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February 21, 2014

David T. Harrison  
President  
Columbus State Community College  
P.O. Box 1609  
550 E. Spring St.  
Columbus, OH 43216-1609

Dear President Harrison:

Enclosed is a copy of Columbus State Community College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. Your Systems Appraisal Team provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's Accreditation Liaison a copy of this report.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution.

We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to [AQIP@hlcommission.org](mailto:AQIP@hlcommission.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary L. Green". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary L. Green  
AQIP Process Administrator

**Systems Appraisal Feedback Report**

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 21, 2014

for

**The Higher Learning Commission**

A Commission of the North Central Association

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## Elements of Columbus State Community College's Feedback Report

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly, the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving widespread institutional attention. Indeed, it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

**Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary:** In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: 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 each AQIP

Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

**Strategic Challenges Analysis:** Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

**AQIP Category Feedback:** The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying and coding 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. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

**Accreditation Issues Analysis:** Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio, with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

**Quality of Report & Its Use:** As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the institution by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state, as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative

that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

## **Reflective Introduction and Executive Summary for Columbus State Community College**

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

*Columbus State has undergone major changes recently including hiring a new president, converting to semesters, and opening a second campus. The college completed a year-long process to revise its mission, vision, and values statements and has committed to a systematic, data-informed focus on student success.*

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

**Category One:** Columbus State has developed the infrastructure to more systematically evaluate student learning, mapping course outcomes to program and general education outcomes, and initiating processes to assess those outcomes, as well as governing structures to act on the data and drive continuous improvement. The college collects data from multiple sources using multiple measures across a range of key stakeholders. The institution may have opportunities to develop a systematic approach to data management and an integrated approach to analysis to aid in evaluating learning support processes.

**Category Two:** Columbus State has launched a number of activities designed to advance Workforce Development and Civic Engagement. The college has an opportunity to further clarify within these broad areas the outcomes the institution seeks to achieve, define relevant metrics to assess performance, and document more systematic processes for designing and managing non-instructional programs. These improvements could strengthen the institution's infrastructure to be a stronger, more agile community partner.

**Category Three:** Columbus State has made several investments in the culture and

infrastructure to support a more systematic approach to understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs, including participation in comprehensive student success programs like Achieving the Dream (AtD) that emphasize analysis of student needs, development of a data warehouse, and participation in college-wide surveys like the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and Great Colleges to Work for (GCTWF). The college has further opportunities to clarify what measures it collects for student and stakeholder satisfaction and its relationship building.

**Category Four:** The college has initiated a number of recent improvements in its processes for valuing people, including expanded committee structures to improve communication and joint decision making, planned leadership and management training, a more robust employee evaluation system, and the use of college-wide employee satisfaction surveys. It is still unclear, however, what measures are in place to ensure these systems are effective. Key performance indicators are established for individual job classifications, but it isn't clear whether similar indicators have been established for key processes in this category. Clarifying these outcomes and aligning data collection with those measures may help to ensure that data collected are more relevant to the outcomes employees hope to see. The portfolio response also appears to be more complete about faculty processes than those related to staff and administrators. An elaboration of these related processes might provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Columbus State ensures the mapping of their skills, credentials, and values to the positions and the institution.

**Category Five:** Columbus State has made several improvements in Leading and Communicating including more efforts at communicating with all employees and strengthening its infrastructure for group decision-making. The college has further opportunities to mature in this area by identifying clear measures of its leading and communication system, clarifying decision-making processes, and expanding its succession planning to include opportunities for staff participation.

**Category Six:** Columbus State has made a number of improvements based on feedback from stakeholders, including changes to its evaluation system in distance education, public safety procedures, and student technology. As it continues its quality journey, the college may want to clarify how it systematically documents its processes, sets performance measures, gains input from a diversity of its stakeholder groups, and directs the data from its measures to appropriate decision-making groups to provide the institution with appropriate and meaningful comparative data to guide continuous institutional learning.

**Category Seven:** Through its participation in data-intense self-study programs like AtD and Foundations of Excellence (FOE), the college has made a substantial commitment to improving its systems for measuring effectiveness. Its work on the data warehouse also indicates a commitment to building an IT infrastructure to support data use. This work may be enhanced by further clarifying some of the processes for data analysis and selecting comparative data, and by defining how it will evaluate the effectiveness of its effectiveness processes. The systems that support high performance may also be improved by regular cycles of evaluation and action.

**Category Eight:** Columbus State is continuing to develop an integrated planning process that helps to align strategies and action plans to its strategic goals. The institution has an opportunity to further enhance its processes by clarifying how long- and short-term strategies are selected to meet goals, how performance targets are determined, how project management fits in the larger planning process, how on-going risks are assessed and integrated into planning, and by which measures it evaluates the effectiveness of its continuous improvement planning processes institution-wide. Clarifying these processes could assist the institution with ensuring the planning process has integrity and is responsive to stakeholder needs.

**Category Nine:** Columbus State has processes designed to create partnerships that help students enter and navigate post-secondary education. Its leadership in several regional planning efforts demonstrates a commitment to collaboration to support its strategic priorities—student success, workforce development, and civic engagement. Clarifying processes around how partnerships are developed, prioritized, and evaluated may help Columbus State in furthering its leadership efforts. The college also has an opportunity to more fully articulate the outcomes of its partnerships and identify relevant measures to further guide continuous improvement.

**Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.**

### **Strategic Challenges for Columbus State Community College**

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities, as well as strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items



may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that Columbus State will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

- Columbus State has a strategic opportunity to strengthen process documentation throughout the portfolio, especially to clarify how processes are systematically linked to performance results and integrated across categories. The college identifies project management as a key method through which it organizes its action plans, evaluates the results of those actions, and ensures alignment and integration of efforts. It is unclear, however, how this method ensures processes are well designed, aligned with stakeholder needs, and integrated across areas of the college. AQIP encourages a process-oriented approach to institutional improvement, so developing a more mature approach to documenting and analyzing processes (i.e., going beyond listed activities) may help the college in its efforts to become more systematic in its work.
- Columbus State participates in national surveys, the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), and has traveled to other colleges as part of its benchmarking efforts; this appears to be an improvement in response to concerns in the last portfolio over benchmarking activity. Further work may be done to support benchmarking efforts, however, by clarifying what criteria and methods are used for selecting sources of comparative data. It was frequently unclear, for example, why particular national surveys or travel sites were selected. Formalizing more of the college's benchmarking processes may help to ensure that sources of comparative data align with key opportunities for outside perspective.
- Columbus State has committed to using data more fully in its decision making. It is participating in national surveys like the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Great Colleges to Work For (GCTWF), and it is participating in data-intense self-study programs like Achieve the Dream (AtD) and Foundations of Excellence (FOE). Processes for data collection continue to be relatively new, however, and opportunities exist to better document how data are collected and analyzed to guide

institutional improvements. In several of the categories, for example, data are provided in the results section that are not relevant to the particular processes covered in those categories. Clarifying the outcomes of key processes, programs and services; identifying appropriate measures for those outcomes; and developing an institutional culture and infrastructure to support regular review and use of data may help the institution to more fully support its organizational learning and continuous improvement.

## **AQIP Category Feedback**

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's 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.** This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education institutions and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 1.

*Columbus State describes its processes for the design, deployment and evaluation of teaching and learning as well-integrated, with regular monitoring, collaborative problem-solving, and analysis of varied data sets. Data include persistence and transfer performance, learning assessment, and validation of the curriculum against current employment needs and industry standards. The college is committed to a systematic, data-driven approach to student learning*

*through its participation in Achieving the Dream (AtD), Foundations of Excellence (FOE), and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).*

**1P1, S.** Columbus State has well-developed, established policies, procedures, and committees to determine and review student learning outcomes based on six general education goals at multiple levels that align with the mission. These goals represent the common objectives for learning and development across the college. The Office of Assessment created the *Assessment for Student Learning Handbook* based on these six goals. A task force, consisting of faculty from all academic areas, developed and reviewed these goals using a literature review, other college and university general education goals, and state and federal regulatory expectations. The Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation and the Human Capacity and Development Office assist faculty in conducting on-going assessments of outcomes for learning and development.

**1P2, S.** Columbus State employs a comprehensive process to determine program learning objectives, which are based on the general education goals, the Ohio Board of Regents Ohio Transfer Module, and Transfer Assurance Guide standards. Faculty develop program outcomes based on input from industry advisory committees, transfer institutions, focus groups, employers, graduates and accrediting agencies. Additionally, academic departments across the college create annual assessment plans, collect data and complete assessment reports throughout the year.

**1P3, S.** Columbus State has a comprehensive process to develop new programs and courses. This process includes completing a market study that indicates the need, forecasts job opportunities, and indicates proximity of similar programs. The formal process also includes articulating course learning outcomes, a rationale for the course, and methods for evaluating student learning. New programs must be approved by the college and the Ohio Board of Regents. Additionally, Columbus State transitioned from academic quarters to semesters in 2012, as was mandated by the Ohio Board of Regents. The development process for new programs and courses are based upon state requirements, the Ohio Transfer Module, and articulation agreements.

**1P4, S.** Columbus State uses a number of mechanisms to ensure programs are responsive to employer and community needs, while ensuring that students meet the programs' learning outcomes. Existing programs are monitored for continued responsiveness through advisory board feedback, and indicators of success such as employment rates and admission rates to advanced degree programs. The primary

mechanism for ensuring these demands are balanced is the three-year program validation process. Examples of Columbus State's responsiveness to design academic programs within its service area include the Dual Enrollment and Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Programs, which are available to high school students.

**1P5, S.** Columbus State determines the preparation required of students for entry into specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning that they will pursue by first reviewing students' test results from the COMPASS and COMPASS ESL exams. Academic advisors in the Advising Services Office aid students by interpreting the test results and helping to select appropriate courses. The college offers the Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) in their preparation to enter college-level courses. The college on occasion will evaluate students' high school or college transcripts as well as military education, community service and applicable employment, and life experiences to determine a student's placement level.

**1P8, S.** Columbus State offers a range of support services across divisions of the College for students who are academically underprepared, such as ABLE for students needing to enhance their readiness for college studies. The math department developed a series of modules that are computer based (Bridge to College Math) and individualized to meet student needs. The Language Institute and the Transitional Workforce Department's Academic Enrichment Program offer additional opportunities for students needing remedial coursework. Additionally, Career Services is used for counseling and for interest and aptitude testing.

**1P9, O.** Columbus State acknowledges an opportunity in its work with CCSSE, AtD, and other initiatives to provide a more systematic approach to detecting and addressing differences in students' learning styles and to enhancing faculty cultural competencies when considering learning styles. Developing a more comprehensive approach, integrated with programs of study, may help students be more informed managers of their own learning.

**1P11, S.** Columbus State uses its *Student Handbook*, course syllabi, and college catalog to document and communicate its expectations to students. Faculty expectations are communicated in the *Faculty Promotion and Tenure Handbook*, the *Policy and Procedure Manual*, and the *Assessment for Student Learning Handbook*. The Faculty Appraisal System documents the value, quality and effectiveness of faculty using several cross-functional committees to review, evaluate and refine effective teaching and

learning. The college offers orientations that are facilitated by the Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation, and faculty are able to participate in grant and committee activities. A pilot study is underway consisting of updates to the faculty mentoring program. Communication across the organization is maintained by sharing of the annual assessment reports via the college assessment website.

**1P12, S.** Columbus State is guided in its selection of course delivery systems by commitment to student access and success. The institution offers a variety of instructional schedules and delivery modalities and employs various practices to ensure its course delivery system is consistent, effective and efficient. Consistency in distance learning courses is ensured through the use of a new common structure based on universal design principles and best practices in online learning. Common standards and procedures are also used for implementing the dual-enrollment program.

**1P14, S.** Columbus State has policies and processes in place to determine programmatic changes and closures. Programs and courses are changed based on licensure requirements, industry needs and transferability, as well as an analysis of graduation rates, employee satisfaction and professional accreditation body recommendations. Courses are discontinued based on changes in articulation and transfer institutions, or other changes that make the course no longer relevant in terms of transmission of required knowledge and skills.

**1P15, O.** Although Columbus State has identified a number of improvements made to better support learners, it is unclear what processes are used to regularly assess those needs, as well as those of faculty. Clarifying the process can help to ensure that learning support needs are met in a timely manner.

**1P16, O.** Columbus State's co-curricular and curricular goals are aligned with core competencies such as critical thinking, effective communication, community awareness, and civic responsibility. Although the college incorporates core competencies into many co-curricular activities including a Student Engagement and Leadership program, Phi Theta Kappa, and a Landscape Club, specific co-curricular development goals are not specified, so it is not clear how they are aligned with these core competencies. There is an opportunity to identify how co-curricular programming aligns with and contributes to curricular learning goals and objectives.

**1P17, O.** Although Columbus State uses course learning outcomes, employer satisfaction and internship surveys, program outcomes, student persistence and retention rates, and grade-point averages to determine whether students have met learning expectations, it is unclear how these indicators determine that students have met degree and certificate expectations. Additionally it is unclear what assessment measures are in place to fully document and validate institutional learning outcomes. Such measures might yield useful data to further inform decision-making and action plans in this area.

**1P18, S.** The assessment process was designed, and is maintained, by a committee of faculty with support from the Office of Assessment for Student Learning, and it has been validated by benchmarking with other community colleges. All program-level student learning objectives are aligned with general education goals and assessed through course-embedded measures. Assessment reports are completed and posted annually to document this process. The annual assessment plan and reports are reviewed by faculty committees and the results are shared with the Academic Council for review and feedback.

**1R1, O.** Columbus State indicates that it collects and analyzes a number of measures of students' learning and development at the course level via faculty-developed annual assessment plans and reporting. However, it is not clear how these course level assessments and their results impact program or institutional outcomes nor how they are tied together. The college has the opportunity to show how the measures address all of the expected learning objectives and to demonstrate how the data are tied to strategic planning and budgeting. By having a consistent process in place, Columbus State may use the assessment data to effect curricular and programmatic change.

**1R2, O.** Data from geography courses are provided, but it is unclear the extent to which general education assessment activities provide a clear understanding of how students are growing in their general education competencies. Shared rubrics for common student learning and development objectives are used to assess course assignments at the departmental level; however, there is an opportunity to explain how reliability of scoring is ensured across programs in order to understand performance results across the college. Columbus State recognizes an opportunity to change its measurement rubric and create measures that will yield more data as it expands the number of general education outcomes that are measured and analyzed for program improvement. As

these processes mature, the comparative trend data that are being collected will be useful in understanding ways to improve student learning.

**1R3, O.** Columbus State compiles data from its courses into a program assessment plan and report, which includes course benchmarks, results, and an action plan for each course within the program. Although this information is beneficial, it is unclear how those results are used for curriculum updates and improvements. Additionally, Columbus State has an opportunity to develop metrics that provide evidence that the students completing programs have acquired the knowledge and skills required to be successful in their chosen career. A more comprehensive assessment in these areas could provide further evidence of performance and inform planning and decision-making.

**1R4, S.** Columbus State reviews a range of evidence collected by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness that includes institutional data; success at transfer institutions; performance on professional licensure exams; and input from the business sector, accrediting bodies, and advisory committees to ensure that students are completing programs, degrees, and certificates with the knowledge and skills required by stakeholders.

**1R5, O.** Columbus State provides data for learning support processes primarily based on usage; however, it is difficult to determine how the College uses the information to make data-informed decisions. The processes and decision making may be clearer if Columbus State showed trended data and described the ways data are used to make corrective actions and set targets for success. Also developing measures of service outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction may help the college better determine the effectiveness of these systems. Inclusion of the CCSSE data may represent one opportunity for evaluating student satisfaction with these services. Developing measures of service outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction may help the college better determine the effectiveness of these processes or systems.

**1R6, S.** Columbus State uses a variety of benchmarking data to compare itself to other higher education institutions, including IPEDS, AtD, CCSSE, and the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) to compare success rates. IPEDS data feedback reports allow the college to look at retention, graduation, and transfer rates. Retention and graduation rates are slightly lower than its benchmarks, so the college is incorporating projects through participation in AtD to support students with financial challenges since Columbus State students seem to be more challenged

economically. Additionally, the college uses data from the CCSSE and is participating in the NCCBP to gain valuable information about how it compares to other participating colleges. In the area of distance learning, the NCCBP showed Columbus State students are below the median in degree completion within a three-year period but students are above the median in transfer rates.

**111, S.** Columbus State has embarked on several improvement projects to help students learn as a result of reviewing its yearly IPEDs reports. Upgrades to laboratories, tutorial and library services have been accomplished. The introduction of Tutor Trac and the employment of Supplemental Instruction peer tutors have resulted in an increase in student achievement. The college's participation in AtD, FOE, and CCSSE, development of two dual-enrollment programs, and the new semester schedule demonstrate a commitment to creating more systematic processes and performance results for guiding future improvements.

**112, O.** Columbus State acknowledges the need to streamline its assessment process to make it more efficient and doable for faculty and allow data to be shared more readily across the college. A new task force composed of different constituencies is searching for an online tool to improve data collection and communication across the college.

**AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.** This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 2.

*Columbus State is committed to education and workforce development in the Central Ohio region. The college's strategic plan has established goals specific to workforce development and civic engagement. Its processes for accomplishing these distinctive objectives are described as ranging from systematic to aligned. Input from local businesses, community and education partners, and other stakeholders are identified as strengths, demonstrated by a 2012 meeting with community and business leaders that led to several partnerships improving support services for students. In addition, benchmarking and further involvement in workforce*



*development are identified by the college as opportunities for growth.*

**2P1, S.** Columbus State has developed four initiatives to assist vulnerable students with needed resources and services to remain in school. To help accomplish these initiatives, an AmeriCorps volunteer was assigned to the Columbus State campus; Mental Health First Aid training was conducted for staff; and the Drug Free Action Alliance planned with a student life team to bring substance abuse prevention, awareness and education to students. In addition, Columbus State is a member of the Central Ohio Compact to help with student transition to college.

**2P2, O.** Although the President's Cabinet develops the non-instructional objectives, which are subsequently approved by the Board, it is unclear how the Cabinet determines which non-instructional objectives to put forth for approval or how other key constituents are engaged in setting the objectives. Clarifying what factors are weighed in these decisions and who contributes may help to demonstrate how these objectives are aligned with the mission and strategic priorities of the college.

**2P3, S.** Media campaigns in local newspapers, magazines, television, and radio are used to share stories on college initiatives. The college uses personal contacts to develop and communicate its initiatives to external stakeholders. Many of the college's employees hold leadership positions in organizations within the community. Columbus State's senior leadership meets regularly with public officials and retains a government relations officer who keeps college leaders informed of governmental activities. Starting in 2011, Columbus State convened the first of two Regional Summits on College Access and Student Attainment with leaders from K-12 school systems, colleges and universities, and other stakeholders in the region. The result was a regional plan to promote college access and student attainment.

**2P4, O.** Columbus State follows project management guidelines to assess and review the appropriateness and value of its non-instructional objectives. An opportunity exists to further define and strengthen this process. Having a consistent, regular process could help the institution evaluate its portfolio of initiatives to determine where best to invest employees' time and college resources.

**2P5, O.** Columbus State does seek input on staff and faculty needs during the regular fiscal year and mid-year budget review process; however, there is an opportunity to provide more information on how the data are gathered beyond through "meeting

opportunities.” Columbus State could benefit from using surveys or needs assessments to create a more formalized process of data collection.

**2P6, O.** Columbus State does not seem to have a formal process identified to utilize data to determine faculty, staff and stakeholder needs in this area. There is an opportunity for the college to establish a more systematic method for regular assessment, data collection, and analysis on faculty and staff needs.

**2R1, O.** Columbus State provides very limited measures to evaluate non-instructional objectives. It is unclear how the action items described—the 25 items associated with the Foundations of Excellence—are related to the objectives and activities in this category. Expanding the use of data already collected to measure and evaluate segmented non-instructional activities may assist the institution with identifying opportunities for improvement that could be used effectively in its decision making and strategic planning processes.

**2R2, O.** While Columbus State appears to have some measures in place for programs like ESLAsC, it does not identify key measures for its non-instructional objectives. Clarifying how performance is evaluated in the areas identified in the category introduction—workforce development and civic engagement—could help the institution affirm whether the data it currently collects are relevant to its non-instructional objectives and whether specific initiatives like ESLAsC are sufficient to achieve the larger institutional goals.

**2R3, O.** Columbus State acknowledges that it is still in the process of setting and collecting metrics to further enhance benchmarking and provide more meaningful comparisons and performance results. The visit to Valencia Community College and Johnson County Community College seemed to provide them with valuable information to move this process forward.

**2R4, O.** Columbus State enhances its relationships with communities and regions it serves through multiple initiatives, for example, its relationship to the EDR-1, LogisticsART, its Biomanufacturing program, open-enrollment courses, and ESL. However, it is not clear how data are collected, used for decision making, or used to assess how each relationship benefits. Further assessment and evaluation of the outcomes could benefit Columbus State in determining the worth and continued success of these initiatives.

**2I1, O.** Columbus State has taken several steps to better address students' needs including hiring two part-time counselors, adding Career Coach software, updating the strategic planning process, and restructuring the Office of Student Life to become the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership (SEaL). Columbus State utilizes the CCSSE survey in career services; however, the college lacks data on whether there is improvement in this area. A systematic process to measure the effectiveness of these new initiatives and to provide empirical evidence could assist the college with developing its continuous quality improvement culture.

**2I2, O.** Columbus State acknowledges it is still working on defining the goals and metrics that will support implementation of its revised mission, values and vision.

**AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.** This category 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 3.

*Columbus State describes having become more systematic since the last appraisal in assessing the needs of their diverse students and other stakeholders. Several offices are reported as engaging in student needs assessment (e.g., Library), and these processes continue to become more systematic. Process improvements include participation in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Achieving the Dream (AtD) quality improvement initiative, and a more systematic deployment of institutional surveys to evaluate student satisfaction. Data are also used to make improvements, including an intrusive advising intervention, a First-Year Experience course, a transfer center, and the redesign of a developmental math sequence.*

**3P1, S.** Columbus State collects data on student needs within service areas and at an institutional level through the CCSSE. The college recently established an Office of Institutional Effectiveness and launched development of a data warehouse to help in synthesizing various data reports into a more systematic process.

**3P2, S.** Columbus State has instituted a number of initiatives to help build and maintain

relationships with students including a registration workshop, the Block Program offered in Developmental Education, AmeriCorps College Coaches and the use of social media. Academic advising, faculty and library services also offer ongoing support to students. Surveys and focus groups are used to ensure students' needs are being met.

**3P3, S.** Columbus State's nine-member Board of Trustees is made up of leaders from many sectors throughout the region it serves. Advisory committees, participation in Columbus 2020, the college's leadership in the establishment of the Central Ohio Compact, establishment of a Transfer Center, partnerships with high schools and transfer institutions within the state of Ohio, and the Center for Workforce Development and the Transitional Workforce Department assist in Columbus State's ability to act upon changing needs of its key stakeholders.

**3P4, O.** Columbus State has the foundation for building and maintaining key stakeholder relationships and may benefit from building on this foundation to develop further systematic processes for ensuring continuous improvement in these key stakeholder relationships.

**3P6, O.** Columbus State has policies and processes for collecting, analyzing, and managing student complaints as well as communicating actions. All complaints are reviewed annually and individual departments or service areas discuss how to address the complaints. It is unclear, however, how the individual complaints are communicated back to the student/stakeholder with some sort of resolution. In addition, the process for other key stakeholders is less clear. Providing such clarity might ensure that these constituents' needs are understood and addressed.

**3R1, O.** Columbus State lists the Columbus State Graduate Follow-Up Survey, administration of the CCSSE, and data generated from participation in the Foundations of Excellence (FOE) as instruments used to track student and stakeholder satisfaction. It is unclear what specific measures have been identified through these survey instruments and data-driven improvement programs. Identifying a set of key measures, and sharing that data as part of the portfolio, may help the institution assess how well it is performing in key areas.

**3R2, O.** Student satisfaction results from the 2010 and 2013 CCSSE indicate the lowest areas of satisfaction in career counseling, working with classmates outside of class and community-based projects and these results have not changed from 2010 to 2013.

There is an opportunity to specify how the data are being used for improvement in these areas. Tutoring was one area that did improve from 2010 to 2013 which reflects the college's commitment to upgrade and expand tutoring services as part of a Title III grant. Targeted student satisfaction surveys have identified other areas in need of improvement but no data have been included or comparisons provided to indicate improvement.

**3R3, O.** Columbus State allows for a student payment plan, the Starfish Early Alert System, as well as focus groups and fishbone groups under the AtD leadership team. However, these data-gathering measurement tools are not performance results. The institution has an opportunity to share the results of these measurement tools.

**3R4, O.** Performance results for stakeholder satisfaction are provided by surveys from the Testing and Talent Assessment Center (TTAC), but it is not clear how these results are used for improvement. For example, utilizing a larger, randomized sample size for TTAC results may offer additional insight into stakeholder satisfaction. Columbus State also mentions results from a Title III grant but these results are not provided. The college states that it uses renewed funding and dual enrollment participation numbers as indicators of stakeholder satisfaction; the college may have an opportunity to collect and analyze additional data that more directly measures stakeholder satisfaction to complement these indirect measures.

**3R5, O.** Data are collected and analyzed to measure the effectiveness of the intrusive counseling intervention. Based on the other information provided, however, it is unclear what other data are being collected and analyzed related to building relationships with key stakeholders. There is an opportunity to present performance results that more completely represent this area.

**3R6, O.** While Columbus State has identified the fact that it can benchmark with other institutions through its participation in CCSSE, FOE, and AtD, the results of these comparisons are not provided. Sharing these results may provide insight on how the college performs relative to other institutions.

**3I1, O.** Columbus State has launched several initiatives designed to better serve students; these initiatives were based on insights gathered by cross-functional teams' analysis of FOE and CCSSE data. While Columbus State is committed to data-informed decision making, it is not always clear how data are chosen, whether the samples are

random in their surveys, or whether this data is being implemented over time. As the college collects more data, it will have the opportunity to do more trend and longitudinal analyses which may be informative. Participation in student-success initiatives like AtD could provide additional data for decision-making and improvements. Columbus State also recognizes the opportunity to assess other areas such as faculty needs and student engagement.

**3I2, O.** Columbus State does not provide information on how its culture and infrastructure assist in determining specific processes and setting targets for improvement. The college might benefit from developing systematic and aligned processes to make improvements and support its culture of assessment and accountability. Participation in the Central Ohio Compact and AtD could assist Columbus State in building upon its processes and culture.

**AQIP Category 4: Valuing People.** This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 4.

*Columbus State describes many of its processes for valuing people as moving toward aligned. The college has comprehensive programs to recruit, hire, retain, and develop its employees, and uses Program for Employee Recognition Founded on Opportunities, Results and Measures (PERFORM), a robust employee evaluation process that helps to align individual faculty and staff professional development goals with the college mission, vision, and values. The college has increased faculty and staff involvement in decision making through faculty committees and a Staff Advisory Council. The college has also begun using the Great Colleges to Work for (GCTWF) and other national surveys to solicit employee feedback; it has made several improvements to its internal communications processes based on those results.*

**4P1, S.** Columbus State uses internal and external data sources to identify human resource needs across all areas including labor market trends, job and position

classification systems for staff, and credential guidelines for faculty hiring. The college also references the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* to ensure a common set of expectations across position classifications. Position descriptions are reviewed annually by supervisors and Human Resources personnel to ensure required skills and credentials are up to date. The College sets credential guidelines for faculty which meet or exceed those required by the Ohio Board of Regents and program-level accreditation bodies.

**4P2, S.** Columbus State uses hiring committees for all full-time faculty and senior administrative positions. Hiring committee members receive training in behavioral interviewing and Human Resources uses Developmental Dimension International (DDI) Targeted Selection tools to develop interview guides for each position. Faculty search committee considerations include the candidates' love of teaching, classroom experience, and contributions to the discipline. Committees also often require a teaching demonstration as part of the interview process. Adjunct faculty must meet the same credential requirements as full-time faculty which includes meeting or exceeding state and disciplinary accreditation guidelines. Guidelines defined by the faculty union contract and interview guides are also used by hiring committees. Reference and credential checks are conducted by the Human Resources Department.

**4P3, S.** Columbus State uses social media and its website as primary modes to advertise and recruit prospective applicants. Columbus State uses consistent processes for recruiting employees that include efforts to reach a diverse pool of qualified candidates, and for retaining employees that include competitive compensation, health care benefits, tuition waivers, and on-going professional development. The college uses an appraisal process for faculty and another process, PERFORMS, to appraise the accomplishments and goals that are established for staff members. These appraisal processes encourage employee participation and achievement of professional and personal development goals that are tied to the master and strategic plans of the institution.

**4P4, S.** Columbus State orients employees to the mission, history, and values through its employee handbook, an on-boarding program, on-going workshops, and orientation programs specific to academic program areas. New employees receive a *Faculty Handbook* and participate in institutional orientations. All academic departments provide mentoring and training for new full-time and adjunct faculty. Faculty have the option to

participate in online sessions via Blackboard. Adjunct instructors participate in a three-hour face-to-face orientation session, and lead instructors or program coordinators serve as mentors for adjunct faculty members.

**4P5, S.** Columbus State has processes in place to plan for changes in faculty demand, staff, and administrative personnel. The college is also in the process of creating a comprehensive leadership development program and training HR representatives in a strategic planning workforce process. The college maintains a phased retirement program to allow long-time employees to train successors. Faculty Fellow positions were created to allow faculty to be partially or fully reassigned from teaching to fill administrative roles.

**4P6, S.** Columbus State conducts faculty and staff appraisals which are tied directly to the college's strategic plans and goals. The college offers flexible and alternative work arrangements. Employees' concerns are reviewed and their feedback is encouraged during forums and national and local surveys such as the Great Colleges To Work For (GCTWF) survey. An example of this is the Board of Trustees' recent approval of a policy on telecommuting which is being piloted in Information Technology.

**4P7, S.** Columbus State adheres to federal laws and state guidelines established by the Ohio Ethics Commission. Yearly independent audits are performed for review of the Transaction Class Document which shares the college's internal process for major transactions. The college also conducts internal audit functions to review processes and to segregate duties and procedures in areas of the college. The college has policies and procedures in place for defining ethical practices in areas like fiscal oversight, conflict of interest, and non-discrimination. The college also maintains an Institutional Review Board for reviewing research with human subjects. Columbus State ensures ethical practices through orientation and annually, all employees are required to read and sign for verification a Conflict of Interest and Nepotism disclosure form. Employee orientation and departmental sessions provide additional ethics training.

**4P8, S.** The training, learning, and development needs of Columbus State faculty, staff and administrators are systematically addressed through robust interrelated processes. The ADDIE model (assess, design, develop, implement and evaluate) for designing employee training and development programs is being utilized, and feedback provided on the reaction, learning, behavior, and results of training is gathered and used to make improvements. In addition, the Human Capacity Development (HCD) section of the



Human Resources Department uses a consultation model that includes strengths assessments and employee development courses to provide employees additional individual training support.

**4P9, S.** Columbus State offers a variety of training and development opportunities for both staff and faculty through HCD. Faculty development support includes a full-time Faculty Development Program Coordinator, an Adjunct Professional Development program, the Adjunct Advanced Leadership Program, and Academic On-Boarding and Renewal Workshops offered for faculty and staff. Employees are required to document professional development goals annually. Each employee of the college develops professional and personal goals to align with the college's master and strategic plans. The college recognizes the importance in developing and offering continuous training for its employees to allow them to make contributions throughout their time spent at the college. Selected training is offered via workshops, on-line modules by Columbus State's Learning Channel on YouTube, attendance at professional conferences, and by assessments of the results for employees' professional and personal development goals.

**4P10, S.** Annual appraisals for faculty are based on categories aligned with college goals and with the college's service values. Employees and managers work together in defining on-going key performance indicators for the position and setting annual professional development goals. Columbus State's faculty evaluation system for full-time faculty includes student evaluation, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and chair evaluation. Department chairs review the appraisals and meet with each faculty member. Student evaluation and classroom observations are used to evaluate adjunct faculty. The PERFORMs is a comprehensive approach used for full-time, non-bargaining unit staff and administrators that includes key performance indicators (KPIs), formal and informal coaching, self-review and manager review. Academic administrators use a performance management tool that aligns with competencies identified by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

**4P11, S.** Columbus State has a range of reward, recognition, and awards programs in place. Employee recognition systems include annual Quality Team Awards competitions, Distinguished Teaching Awards, Distinguished Full Professor Awards, Full-time and Part-time Staff Employee of the Month awards and annual service awards. These recognition and award programs reinforce high performance, alignment with strategic

priorities and commitment to continuous quality improvement. Multiple employee groups are involved in managing the processes.

**4R1, O.** While the college has several mechanisms for collecting data on employee-related processes, it is unclear what measures are used to assess their effectiveness in this category. Having clearly defined measures may help to ensure that processes and instruments used provide the right data to inform continuous improvement.

**4R2, O.** While the college provides some results for individual programs, there is an opportunity to more systematically clarify and provide trended results for key measures related to the core processes described in 4P1-4P13. Providing a more systematic analysis of the data, such as using comparable results by faculty, administrators, and staff in areas targeted for improvement, may help the institution identify key strengths and opportunities. Although the institution uses a multi-method, multi-measures approach to data collection related to valuing people, and presents findings in this portfolio, Columbus State has an opportunity to integrate the data to more fully understand trends and use the results to further inform evidence-based systemic changes.

**4R3, O.** The portfolio references how individual employee goals are aligned through PERFORMS and annual goal setting; however evidence of employee productivity and effectiveness is not provided and is not linked to indicate how the effectiveness of faculty, staff and administration is able to support Columbus State in achieving its goals. The current process appears to evaluate effectiveness individually with one person's goals. Identifying ways to aggregate this data or to evaluate the system as a whole may help the institution learn whether its processes for encouraging productivity are effective across the college or across particular employee groups.

**4R4, O.** While Columbus State appears to have a number of processes in place for comparing its performance to other organizations, the portfolio encourages the institution to share those results. Results of these bench-marking activities are not provided.

**4I1, O.** Columbus State has made several improvements in Valuing People which include expanding communication opportunities, offering flexible and alternative work arrangements, revising the union contract hiring procedures and expanding opportunities for adjuncts, establishing faculty fellow positions, developing HR consulting and hiring maps, and restructuring the College's shared governance process between the

Academic Council and the Policy Council. However, an opportunity exists to address the extent to which processes and performance results regarding Valuing People are systematic and comprehensive in nature.

**4I2, O.** Although Columbus State indicates several pathways for input into improving and setting targets in this category, it is unclear how these pathways then lead to selection of improvement processes. Understanding such may help to ensure that relevant targets are determined and considered in planning and budgeting. An in-depth description of how the culture and infrastructure at Columbus State help it select processes to improve and set targets for improved performance would assist in determining if the results have been achieved.

**AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating.** This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 5.

*Columbus State describes its process as moving from systematic to aligned in the area of leading and communicating. The college uses a principle-based approach to leadership and a project management approach to implementing decisions. The college follows a shared governance model, and committee structures reflect the college's commitment to employee input in decision making. Communication is accomplished through a variety of formal and informal mechanisms, including committees, an online newsletter, surveys, monthly forums, and college-wide in-service days. The college has updated its strategic planning process, completing phase I that updated the mission, values, and vision. Phase II is underway and will involve the identification of specific, measurable goals that align to its mission, values, and vision.*

**5P1, S.** Columbus State has embraced a two-phase strategic planning process to update the mission, values, and vision and to develop measurable goals for future assessment. Phase I of the strategic plan began in autumn of 2011. The process started

with a bottom-up approach using departmental brainstorming sessions that progressed and became recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees. A consulting firm was contracted to conduct research and to assist in the coordination of the process. The final statements were approved by the President and the Board of Trustees in January, 2013. Phase II of the process is currently underway and will identify specific, measurable goals based on the results from Phase I.

**5P2, O.** Columbus State reports that resource allocation is aligned with strategic goals and that integrative planning ensures that annual budgeting reflects the college's priorities. A number of examples are provided of work that required integrative planning or that supported the college's mission including crafting a master plan, switching to semesters, seeking reaffirmation of accreditation, joining the Foundations of Excellence (FOE) and Achieving the Dream (AtD) initiatives, and reorganizing the Office of Student Affairs. There is an opportunity to clarify the processes that ensure that leaders set directions that are aligned with mission, vision, and values.

**5P3, S.** Columbus State interacts with key stakeholders and relies on the results of national surveys and focus groups to understand the needs and expectations of current and potential students, and employers. The college conducts research and continuous outreach with its stakeholders to assess their needs.

**5P4, S.** Columbus State is a leading educational resource in the Central Ohio region and develops innovative learning environments in a variety of communities. The Preferred Pathways program provides students with guaranteed admission to OSU, the Dual Enrollment program allows high school students opportunities to take college courses at reduced tuition rates within their home schools, and the AtD initiative helps the college develop evidence-based programming for student success.

**5P5, S.** Columbus State's shared governance model consists of the Policy and Faculty Councils which have standing committees and ad hoc teams to address policy and procedure matters and to make recommendations to the full council membership which includes the Chief Academic Officer. The Board of Trustees is responsible for adopting policy and the President is responsible for adopting procedures and making operational decisions. The college also has labor management agreements that must be considered in decision making and policy/procedure changes.

**5P6, O.** Columbus State uses information gathered from its Master Planning process and cites the AtD initiative as an example of using data, information, and performance results in its decision-making process. It is not clear from the two examples provided, however, how Columbus State uses data, information, and its performance results in the decision-making process. The college has an opportunity to go beyond description and indicate how this information is utilized.

**5P7, S.** The President has made great efforts to ensure that communication occurs across the college through individual and group meetings, and regularly scheduled monthly meetings with employees to solicit input and sharing. Meetings are streamed live for viewing by employees who are unable to attend.

**5P8, S.** Leaders at Columbus State communicate a shared mission, vision, and values that deepen and reinforce characteristics of high performance organizations by using a shared governance model and a Strategic Planning Committee which includes participation by all employees. The President's Cabinet meets weekly and communicates back to faculty and staff via First Wednesday gatherings, department meetings, and by using an online employee newsletter, *Update*.

**5P9, S.** The shared governance structure at Columbus State encourages, develops, and strengthens opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators to participate in leadership roles and initiatives at the college. The Policy and Faculty Councils, and Staff Advisory Council provide communication and opportunities for input while sharing knowledge, skills, and best practices. Faculty leadership opportunities are offered through the tenure and promotion process and the Faculty Fellows program. Best practices are recognized through Continuous Quality Improvement Team Awards which recognize individual and team accomplishments.

**5P10, O.** Columbus State is currently developing a comprehensive plan for leadership succession and is assisting faculty and staff in building their portfolios to become viable candidates for future opportunities. The program will have three tracks: Aspiring Leaders, Emerging Leaders, and Accomplished Leaders. The college has a great opportunity to implement this plan with processes that ensure the institution can move forward as its leadership changes.

**5R1, O.** Columbus State is beginning to measure its results for leading and communicating by collecting and analyzing data collected from the FOE, the GCTWF

survey, college forums, the CCSSE, and CCSFE but it is not evident what measures within these surveys and self-study frameworks will be used to gather results on leading and communicating. It is also unclear how these data are analyzed and utilized by the leadership to make decisions.

**5R2, O.** Using the results from the GCTWF survey and a follow-up internal survey, the college was able to make improvements in its internal communications. There is an opportunity to present the results that led to these improvements. A more comprehensive set of results including all aspects of this category may inform the institution about its successes and areas for continued improvements.

**5R3, OO.** The college reports some comparison of results with other institutions, using data collected from the FOE and CCSSE that led to the development of the first-year student experiences courses and measurements for benchmarking on “Student Effort” and “Student-Faculty Interaction.” However, it is unclear how this information pertains to the college’s processes for Leading and Communicating.

**5I1-5I2, O.** Columbus State has recently made improvements to its internal communications process and acknowledges that it seeks new avenues to continuously improve its communications. The new mission, vision, and values, the shared governance structure, as well as current activities/initiatives are necessary to develop platforms for institutional effectiveness (leading and communicating) and student success. However, the information that is provided and the data that have been gathered are very recent, making it difficult for the college to recognize improvements.

Columbus State is to be commended for its efforts to improve internal communication; however, it is also not clear as to how this information is used to set targets for improvement nor how this results in more effective leading and communicating. The college may further benefit by building into its improvement process, mechanisms for assessing effectiveness by pre-setting targets for key performance indicators, to indicate how changes are impacting the college’s efforts in Leading and Communicating.

Tracking such indicators may assist the college in identifying both best practices and areas in need of continued improvement.

**AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations.** This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can

thrive. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 6.

*Columbus State's master planning process has resulted in a comprehensive plan that focuses operations on student success. Technology support has been enhanced through the use of a help desk and multiple computer commons with on-site support for students. Stewardship of financial resources has been addressed through improvements like the implementation of an in-house assessment for online learning. Areas like Career Services, the College Safety Council, and Disability Services and Behavioral Intervention have used data to enhance their support of student success. Through these improvements, the college believes it is moving from systematic to aligned in the maturity of its operations.*

**6P1, S.** Columbus State uses a variety of measures to identify the support service needs of its students and key stakeholders which include in-house surveys, the CCSSE, *The Chronicle's* GCTWF survey, K-12 districts, the Central Ohio Compact, partnerships with various educational entities, the Workforce Development team, and institutional forum communications. The Workforce Development team has partnered with industry and community leaders to develop training programs to meet the needs of employers in the region. Columbus State continues to host forums which are open to the public where information is shared and feedback is collected.

**6P2, S.** Columbus State identifies the administrative support service needs of its faculty, staff, and administration through a variety of feedback mechanisms including national surveys, advisory groups, and college-wide councils. These councils are elected groups of full-time employees of the college who meet monthly to review, evaluate and make recommendations regarding college operations.

**6P3, S.** Columbus State's comprehensive processes are in place for supporting key practices that contribute to safety, including an Environmental Design program and the RAVE emergency text notification program for employees and students. Safety, security, and emergency procedures are communicated through the Police Department's website. Additionally, the campus police assisted the Campus Safety Committee in developing and providing training sessions to faculty and staff. All of the safety procedures are

available in the *Policy and Procedures Manual* and are discussed during staff orientations.

**6P4, O.** Columbus State indicates that its Division of Student Affairs is responsible for management of most of the college's student support services. These services seem to be well maintained and organized. However, it is not clear how administrative and organizational support services are managed on a day-to-day basis and what departments/divisions are responsible for this management. Clarifying these processes may help to ensure that the needs identified are addressed in employees' daily work.

**6P5, S.** Columbus State utilizes electronic means as its primary source for documenting support services information. The college *Policies and Procedures Manual*, *Student Handbook*, and *College Catalog* are housed on the college website. An employee intranet is currently also being employed to house forms for internal use and information regarding current policy/procedure changes and updates. A semi-weekly online publication *Update* is also in place for regular communication with college employees. To promote innovation and empowerment, the college requires all departments to submit information on quality improvement (CQI) projects that are underway.

**6R1, O.** Columbus State utilizes a multi-method, multi-measures approach to data collection and presents some institutional and comparative findings in this portfolio; however, it is not clear which measures have been identified within the national surveys as performance indicators for the areas described in this category. The institution has an opportunity to clarify how its different measures and data-collection tools constitute a basis for supporting evidence-based improvements in its support services.

**6R2, O.** Based on the results from several surveys, Columbus State renovated parts of the library and made improvements in its IT support on campus. It is still unclear, however, as to the strategy that is used to collectively measure the performance for student support service processes. The college may also benefit by developing target levels as goals for performance results.

**6R3, O.** Columbus State describes recent improvements in enrollment services and its development of the Columbus State Course Evaluation System for course evaluation. However, it is unclear whether the institution is performing at a level deemed desirable. Without trend data and targets, it is difficult to ascertain if the results presented are favorable. An opportunity exists to establish targets and trend data to support, monitor



and improve administrative processes. In addition, sharing results of administrative support services may help the institution assess whether its services are meeting stakeholders' needs.

**6R4, S.** Columbus State has taken many steps to improve stewardship of its financial and other resources. The college has implemented cost-saving initiatives to control office supplies, increased mail delivery efficiency, used a position management tool to manage payroll funding, and adjusted hours of operation to align in-person and online support service hours to the times students most need access. The college has also taken many steps to improve safety for students and employees through its newly restructured Police Department and RAVE program.

**6R5, O.** Columbus State indicates that results from the CCSSE student satisfaction survey show that they are slightly behind other colleges in "Support for Learners" and they recognize this as an opportunity for improvement; however the college could benefit from identifying other results from measures listed in Figure 6R1. While, the institution has not been involved in AtD long enough to gather valuable comparative data, through its new AtD program activities it has the opportunity to utilize performance measurements that provide appropriate and meaningful comparative data to guide and inform improvement efforts.

**6I1, O.** Columbus State has made several recent improvements in supporting organizational operations, however, the overall strategy for the design of these processes and the methods that were used to implement the processes is still unclear. Opportunities exist to develop a comprehensive and systematic process of gathering performance results for supporting institutional operations. Using performance results to inform institutional improvements may assist the College with becoming more systematic and comprehensive in its evaluation and assessment of processes that could be used to drive decision-making.

**6I2, O.** Columbus State's shared governance model is helping improve the culture and infrastructure in Supporting Organizational Operations; however it appears that students and alumni are not represented within the governance model. It is unclear whether processes are in place for these groups to review measures of current performance and set target measures for improvement. In addition, the shared governance model in place affords active input from faculty, staff, administrators, and Board members within the institution.

**AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness.** This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 7.

*Columbus State is developing the infrastructure to support the collection, management, and distribution of data, including regular feedback instruments (e.g., CCSSE and the GCTWF), benchmarking, an Operational Data Store (ODS), a College Scorecard, and a project management methodology that identifies key performance indicators and needed data. The college notes a range of process maturity levels related to measuring its effectiveness, but reports getting more systematic in data collection and use. The college is committed to a culture of data-driven decision making, as demonstrated by its participation in Achieving the Dream (AtD) and the Foundation of Excellence (FOE) programs. Opportunities may exist, however, to demonstrate further how data are used in driving improvements.*

**7P1, S.** Columbus State relies upon data gathered through their Master Plan project, cost analysis of effectiveness, and TutorTrac. The college has established an Office of Institutional Effectiveness and uses ZogoTech software to support its development of a data warehouse which will assist the college in analyzing and sharing data and in making decisions on future goals related to the changing needs of students. Additionally, data are shared with the college during in-service days.

**7P2, O.** Columbus State provided several examples that indicate they had utilized data to make specific improvements. However, this information does not indicate the systematic processes the college uses to select, manage and distribute data for its improvement efforts. Clarifying these processes may help to ensure that data needs are met and the data going into these systems are valuable.

**7P3, S.** Columbus State uses project management (PM) methodologies to determine the needs of its departments and units related to the collection, storage, and accessibility of data and performance information. The usage of PM provides the college with a common language for planning and developing project proposals. Columbus State used

Team Dynamix (PM) software to implement the Switch to Semester, to develop its Master Plan, to prepare for its reaffirmation for accreditation, and in its work with the AtD initiative. The [project team works with IT and Institutional Effectiveness to create plans for the collection and distribution of data when data are not already available. In addition, the institution continuously reviews and assesses its classroom spaces by collecting feedback from faculty, staff and students; articulating classroom design standards; and planning for future classroom renovations.

**7P4, S.** Columbus State has been utilizing the College Scorecard to track progress on strategic goals established by its Board of Trustees in July of 2008. Additionally, the Scorecard was expanded to monitor progress toward attainment of Ohio Board of Regents performance measures. The information from the College Scorecard is being posted to the college's intranet and printed annually in the college's *Data Handbook* which is available on the college website for public dissemination. The college is currently in the process of developing a data warehouse that will include functionality to replace the College Scorecard.

**7P5, O.** While Columbus State provides several good examples of efforts to benchmark performance through participation in the CCSSE, the NCCBP, and AtD, it does not explain what criteria and methods are used for selecting sources of comparative data. Clarifying and formalizing the methods used to select sources of comparative data may help to ensure that selected sources are valuable.

**7P6, O.** The project management methodology is used to ensure alignment across the organization; however, it is unclear exactly how this process works. Providing greater clarity in this area may help to ensure such alignment and identify potential gaps.

**7P7, S.** Columbus State utilizes the Information Technology Department, business processes, and a number of validation activities to ensure accuracy, reliability, and security of its information.

**7R1-R3, O.** It is unclear whether Columbus State has identified measures for its Measuring Effectiveness systems. Examples of measures and results for college operations like support for learners are provided, but not for the systems that support data-guided decision making. Defining measures of effectiveness in this area may help the institution evaluate whether its efforts to improve data-guided decision making (e.g., creating a data warehouse to provide decentralized access to a consistent set of results)

are making a difference. In addition, providing comparative internal and external data may facilitate a deeper understanding of the college's results in this category and assist the college with understanding the effectiveness of its information and knowledge management processes and systems. Some sources of comparative data are mentioned; however, the processes utilized to identify specific data elements for comparison are not presented in detail, and it is not clear how or why these data resources were selected. A more thorough discussion of the performance results in this category might facilitate a shared understanding of the college's current status and inform future plans.

**711, O.** Columbus State recognized the need to develop a unified plan for data reporting, collection, storage, and retrieval and hired Campus Works, Inc. in a consultant capacity. Information provided from this project resulted in improvements within the Information Technology Department. The college also recognized that participation in several data collection opportunities such as CCSSE, FOE, and NCCBP would provide critical and useful data. While this is commendable, there is no detailed description of how this information has been utilized to improve and/or establish systematic processes for measuring effectiveness. Clarifying how these activities constitute a more integrated approach may help to demonstrate a more systematic approach to identifying and evaluating improvements.

**712, O.** Columbus State provides examples of activities or projects that have been initiated or improved. However, there is no evidence of the processes utilized to arrive at the development or implementation of these activities or projects, nor how targets are set for improved results. The institution has the opportunity to outline how it creates this culture and infrastructure through connecting it to specific data collection and analysis. Linking performance results related to a desired target, longitudinal trends, or comparison measures could assist the college with systematic identification of performance gaps for future improvement initiatives.

**AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement.** This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve

these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 8.

*Columbus State is committed to a culture of evidence, striving to integrate their continuous improvement activities. The college uses cross-functional groups to analyze data and encourage employee input into decision making. It also uses project management to organize its continuous improvement activities. Each improvement project includes a project charter that identifies the sponsors, summarizes the project, identifies the proper leadership, and details the desired results. Data collected from the planning process are stored in the TeamDynamix database.*

**8P1, S.** Columbus State created its first College Scorecard, aligned its college goals to University System of Ohio outcomes, prioritized and funded college projects to facilitate completion of established goals and implemented the PERFORMS model in which employees develop individual goals that support goals set by the college. The college also developed an integrated planning manual and planning cycle to complement and support its planning processes.

**8P2, O.** In 2011, short- and long-term strategies were advanced by the new Columbus State President, who assisted the institution with embarking on a comprehensive process to update its strategic plan. However, it is currently unclear how these processes are used to select long- and short-term strategies and how those processes are evaluated for currency and relevancy. Clarifying these processes could assist the College with ensuring the process has integrity and is responsive to stakeholder needs.

**8P3, O.** Columbus State has undergone a number of recent changes that affect how key action plans are developed including adopting project management for continuous improvement and creating college-wide faculty committees. However, it is unclear how these processes tie in and support institution-wide strategies. There is an opportunity to clarify how these new processes work with the integrated planning process adopted in 2008-2009 and how all the processes work together to develop key action plans.

**8P4, S.** Columbus State aligns planning processes across the college's various levels through departmental and divisional proposals which align with college goals. The Cabinet prioritizes the proposals and the Board approves and funds the proposals. Project charters outlining specific action steps, timelines and resources are created for approved projects.

**8P5, O.** Columbus State has developed a comprehensive strategic planning process. The Board of Trustees accepted a new mission, values statement, and three overarching college goals. The college acknowledges the opportunity exists to develop these goals. The goal of Student Success will be led by the college's AtD team which is currently working on identifying metrics to be measured. The President has established this same planning process for the workgroups addressing the goals of workforce Development and Civic Engagement. The institution may also want to define objectives, and develop a comprehensive process to evaluate the effectiveness the implemented goals and programs have on the institution.

**8P6, S.** Columbus State utilized a phased approach to assure physical presence and resources are well positioned for the future. Furthermore, the institution links strategy selection and action plans, while taking into account levels of current resources and future needs through its strategic action plan and long-range facilities in a Board-led Master Plan process in which the initial phase of the plan is being prepared for submission to the State of Ohio for capital funds allocation consideration. During the annual budget process, non-operational budgets are developed and resources allocated according to their alignment with prioritized goals established by the Cabinet.

**8P7, O.** While the project management process identifies risks associated with particular initiatives, it is unclear how the college anticipates non-project-based risks and integrates this information into its planning processes. Clarifying this part of the planning system will help to ensure operational risks are anticipated.

**8P8, S.** Columbus State's project management (PM) process methodology ensures employee development as the process demands a work breakdown structure that assigns duties, responsibilities and accountability by each project team member. Employee development needs related to projects are assessed through the project management process while non-project needs are assessed through annual performance reviews. Each employee is encouraged to develop new skills, and department budgets contain funds to support training opportunities. With the implementation of the PERFORMs model, performance outcomes that relate to meeting college goals are defined in individual employee's planning guides.

**8R1-8R3, O.** Columbus State states that it uses information housed in the TeamDynamix database to measure effectiveness of planning processes and refers to examples such as the switch to semesters, the renovation of the library and the

implementation of a document management system. However, it is unclear what measures the college collects and analyzes regarding the effectiveness of its planning processes. There is an opportunity for Columbus State to identify the specific measures it collects and analyzes regularly to ensure the effectiveness of planning processes across the college. In addition, establishing and setting targets is important to assist college leaders to reassess priorities and realistically evaluate what levels of support are needed to reach acceptable levels of performance. Also, comparative performance results related to the FOE are referred to but not included.

**8R4, O.** Comparative data on growth rates of distance learning are provided; however, comparative performance results are not provided. Providing results may help to demonstrate whether processes in this category are effective.

**8R5, O.** Through its AQIP participation, Columbus State has provided examples on how it engages in number of action projects and reports on the progress made. For example, all departments are asked to submit a summary of continuous quality improvement activities being conducted in their department, which has augmented the culture of continuous improvement on campus. While this is important, there is no documented evidence that their system for planning continuous improvement is effective. Capitalizing on the efforts and resources of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the college may consider how best to represent results to more fully demonstrate progress in this area.

**8I1, O.** Columbus State is making progress in this category. While these initiatives and progress are to be commended, there is not much information provided to indicate how systematic and comprehensive the college processes and performance results for planning continuous improvement have become. Identifying additional linkages and alignments of its strategic initiatives and AQIP categories may enhance the institution's culture of quality and support its continuous improvement efforts.

**8I2, S.** Columbus State is making progress in moving toward a culture of evidence since the last portfolio. However, it is not clear how the college selects processes for improvement or sets targets to measure the results that might indicate improvement or additional areas needing attention. The institution may have the opportunity to leverage the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the PM process to articulate how it selects goals and performance targets to advance a continuous improvement process in order to further enable a shared ethos of and infrastructure for planning, resource utilization, evidence-based changes, and rapid response.

**AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships.** This category examines the institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution accomplishing its mission. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, and building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Columbus State for Category 9.

*Columbus State is involved in a number of initiatives that sustain and help build collaborative relationships including developing a regional approach to educational partnerships, partnering with the national network for Pathways to Prosperity (PTP), and joining the Achieving the Dream (AtD) and Foundations of Excellence (FOE) programs. The college has also enhanced internal communication through the addition of new cross-functional committees and "First Friday" meetings with faculty and staff. The college identifies its processes for incoming and outgoing students as mature. It is improving its capacity to work with data, to benchmark its performance with other groups like the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and the National Internship and Co-op Study, and it has begun visiting peer community colleges to compare processes. The college also uses a compression planning methodology to develop more formal processes for creating partnerships.*

**9P1, S.** Columbus State has developed a number of partnerships with K-12 schools, the Educational Services Center (ESC) and Ohio's Office of Workforce Development. Columbus State has also been a leader in the creation of the Central Ohio Compact. This partnership is driven by a goal of improving the number of citizens with a post-secondary credential. The college also maintains several programs designed to assist several under-represented populations access post-secondary education. The college has also utilized grant funding to establish programs to create and sustain relationships with needed partners.

**9P2, S.** Columbus State uses a cost, demand, and mutual benefit approach to deciding with which educational entities it will engage to provide services to students. A Preferred Pathway program has been established with Ohio State and 3+1 programs have been established with other Ohio four-year institutions. Further, the college uses the Aspen Institute Models for Sector Strategies to identify business partners, and is working with Columbus 2020 with regard to economic development.



**9P3, O.** Columbus State uses its strategic planning process to provide the impetus for developing several new community partnerships focused on providing services to students. For example, the college enhances its strategic planning goal of Civic Engagement through relationships with the Ohio Benefit Bank, C.A.R.E.S., Mental Health, and Work-based Learning Experiences. While these programs meet basic needs, address student mental health issues, and provide experiential education opportunities, it is unclear what processes are used to create, prioritize, and build these partnerships, as well as partnerships through which other services are provided to students.

**9P4, S.** Columbus State's mission is to serve the community at large and they strive to build relationships with local organizations that supply materials and services. Columbus State uses several processes in its decision-making on vendor services such as competitive bidding, stakeholder engagement, formal purchasing mechanisms, and prioritization based on goods.

**9P5–9P6, O.** Columbus State identified initial core principles in a compression planning session to systemize its partnership development approach. These principles provide guidelines related to creating, prioritizing and building new partnerships including target characteristics of partnerships and of processes needed to manage and grow partnerships. The college is now situated to execute on these draft principles as it recognizes the opportunity to develop a more formal partnership process for engaging in relationships with external entities and partners as well as how these relationships meet the varying needs of constituents.

**9P7, S.** Columbus State has developed a number of partnerships between and among departments of the college. The use of cross-functional teams, the formation of several faculty committees, a learning community created to boost success and retention, a focus on communication with the implementation of First Wednesdays, and the collaboration between the math department and developmental education to revamp the approach to college preparatory math are all examples of internal relationships that have been created.

**9R1-9R3, O.** Columbus State identifies several of the instruments used to collect data on partnerships; however, it is unclear what measures are used within these instruments to evaluate the partnerships' effectiveness. Data provided do not appear to be part of a systematic effort to evaluate partnership performance. The institution has the opportunity

to further consider what key metrics can be culled from its existing data set, what additional data may be needed, and how they may be integrated and analyzed to enable systematic evidence-based prioritization and action planning.

**9I1, O.** Columbus State has initiated a number of improvements to partnerships that are aligned with their institutional priorities of improving student success. Given many of these initiatives are very recent, the college has the opportunity to build systematic and comprehensive processes and provide results in this category.

**9I2, O.** Columbus State indicates that it fosters a culture and infrastructure to set targets in improving performance results through FOE, AtD, Central Ohio Compact, and various community-based organizations that enhance its ability to build collaborative relationships. However, it remains unclear *how* Columbus State selects specific processes to improve and set targets for improved performance results. By building on its existing relationships and with the efforts from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Columbus State has the opportunity identify and set targets for performance in this category.

**Accreditation Evidence for Columbus State Community College**

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components, or that it may face difficulty in meeting the Criteria and Core Components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

No evidence issues noted by the team.

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	1A	1B	1C	1D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	X	X	X	X	
Adequate but could be improved.					
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	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	Core Component				
	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	Core Component				
	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	Core Component				
	5A	5B	5C	5D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	X	X			
Adequate but could be improved.			X	X	
Unclear or incomplete.					

**Core Component 1.A**

**5P1 & 5P2.** HLC Core Component 1.A. *The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

**Core Component 1.B**

**5P3 & 5P8.** HLC Core Component 1.B. *The mission is articulated publicly.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

**Core Component 1.C**

**1P4 & 1P10.** HLC Core Component 1.C. *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

**Core Component 1.D**

**3P3 & 3P5.** HLC Core Component 1.D. *The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

**Core Component 2.A**

**4P7.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 2.A. *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 2.B**

**1P6.** HLC Core Component 2.B. *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 2.C**

**5P2.** HLC Core Component 2.C. *The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.*

- Additional information directly addressing core component 2.C would demonstrate that Columbus State's governing board is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution.

### **Core Component 2.D**

**1P11.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 2.D. *The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 2.E**

**1P11.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 3.A**

**1P4 & 1P12.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 3.A. *The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 3.B**

**1P1 & 1P2.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 3.B. *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 3.C**

**4P2 & 4P10.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 3.C. *The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 3.D**

**1P7 & 1P15.** HLC Core Component 3.D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 3.E**

**1P16.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 3.E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 4.A**

**1P4 & 1P13.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 4.A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 4.B**

**1P2 & 1P18.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 4.B. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

### **Core Component 4.C**

**3P1.** HLC Core Component 4.C. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

#### **Core Component 5.A**

**8P6.** HLC Core Component 5.A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

#### **Core Component 5.B**

**5P5 & 5P9.** HLC Core Component 5.B. *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.*

- No evidence issues noted by the team

#### **Core Component 5.C**

**5P2 & 5P6.** Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 5.C. *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.*

- Columbus State is working to link processes for planning, budgeting, assessment of student learning, and evaluation of operations through special initiatives such as the Foundations of Excellence, Achieving the Dream, and master planning. Further clarifying these linkages may help the college provide strong, clear evidence for this component.

#### **Core Component 5.D**

**7P2 & 7P4.** HLC Core Component 5.D. *The institution works systematically to improve its performance.*

- Columbus State has initiated projects and processes aimed at improving student success by utilizing collected data (e.g., college prep math, Cougar Edge, tutoring); it is often unclear, however, whether these processes are systematic.
- Columbus State established an Office of Institutional Effectiveness to help develop more systematic data gathering and reporting processes which may position the college to

provide strong, clear evidence in the future.

## Quality of Systems Portfolio for Columbus State Community College

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides Columbus State with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

- The development of an Office for Institutional Effectiveness and an institution-wide data mart may help to strengthen the institution's presentation of data. Throughout the portfolio, the college had opportunities to more fully document results. Results were referenced in the college's responses, but wider inclusion of those results where they were relevant to the category and use of formats that would make the results more accessible (e.g., tables and trended graphs) may have helped the review team more readily see why particular improvements were taken.

## Using the Feedback Report

The AQIP Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, the Commission expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: 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.

The Commission's goal is to help an institution clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.