision and core values visible to the college and the community.

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 Owens 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

- O4 OCC has 2209 employees comprised of the following; 206 full-time faculty; 466 full-time staff; 90 part-time staff; 1018 adjunct faculty; 102 temporary workers; and 327 student workers. The college is working to increase the minority representation of faculty and staff through a 2009 AQIP project.

- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.

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

Item S/O Comment

4P1 S Specific credentials, skills and values required for faculty, staff and administrators are determined by multiple sources. In addition to locally

developed competencies, faculty credentialing, position expectations, needs and rank are defined by the Ohio Board of regents and the Higher Learning Commission.

- 4P2 S OCC has a well-defined recruiting and hiring process. This is complemented by well-developed job descriptions involving screening templates and interview questions based on job competencies. On-going training and coaching is made available for supervisors and search committees by the Office of Human Resources.
- 4P3 S Recruiting is accomplished via multiple internal and external media outlets. In 2007, the college made a strong statement regarding how it values its employees by committing to and acting on a compensation analysis that resulted in a two year equity adjustment process. In addition to this, the retention of employees is further enhanced by professional development opportunities and recognition programs
- 4P5 S Immediate and long term changes in personnel are determined via three institutional planning activities. The strategic planning, operational planning and budget processes represent the strategic approach taken by the college. There is evidence that OCC uses data in its personnel decision making, including human resource statistical information derived from peer institutions.
- 4P6 O There does not appear to be an institutional system in place that ensures consistency in the frequency and the structure of how work processes are evaluated. Despite HR's support in offering professional development opportunities, design appears to be decentralized. The college needs to continue its efforts to promote an informed and standardized approach to work processes and to expectations for workplace productivity.
- 4P7 S Expectations on ethical practices are addressed via college policies, which are shared at new employee orientation. In addition to monitoring non-compliant reports, the promotion of positive and ethical values is accomplished via training and visibility on the college's internal website.

- 4P8b O OCC has several methods in place to determine training needs resulting in program training development which supports employee development and retention. It is not clear how training is aligned with organizational plans or how it strengthens programs.
- 4P9 S OCC appears to have a standard program for the professional development of its faculty and staff. These include various in-service training, mandatory supervisory training, funding support for professional development and workshops/retreats.
- 4P10 S OCC evaluation processes are well-developed and allow for differences between those with negotiated contract and employees in non-bargaining units. It should be noted that the evaluation process has a strong connection with the college's core values and the individual's job description.
- 4P11 O It is unclear how OCC's newly revamped evaluation system for its non-bargaining units is aligned with service. The initiative in including core values in the evaluation of some employees holds promise that performance may then be subsequently reflected in compensation.
- 4P12 S OCC administers the SNAP survey software through its Institutional Research office. Results of the surveys are analyzed by differing committees to determine employee motivation along with other identified resources.
- 4P13 O Despite establishing a Wellness Committee and an assortment of policies, programs and benefits that promote the health and safety of its employees, OCC reports that a survey instrument is under development.
- 4R1 S OCC cites an assortment of measures used to collect statistical data from departments related to benefits and activities, percentage patterns and feedback data.
- 4R2 O OCC has successfully reduced the time to fill positions, maintained a low employee turnover rate, and integrated employee training into the

- workplace. While the institution has increased minority recruitment and hiring, its diversity efforts have not become an institution-wide process.
- 4R3 O OCC cites its favorable developments in enrollment, employee donations to its Foundation, and activity in its alumni association—all of which may have a relationship to staff and faculty productivity and effectiveness; however, the measures and results do not give the college the evidence that it needs to determine the adequacy of its performance and cannot be used to identify targets for improvement.
- 4R4 O OCC is limited to comparative data obtained within the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistic; moreover, in the area of human resources, regional organizations may provide data from the private sector and the non-higher education public sector that can be used comparatively.
- 4I1 O Improvements have been made in the self-comparison mode but nothing is reported in comparisons with others. Additionally, OCC has not demonstrated improvements in increasing diversity on campus.
- 4I2 S OCC uses focus groups to solicit feedback about employee evaluations and relies on continuous quality improvement initiatives to improve communication and representation. Commitment to quality improvement has resulted in several significant results (such as the salary equity adjustment and the shared leadership model); these outcomes reinforce the value of self-improvement and build credibility into OCC; continuing efforts to value people.

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 Owens 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 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC's strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. "Organizational Vitality" is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O7 OCC collects, stores, and distributes institutional information that focuses on mission, vision, and core values; the strategic plan, AQIP projects and initiatives, and compliance mandates.
- O9 OCC has developed a significant partnership with the Ohio Coalition of AQIP colleges and Universities to better utilize resources in continuous improvement.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5P1	S	OCC has evolved a strategic planning system where the definition of its mission and values is embedded in a continuous process that is coordinated by the AQIP Planning Council (APC).
5P2	SS	Alignment is achieved by college leadership in concert with the strategic plan—which is specifically informed by <i>Ohio's Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2008-2017</i> . Coordination efforts are supported by an expansion in planning resources, the creation of a new position with related duties, and the certification of 21 quality trainers.

- 5P3 S OCC has dedicated significant attention to an environmental scanning process whose research component has a focus on needs and expectations of stakeholders. This effort is bolstered by local and proprietary surveys, incorporates OCC's knowledge of its learning outcomes, and is interpreted through appropriate analyses.
- 5P4 S OCC's Shared Leadership Model, along with the considerable support provided by planning and quality-improvement processes, allows OCC to move from a tactical to a strategic perspective on its future opportunities. Institutional outlook and planning are further strengthened by alignment with Ohio's ten-year strategic plan and through a focus on students and learning as seen in the new Teaching and Learning Center.
- 5P5 O While multiple paths in decision making are evident, OCC's development of its Shared Leadership Model is an approach with great opportunities for the incorporation of faculty and staff feedback, collaborative thinking and action, and consensus-building for major decisions; however, the process through which the Shared Leadership Model actually guides decision making is not clear.
- 5P6 S OCC gives evidence of a systematic approach to the collection, analysis, and utilization of data in decision making. The college assesses current practices and uses this data in its improvement efforts. It also has a robust environmental scanning effort that also produces information critical to institutional decision making. The assessment of student learning outcomes produces additional knowledge that is reflected in curricular and other decisions.
- OCC provides examples of data-driven decision making that add further credence to its representations: data is used to document and track critical trends, outcomes data is measured in terms of the achievement of set objectives, and quality improvement projects are designed to be data-driven.
- 5P7 S Communications at OCC are targeted to internal and external stakeholders through multiple delivery methods. The communications

- strategy uses both formal and informal means that appear to be consistent with common practice in higher education. A daily *O-News* e-zine gives the college an opportunity to assure that critical information is provided quickly, conveniently, and at all organizational levels.
- 5P8 S Using the media and instruments described its response to 5P7, and through the convening of college-wide meetings, OCC's leaders have multiple opportunities to reinforce mission, vision, and values. These efforts are considerably strengthened by the college's use of a planning system where mission and values are integral to that process.
- 5P9 SS OCC has several systems that provide for leadership development. The Owens Leadership Academy, which delivers formal nine-month experience, has produced 75 faculty, staff, and administrator graduates over the last nine years. Another program offers leadership "Toolkit" programming through a series of workshops. Additional opportunities are documented. It is not apparent how these multiple systems are coordinated nor is it clear how employees may be identified for these programs.
- 5P10 O OCC does not have a formal succession plan; however, with its several programs for leadership development (such as the Owens Leadership Academy) and the efforts that its HR department has in progress for the assessment of positions, there is an opportunity for the college to develop this critical plan.
- 5R1 O OCC has developed several key processes and products (such as its environmental scanning report, enrollment opportunity report, Score Card publication, and communications/marketing reports) and uses the resulting information for planning and improvement on a regular basis. Although several measures are collected and analyzed, it is unclear how these may be aligned with performance in Leading and Communicating.
- 5R2 O OCC presents several examples of how data has informed institutional decision making and points to some positive results achieved in HR and in how communications and marketing may impact enrollment. There is

- an opportunity for OCC to directly link its results to its performance measures and to share these findings in its Portfolio.
- 5R3 O OCC participates in the Strategic Horizons initiative. This collaboration may give OCC the ability to demonstrate how its results compare to those of other institutions; however, the Portfolio conveys no information with regard to peer comparisons.
- 5I1 S OCC has demonstrated how it is using the Portfolio process and the Guiding Coalition process to move toward systematic process improvement for this Category. Moreover, prior evidence concerning how the AQIP and strategic planning processes result in continuous efforts guided by the APC shows additional strength in this area.
- 5I2 O OCC has developed structures such as the APC and the Shared Leadership Model that create opportunities for the institution to develop processes that will identify areas for improvement and set targets for intended results. The college has self-identified that a PACE survey could be used to give additional guidance for this process when it is developed.

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 Owens 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

- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC’s strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. “Organizational Vitality” is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6P1	S	OCC determines its student support needs through several processes. This includes face to face conversations, focus groups, written and online customer satisfaction surveys. External outreach is done via the executive staff with alumni and community organizations.
6P2	S	Administrative support service needs are identified and prioritized via the college’s annual planning and budgeting process. The strategic plan and the AQIP objectives serve as the guide to this prioritization process.
6P3	S	Support processes are designed and implemented through OCC’s emergency program. This program, developed by a campus and safety committee, encompasses training and technological enhancements. Signage and literature appear to be the primary avenues for communication
6P4	O	OCC reports that it tracks feedback and monitors its processes in this area, but it does not describe these processes and systems. Leaders meet periodically to manage key support service processes. An opportunity exists to create a support/customer service model with associated training.

- 6P5 S Support processes are documented and communicated through routine reports, sites, and publications. This diversified approach does appear to reach the various stakeholder groups.
- 6R1 O OCC reports that it collects information relating to various student applications, that its offices receive and that its supervisors analyze. The measures cited need to be clearly presented. There is no insight into the type of data collected and how it is analyzed.
- 6R2b O While the Portfolio cites two results that demonstrated enhanced business efficiency, thorough measures of support service processes need to be clearly presented. There is no evidence of a systematic approach to collecting and reporting results.
- 6R3 O OCC states that the true measure for (administrative support) processes is the increase in semester enrollment and the number of students retained. These are clearly critical end of game measures, but they lack the nuance and detail needed for OCC to identify its problems and successes. Developing measures that directly align with the specific administrative support services will enhance the quality improvement process.
- 6R4 O OCC has not detailed its process for using its results to improve services covered under this category. A written, more formal process for using information collected to improve services could better institutionalize the change process and its improvement.
- 6R5 O Despite reporting that it conducts surveys of other higher education institutions concerning customer service, student support and administrative support services, there is no comparative benchmarking information provided.
- 6I1 SS OCC has cited numerous significant process improvements across a wide range of institutional operations. These include their budgeting process; expanded and improved capital and facilities planning, launching of new IT technologies and integrating records and registration processes in a decentralized electronic environment.

- 6I2 O Although the end results documented in 6I1 are impressive, it is still not apparent how OCC systematically selects its targets for improvement.

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 Owens 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

- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC's strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. "Organizational Vitality" is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O7 OCC collects, stores, and distributes institutional information that focuses on mission, vision, and core values; the strategic plan, AQIP projects and initiatives, and compliance mandates.
- O9 OCC has developed a significant partnership with the Ohio Coalition of AQIP colleges and Universities to better utilize resources in continuous improvement.

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

Item	S/O	Comment
7P1	SS	OCC uses its strategic plan to guide the selection of data and performance information, a gap analysis to determine differences between current status and future goals, identifies appropriate measures, and designs processes to communicate results. Retention information is managed through the development of a retention database. These data provide some indication of the students' need for additional support. In some cases, this additional support is for an intrusive advising and mentoring program. This is a best practice process for creating usable information from the analysis of data.
7P2	S	OCC uses a biannual environmental scan to update its strategic plan and address technology, competition, physical environment, learning, political, social, and economic factors. The institution develops priorities that align with state and federal mandates and measures progress on those priorities to determine whether a change in activity should occur. The OCC Institutional Research, Information Technology Services, Human Resources, and Finance departments manage and distribute performance data.
7P3	O	Needs are determined at the department and unit levels. Although IR, ITS, and Finance support departments with technical assistance, some units maintain their own databases. The decentralized approach used by OCC may not lead to the standardization of measures and research methodologies that are needed to produce consistent and reliable data for quality improvement systems.
7P4	S	OCC analyzes information of its overall performance by scores of the finance area calculated by the Ohio Board of Regents and compared monthly, quarterly and yearly, HR reports, IR reports, Program Review and Evaluation Process reports and Student Learning Assessment reports. These monitoring reports are distributed in different means to all of the stakeholders.

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| 7P5 | S | OCC's board and its senior staff are responsible for determining and monitoring the indicators that link to the strategic plan and to the college's accountability and performance measures. Comparative data are sought for these key measures and peer group comparisons are developed. |
| 7P6 | S | OCC's instructional areas utilize PREP analysis criteria such as program mission, external demand, internal demand, quality, productivity, essentiality, and opportunity analysis to connect the mission and vision of their respective schools to the OCC mission and vision. PREP teams gather input from stakeholder forums, review program datasets, and write reports that describe content, define processes, articulate results, and recommend improvements. Results are considered for action by academic administration. The OCC Portfolio does not describe any process that deals with similar issues on non-instructional programs. |
| 7P7 | S | OCC uses its enterprise-wide information technology system to increase efficiencies and its Technology Strategic Plan to guide timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of information systems. The institution ensures system integrity through system audits and standardization, data integration through a portal system, and system security through intrusion detection systems. |
| 7R1 | S | Measures that are collected and analyzed regularly include the academic program, finance, HR, student services, website hits, information security and computer systems. Service-related data are also gathered and analyzed to determine if customer service, turnaround time, and customer satisfaction expectations are being achieved. OCC looks to implement additional measures associated with customer service, response time for requests, and the level of satisfaction with the report produced. Critical information services are available to end-users for greater than 95% of all hours during the week. |
| 7R2 | O | OCC cites various reports as evidence that it is meeting its organizational needs, goals and mission. OCC's website backup for this category lists many reports and results, but the linkage to mission and goals described |

in the response is not apparent. Many (if not all) of the cells identified as “evidence” have restricted access and could not be accessed for the purposes of this review. When OCC reissues its Portfolio, it should strive to contain its important descriptions and results within the confines of the Portfolio template and guidelines provided by the Commission.

- 7R3 O OCC cites the use of reports to monitor effectiveness and benchmark itself against other higher education institutions and industries outside of higher education. Despite providing an overview of such processes, minimal information is provided regarding how the institution compares with other organizations within and outside higher education. OCC continues to face challenges with technologies for adult learners.
- 711 S OCC is making critical progress in key areas of importance for Measuring Effectiveness. It has implemented improvements in both process and infrastructure, but the institution is still in development in its need to assure that its approach is both comprehensive and systematic.
- 712 S A number of cultural/structural changes have occurred that support OCC’s transition into an environment that embraces continuous quality improvement. As the college’s efforts continue to mature, it should seek to measure the acceptance and understanding its faculty, staff, and stakeholders exhibit towards quality improvement.

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 Owens 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 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC's strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. "Organizational Vitality" is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O7 OCC collects, stores, and distributes institutional information that focuses on mission, vision, and core values; the strategic plan, AQIP projects and initiatives, and compliance mandates.
- O8 OCC is experiencing challenges in the areas of growth requirements and needs, existing facilities updating, and funding for those updates. Other challenges for the institution at the moment include the national and regional economy, loss of jobs, rising energy costs, and competition from career centers, adult education centers, and two- and four-year institutions.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
8P1	S	<p>OCC exhibits a complex planning process that uses several leadership structures to assure that continuous improvement is advanced. A Shared Leadership Model—the product of The Guiding Coalition—provides for diverse points-of-view in planning and decision making processes. However, details provided for the Model are not sufficient to demonstrate how this structure integrates into the process.</p> <p>The AQIP Planning Council (APC) and the Quality Council (QC) provide for differentiation between leadership for the strategic plan and for on-</p>

going continuous quality improvement projects. OCC's planning and improvement councils meet on a monthly basis and hold joint sessions to strengthen their organizational compatibility. A Director of Organizational Performance and Accountability facilitates both the APC and the QC—strengthening the communication and coordination that is required for the overall effort.

- 8P2 S The APC works collaboratively with key stakeholder groups, including the President's Cabinet, to select its long and short-term strategies. In this process local, regional and national data and trends are considered as are state and federal expectations.
- 8P3a S OCC has multiple methods for the identification and nomination of its action plans. All OCC stakeholders have the ability to submit quality team suggestions through an AQIP Intranet site using a process that requires some levels of research and investment by the nominators. These submissions are then reviewed at several points before being referred to the departmental level for consideration and implementation.
- 8P3b O As this process matures, the college will need to monitor the number of submissions that are actually implemented to determine if its goals for stakeholder access and participation are being met. Additionally, it is not clear how leaders develop action plans to address strategies.
- 8P4 S OCC's various departments and schools develop individual mission, vision, and planning documents that are required to be in concert with OCC's overall strategic plan. The Portfolio does not clarify how these subsidiary directions are reviewed and approved to assure that the desired alignment occurs.
- 8P5 S The APC routinely reviews the institution's strategic plan (which sets objectives, measures, and targets) and incorporates findings from the annual environmental scan to determine the extent to which desired outcomes are achieved. These gap analyses are then used to guide further activities. The President's Cabinet may also set priorities and targets.

- OCC is transitioning from a dashboard system that tracked progress achieved in planning and improvement activities. It will now use a multi-level project management system that has the promise of being more streamlined and accessible.
- 8P6 O While the college has created a budget pool for the purposes of advancing continuous quality improvement activities, neither the extent of this resource nor the processes that determine allocation and expenditures are detailed.
- 8P7 O Risk assessment processes are very informal and at a rudimentary stage. OCC has the opportunity to develop a process that will assign risk determination to the appropriate institutional levels and provide a procedure that uses a consistent methodology to assess situations. By standardizing risk assessment, OCC will achieve more reliable results and will be better able to build a consensus that supports those findings.
- 8P8 S OCC gives evidence of a fairly robust system for employee development in its responses to Category Five. That system presumably includes the specific concerns of this Category. The institution has devoted considerable priority and resources to training, staff development, and faculty development. The Portfolio does not clarify how these extensive resources are deployed to address the needs occasioned by change.
- 8R1 O OCC is clearly progressing in its developing efforts to identify, collect, and analyze measures that relate to the effectiveness of its planning systems. It is training teams in data collection and analysis, and it has contracted with a known consultant to provide guidance; however, it does not appear that the institution is able to identify measures for the effectiveness of its planning efforts at this time.
- OCC has invested considerable resources in its planning systems and has created other processes that hinge on the effectiveness of that planning. Moving quickly to develop its measures, apply and analyze those measures, and determine needed improvements will facilitate the continuous improvement process with regard to planning.

- 8R2 S OCC is extensively engaged in its improvement efforts; it has mounted 36 objectives and 103 action projects. 35 quality teams have received training and have initiated projects—33 have completed their work to date. The college cites retention data as it relates to the second year of its Title III grant.
- 8R3 O OCC has not yet identified targets for the next 1-3 years and reports that it will use the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, in part, to identify new action projects. As important as the Feedback Report can be, OCC has many other sources of data, feedback, and insight that should be routinely used to set future targets—especially performance targets keyed to its strategic plan.
- 8R4 O OCC reports that it is comparable to other higher education organizations and asserts that its four-year results (presumably as an AQIP institution) are superior to comparable colleges. However, the institution cites no data or other documentation that may point to these results or provide other nuance to the college’s comparative outcomes in this Category. Such comparison is essential for OCC to gauge its effectiveness, self-assure that its processes are delivering the desired results—and very importantly—to set appropriate targets for improvement.
- 8R5 O The Portfolio indicates neither a process for measuring the effectiveness of deployed planning systems nor results from such systems. As noted in 8R1 above, it is critical that the institution move on this opportunity as soon as possible.
- 8I1 S OCC is making substantial and demonstrable progress in the systemization of its processes for this category. This is well-documented by the sheer number of the 300 employees and staff who have served on quality teams and the 105 employees engaged in developing the Systems Portfolio. OCC’s previous evidence of its extensive training program for those tasked with specific quality improvement responsibilities also verifies that expectations are being met in this area.

8I2 S OCC's adoption of its Shared leadership Model, its extensive investment in leadership and quality improvement training, and its success in engaging faculty and staff in quality improvement activities document a campus culture that will sustain the work and focus that is needed for OCC to excel in this Category. The college's structure and processes for grounding its strategic plan in its mission, vision, and values add additional strength to its capacity to self-target for enhanced performance in planning.

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 Owens 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

- O1a OCC is one the largest comprehensive state community college in Ohio with a current enrollment of 20,425, campuses in Toledo and Findlay, satellite locations, and a large virtual student population. The institution does not have the support of a tax levy and offers the lowest tuition in Ohio.
- O1b OCC offers associate degrees and certificates through the Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Systems, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Technology schools. The institution also offers certificate and non-credit programs through its Workforce and Community Services division.

- O2 OCC has provided its Foundation and its Alumni Relations initiatives with a central leadership structure and has aligned those efforts with the institution’s mission, vision, and goals.
- O3 OCC student and stakeholder expectations focus on securing employment, affordability, credit transfer, and good college/community relationships.
- O4 OCC has 2209 employees comprised of the following: 206 full-time faculty; 466 full-time staff; 90 part-time staff; 1018 adjunct faculty; 102 temporary workers; and 327 student workers. The college is working to increase the minority representation of faculty and staff through a 2009 AQIP action project.
- O5 During 2008, OCC revamped its organizational structure to a shared leadership model that consists of an AQIP Planning Council (APC) and a Quality Council (QC) that collaborate with college departments and various college committees.
- O6 OCC’s strategic plan includes six major initiatives, 36 objectives, and 103 action steps. “Organizational Vitality” is one major strategy and focuses on planning, human resources, facilities, information technology, energy/environment, and diversity.
- O8 OCC is experiencing challenges in the areas of growth requirements and needs, existing facilities updating, and funding for those updates. Other challenges for the institution at the moment include the national and regional economy, loss of jobs, rising energy costs, and competition from career centers, adult education centers, and two- and four-year institutions.
- O9 OCC has developed a significant partnership with the Ohio Coalition of AQIP colleges and Universities to better utilize resources in continuous improvement.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1	S	OCC uses community and student surveys, demographic surveys as well as employees' community involvement to assess community needs. In doing so, OCC reveals a strong capacity to identify the educational needs of those its serves and to develop programs to meet these needs.

- 9P2 O While Advisory committees provide input on department curricula as well as the college's programmatic responsiveness to community and business needs, the Portfolio does not indicate that there is an institution wide process for the establishment and utilization of advisory committees.
- 9P3 O Despite citing some examples of outreach collaborative efforts with some external organizations, there does not appear to be an institutional system in place.
- 9P4 S Despite a standardized competitive bidding requirement, OCC works to build long-term relationships with material and equipment suppliers. There is an expectation for some administrative positions to foster and nurture collaborative relationships with the community.
- 9P5 O OCC has developed an impressive research agenda that will help it prioritize relationships with businesses, the community and educational partners. These inputs are used by college leaders for planning purposes, but the exact processes are unspecified.
- 9P6 S OCC continually surveys all stakeholders and college constituents to assess the ongoing needs of these populations. The institution has over 60 partnerships and agreements in place with external partners.
- 9P7 O OCC is promoting collaboration as a key value and cites quality teams as one vehicle for this collaboration. There is an opportunity for OCC to go beyond espousing the value of collaboration and creating quality teams. Training and rewarding multi-departmental improvements would help assure integration and communication across units.
- 9R1 O OCC surveys students and reports that it frequently surveys its external partners concerning their needs. The response does not indicate what is encompassed in these results, how they are analyzed, or how they are used to improve institutional collaboration.
- 9R2 S OCC cites a series of relationship to document its success in the process of building external relationships. These relationships clearly advance the institution and the opportunities for its students.

- 9R3 O OCC compares the results for its Foundation; however, no other comparisons to other institutions of higher education or other organizations are cited.
- 9I1 O OCC lists a number of initiatives which show the impact of collaboration; however, it would be helpful to show how the process of collaboration has improved and how this process has become systematized.
- 9I2 S The Shared Leadership Model and the continuous improvement effort at OCC create a culture and infrastructure that support collaborative relationships.