

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

CROWDER COLLEGE

March 8, 2005

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March 11, 2005

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INTRODUCTION

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

Each member of the Systems Appraisal Team devoted many hours to analyzing your *Systems Portfolio*, first individually and then via a consensus process designed to ensure that all feedback you receive is the agreed-upon conclusion of an entire group of intelligent, trained peers. There are no one-person opinions, no idiosyncratic, subjective opinions. Most of the team's members have had executive responsibilities in colleges and universities, but the team also included at least one person whose experience lies outside of higher education, and who could help the team maintain perspective on the work higher educators still have to do to bring quality principles into all areas of the Academy. All team members are committed to promoting continuous quality improvement in higher education and have received training in quality processes. Many team members have also had experience with Baldrige-type quality award programs. We know that you and your colleagues will find the astuteness of their perceptions, as embodied in this report, useful in your commitment for continuous quality learning.

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

Critical Characteristics: The Organizational Overview of your *Portfolio* shapes the team's understanding of your institution's distinct character. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders,

competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

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

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

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission and quality improvement goals. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these issues throughout the appraisal process. These issues provide a framework for improving processes and systems and serve as an "executive summary" of key findings and recommendations. Accreditation issues are those that relate directly to your organization's evidence for Commission's five *Criteria for Accreditation* and their Core Components. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these accreditation issues through analysis of your *Portfolio* and the *Accreditation Evidence Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* you prepared to accompany your *Portfolio*. The Team has identified these issues as either an (a) evidentiary issue, meaning that additional evidence is needed or the evidence is unclear, or as an (b) accreditation issue, meaning that it must to be addressed prior to your *Quality Check up* and your *Reaffirmation Review*.

Appraisal Summary: The compilation of the nine rubrics that capture the team's appraisal of the organization's Portfolio description of each of the nine AQIP Categories. The summary indicates the team's consensus on the developmental maturity of each Category description.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging *involvement, learning, collaboration* and *integrity*. Rubrics should be used to understand where the opportunities for ongoing systems improvement are greatest, not as scores indicating success or failure. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements, in turn, can be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future *Systems Appraisals* will reflect the progress an institution has made.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of the College's identity, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates to you, when you study *the Feedback Report*, that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes the Institution distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify

and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

01a The College is a comprehensive, public community college with a main campus in Neosho, MO., and three satellite educational centers. It is an open-admissions institution. It has been in existence for 40 years.

01b The vision/mission of the College is the building of a "...civil, serving, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

01c The College serves a largely rural two-county taxing district and a broader nine-county service area in Southwest Missouri. The local population, primarily Caucasian, is reflected in the student population. Of 2,836 FTE students, there are 26 full-time international students. Tuition increases have been lower than those of four-year colleges.

01d The College's Board of Trustees is elected by local citizens of their community and must approve by law: the hiring and dismissal of personnel; contracts with outside vendors, budgets and increases; all expenditures.

01e The College is committed to creating and maintaining the culture of a very close community, "being a family." This focus on service is reflected in a commitment to *Servant Leadership* philosophy.

02a The College offers Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), certificates, and diploma programs.

02b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students including, Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

1C3 The AA Transfer Program is the College's largest instructional enterprise, with 25 disciplinary concentrations.

02c The College offers classes through its Business and Consulting program, and through its Environmental Resource Center.

03b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, local taxpayers, and community members.

04b The Foundation Board contributes \$100,000 annually for mini-grants for faculty and staff instructional equipment and campus beautification.

9C1 The College has divided its collaborative relationships into three primary categories: 1) those with direct authority over accreditation and service delivery, 2) feeder schools, employers, receiving schools, and organizations with financial ties, 3) community organizations and suppliers.

05a Full-time faculty and staff 185; part-time 189. Faculty full-time 64; adjunct faculty 150; professional staff 57; hourly staff 51, administrators 13. Almost equal number of men and women on faculty. Six of 13 administrators are women. Over 33% of faculty do not have master's degrees. Sixty-six percent of full-time faculty have graduate degrees, and 19% have less than a Bachelors degree.

05b Of 185 employees, 14 (about 7%) are non-Caucasian.

05c There are no organized bargaining units, no tenure, and no faculty rank.

05d Most administrators have teaching responsibilities.

05e Each year over 95% of full-time employees are engaged in organized professional development activities/programs.

06a The College's campus and residence halls are networked with 12-hour technology support, and the campus includes 36 computer labs and 50 "Smart" classrooms incorporating computer workstations, VCR/DVD players, projectors and laptop connections. Student-computer ratio is 2:1. A totally on-line A.A. degree is available at the Institution.

06b Non-traditional course delivery methods include the use of an interactive television network, tele-courses, self-directed learning, and on-line instruction using *Blackboard*.

06c The College enjoys support from the local communities, which donated or contributed to the acquisition of additional facilities for its satellite educational buildings.

06d The Institution has strong partnerships with the high school districts. A consortium of 42 school districts meets monthly with college personnel to share information and facilitate cooperative staff development activities with businesses and social service agencies.

07a The College feels little competitive pressure at this time because its closest Missouri competition (MSSU) has become a four-year institution and must, within 5 years, relinquish all 2-year degree programs. Student population is growing fast, and a state program for funding community college students, A+, supports students financially.

07b The Institution has not had a written strategic plan in the past, and the use of "strategic planning" in the System Portfolio refers to AQIP planning (8C p. 78).

08a Recent significant enrollment growth is increasing the strain on college staff and facilities, and this growth is expected to continue.

08b Due to retirements, the College expects significant turnover in the next few years.

08d A new College president, and recent changes in board leadership, underscore the significant change taking place in the college's leadership. The impact of these changes on strategic planning and the role of the AQIP accreditation model within the institution are perhaps not entirely clear because of the long tenure of the former president and board chair, approximately 20 years for each individual.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

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

AQIP CATEGORY 1: *HELPING STUDENTS LEARN*

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

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

O1a The College is a comprehensive, public community college with a main campus in Neosho, MO., and three satellite educational centers. It is an open-admissions institution. It has been in existence for 40 years.

O1b The mission of the College is the building of a "...civil, serving, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

O1c The College serves a largely rural two-county taxing district and a broader nine-county service area in Southwest Missouri. The local population, primarily Caucasian, is reflected in the student population. Of 2,836 FTE students, there are 26 full-time international students. Tuition increases have been lower than those of four-year colleges.

O2a The College offers the Associate of Art (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), certificates, and diploma programs

O2b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students including, Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

O2c The College offers classes through its business and consulting program, and through its Environmental Resource Center.

O6a The College's campus and residence halls are networked with 12-hour technology support, and the campus includes 36 computer labs and 50 "Smart" classrooms incorporating computer workstations, VCR/DVD players, projectors and laptop connections. Student-computer ratio is 2:1. A totally on-line A.A. degree is available at the Institution.

O6b Non-traditional course delivery methods include the use of an interactive television network, tele-courses, self-directed learning, and on-line instruction using Blackboard.

1C3 The AA transfer program is the College's largest instructional enterprise, with 25 disciplinary concentrations.

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

- S 1C1 The College has established nine common learning objectives for all students based on the College's mission and vision statements, and these nine objectives incorporate skill area goals recently mandated by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education. These learning objectives are foundational in preparation for life-long learning and will also facilitate degree transfer and articulation for graduates within the state of Missouri.
- S 1C2 The College has devised a framework of goals, measures, and outcomes for reviewing and managing student learning.
- S 1C3 The College incorporates a wide range of instructional delivery methods and technologies including traditional classroom, interactive television network, on-line, tele-courses in addition to Smart Board and BlackBoard technologies. Exposure to these methods and technologies should enhance their future ability to learn in a variety of environments.
- S 1C3 The College has developed a variety of means to accommodate student needs for flexible scheduling including shortened semesters, and self-direction or "contract" learning.
- S 1C4 The College has responded in several ways to meet the needs of the small, but increasing, immigrant population with programs that include ESL, HEP, and CAMP. Opportunities for faculty and students to teach or attend classes at institutions overseas are expanding. These programs should benefit the largely homogeneous student and faculty populations with exposure to other cultures.
- O 1C4 There is no indication that the College is designing learning specific learning experiences or outcomes that will better prepare students to live and work effectively in an increasingly diverse world.
- O 1P1 There is a proliferation of identified goals, variously referred to as goals, key outcomes, objectives, abilities, competencies, etc. The relationships between these various goals/outcomes is not clearly articulated.
- S 1P1 The College has identified three Key Outcomes that relate to Category 1: academic competence; 'broadened' access; 'integrated' academic support systems.

O 1P1 The College has a process for program development and review, but there is no clear definition of the data that are used in the process.

S

1P1/1P2 A process has been developed for developing new programs that fit within the planning framework.

O 1P2 Most attention in program development is focused on the internal process of developing and approving new programs. Data collection from advisory groups appears to be informal meetings. Data based on longer-term trend analysis could greatly strengthen program development.

S 1P3 The existence of standard institutional syllabi, which list the student abilities and specific competencies addressed in the course, is a positive step in providing consistent learning opportunities for students and a basis for assessment of student learning.

S 1P3 The College has an extensive student placement system for entering freshmen utilizing test scores from COMPASS, ACT, PESCO, and Nelson-Denny to identify appropriate entry points for students and ensure early academic success.

O 1P4 Given state-mandated enrollment limits for its nursing program, it is not clear what criteria are used for admitting students to this program or how this criteria is communicated to prospective students.

S 1P4 In addition to Enrollment Clinics which provide a four-hour introduction to the first semester enrollment assistance, entering students are individually assigned a trained advisor to assist in program selection and course scheduling.

O 1P4 It appears as though an advising system is developing (Advising Task Force), however the portfolio suggests there is no requirement that students use the advising opportunities.

S 1P4 The College has comprehensive strategies for informing prospective students of the expectations of incoming students. It is unclear what outcome information is used by staff for improving these strategies.

SS 1P5 A newly developed "intrusive advising plan" provides a structured and proactive process for interacting with students regarding their academic choices. Various personality and skills profiles are used to assist students in career choice and selection of an appropriate major. This strategy should promote early academic success and shorten program completion time.

- S 1P5 The College uses several programs to assist under-prepared students including ARC, SSS, CAMP, and the career planning office. Assessments are also used to aid students in identifying possible career choices.
- O 1P5 There is a series of counseling and remedial education services to foster student success. However, what appears in this section is a description of what is, not how the processes work or how their effectiveness is measured.
- S 1P6 A number of methods are used to assess student learning: CAAP, C-BASE, Certification results, Pre-and post course assessments, etc. A system for success after transfer is being developed. Identification of direct measures of student learning will make the measurement of student learning easier and more useful for improvement.
- O 1P6 While the College identified processes for evaluating the effectiveness of general education learning outcomes, evidence is lacking for measuring learning outcomes for vocation programs.
- OO 1P6 The Institution appears to be relying on course test grades as an assessment of student learning. This practice does not provide a reliable assessment of student learning. The College needs to identify more comprehensive methods of evaluating student learning.
- OO 1P6 The Institution mixes course and faculty evaluation by students with assessment of learning. The evaluation of course and faculty by students is important, but it is not assessment of learning. Assessment of learning is essentially research applied to a particular question, i.e., did learners master what was intended. A crisp understanding of what constitutes measurement of learning makes this research task much easier.
- O 1P7 It is not clear whether or how student input is collected or utilized in making course delivery decisions.
- O 1P8 There does not appear to be a systematic, ongoing process to monitor the currency and effectiveness of the curriculum, specifically for “determining the viability of programs and courses.” Developing program/course criteria and systematic data collection based on those criteria could improve the quality of decision-making.
- O 1P8 The College devotes staff development time to assist faculty in remaining current on learning research.
- O 1P8 It is not clear how the advisory committee collects and evaluates information for implementation?

- O 1P9 The College requires all graduating students to participate in an “intense focus group activity” as part of its course assessment process. Requiring all graduating students to participate in focus groups present a methodological/ethical issues. Also, where the portfolio reports results from these focus groups, those results are portrayed in a quantitative sense, rather than from the insight normally gained from qualitative methodologies.
- O 1P9 It is not clear how faculty needs are determined or supported relative to learning support. It is not apparent whether faculty have input into decisions regarding library, tutoring and other student services.
- S 1P9 The College utilizes student and graduate satisfaction surveys.
- O 1P10 Co-curricular activities are described, but there is no explanation of how these activities tie directly, or indirectly, to learning.
- O 1P11 It is not clear who the General Education Assessment Committee is, what impact they can have on curriculum changes, or how they perform the process of reviewing assessment for reliability and validity.
- S 1P12 The College uses four indicators to assess the relevance of learning to graduate goals: preparation for job specific skills, success in transfer institutions, components of instruction that are helpful [through graduate survey], and certification examination scores.
- OO 1P12 Considering the predominance of the Institution’s transfer programs and associated student enrollment, the College does not appear to have an established process for gathering meaningful data on transfer student success. Such data is important to understanding the College’s success in fulfilling its mission for student academic preparation.
- OO
1R1/IR4 It appears as though the College does not have a means for collecting data regarding “Student Abilities,” other than with student perceptions. Tuition rates, credit hours generated, and head counts are not measures of learning. Without a tool(s) for measuring results in these key eight areas (listed in 1C1) which form the foundation of the common learning objectives, it is very difficult to determine the degree of success or select improvement strategies. A concise and widely understood (within the college) definition of learning will be very helpful to staff in designing the applied research that will help discover if the College’s students learned what instructors intended.

- OO 1R1 Tracking has helped the College identify decreasing numbers of graduates within a three-year timeframe. Concerns about increasing enrollment and the resultant strain on resources are prominent in the portfolio; concerns about decreased graduation rates are less prominent. Comparative graduation rates (e.g., figure 1.8) are instructive, but these are not linked to programmatic or service improvements. Improved Fall-Fall retention is (112).
- O 1R1 Tracking has helped the College identify declining CAAP scores in Math, Reading, and Critical Thinking. Such data should be helpful in considering steps towards reversing this trend.
- S 1R1 The College collects data on its graduating students from several sources including CAAP, C-BASE, and nursing certification results.
- O 1R2 Throughout the portfolio the College identifies improved Fall-Spring retention as a positive. That is a first step to addressing declines in Fall-Fall retention identified here.
- S 1R2 The percentages reported in Table 1.16 suggested that most employers and graduates were highly satisfied with their education.
- O 1R2 The percentages reported in Table 1.16, though quite high, do not make clear either the numbers of employers and students, nor is it possible to determine the overall percentage of total possible employers, or numbers of graduates. The lack of more specific numbers makes it difficult to make accurate assessments of program(s) effectiveness.
- O 1R2 A survey of employer perceptions of graduate skills is an indirect measure of learning. More direct measures of learning would be useful.
- S 1R3 The College's cohort student completion rate is 41% higher than the rate for all community colleges in Missouri.
- S 1R3 The pass rates on state board exams for the Institution's nursing graduates exceeds the state and national averages providing evidence of learning outcomes for this program.
- S 1R4 Although in beginning stages, the College has made strides towards identifying comparison information to enhance its results and improvement processes. The College has recently 'joined' the community college benchmark project with the intent of sharing and acquiring comparative data.

O 112 There does not appear to be a systemic and encompassing process in place for improving student learning and development.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the Institution's performance on this Category as Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

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

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

O1a The College is a comprehensive, public community college in Neosho, Mo., with three satellite education centers. It is an open admissions institution; it has been in existence for 40 years.

O1b The vision/mission of the College is the building of "... civil, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

1C3 The AA transfer program is the College's largest instructional program, with 25 disciplinary programs.

O2b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students, including Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

O2c The College offers classes through its Business and Consulting program and through its Environmental Resource Center.

O4b The Foundation board contributes \$100,000 annually for mini grants for faculty and staff instruction and campus beautification.

O6b Non-traditional course delivery methods include the use of an interactive television network, tele-courses, self-directed learning, and on-line instruction using *Blackboard*.

O6d The College has strong partnerships with the high schools districts. A consortium of 42 school districts meets monthly with college personnel to share information and facilitate cooperative staff development activities with business and social agencies.

O8b Due to retirements, the College expects significant turnover in the next few years.

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

S 2C1-3 The role of *Other Distinctive Objectives* has been defined, including the alignment with the College's mission and their support of *Helping Students Learn*. The administration reviews this definition annually.

SS 2C2 In the spirit of the mission, Crowder's "CAMP" program for migrant farm workers is a unique response to the local community's academic and social needs.

S 2P1 The College uses a process (a set of questions) to evaluate annually programs and activities that contribute to *Other Distinctive Objectives*.

S 2P2 Appropriate strategies are used to communicate to staff. The use of staff days, internal staff meetings, newsletters, and open forums with the President should foster positive sharing of information.

O 2P3 The process for determining faculty and staff needs with regard to *Other Distinctive Objectives* is not clearly defined. Various measures are listed, but there is no process described to evaluate the variables. It is not clear who determines these needs or when, or whether, the determination occurs systematically.

O 2P4 A number of ways for identifying *Other Distinctive Objectives* are presented, but there is no clear decision process for determining which objectives are pursued, or who makes this determination.

O 2R2 The College uses no comparison data collection for measuring *Other Distinctive Objectives* performance.

O 2R3 It is unclear what impact the data collected has on the Institution.

OO 2R1 The measures used to evaluate the *Other Distinctive Objectives* appear tangential to CC's mission, vision, and philosophy. In addition, the graduation rate of athletes, while important, is a secondary measure of learning, not a measure of some *Other Distinctive Objectives*. Review of this measure will direct college improvement efforts toward learning, not improvement of *Other Distinctive Objectives*.

S 2I2 The priority to improve internal and external data collection in measuring *Other Distinctive Objectives* should serve the College well in understanding how these activities benefit the College and the community.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Beginning, characterized by:

Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

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

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with

students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

01c The College serves a largely rural two-county taxing district and a broader nine-county service area in Southwest Missouri. The local population, primarily Caucasian, is reflected in the student population. Of 2,836 FTE students, there are 26 full-time international students. Tuition increases have been lower than those of four-year colleges.

02b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students including, Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

02c The College offers classes through its Business and Consulting program, and through its Environmental Resource Center.

03b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, local taxpayers, and community members.

04b The Foundation Board contributes \$100,000 annually for mini-grants for faculty and staff instructional equipment and campus beautification.

06d The College has strong partnerships with the high school districts. A consortium of 42 school districts meets monthly with college personnel to share information and facilitate cooperative staff development activities with businesses and social service agencies.

07a The College feels little competitive pressure at this time because its closest Missouri competition (MSSU) has become a four-year institution and must, within 5 years, relinquish all 2-year degree programs. Student population is growing fast, and a state program for funding community college students, A+, supports students financially.

07b The Institution has not had a written strategic plan in the past, and the use of "strategic planning" in the System Portfolio refers to AQIP planning (8C, p. 78).

9C1 The College has divided its collaborative relationships into three primary categories: 1) those with direct authority over accreditation and service delivery, 2) feeder schools,

employers, receiving schools, and organizations with financial ties, 3) community organizations and suppliers.

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

S 3C2 The College has segmented groups of students and stakeholders and identified the interests/needs of each group.

S 3P1 Present and future needs of stakeholders are identified through a process that includes surveys of several student groups (current students, alumni), classroom teaching evaluations, and close contact with feeder schools and employers.

Findings and analyses are referred to the Administrative Council or Executive Council for action.

O 3P1 The extent to which the College collects data from adjunct and other part-time employees is unclear, the usage of such staff dictates that their needs be better understood. Note: the CQS (College Quality Survey) is distributed only to full-time employees (N=183, response rate unknown).

O 3P1 The College may find it useful to include a more strategic environmental scanning approach as a means for anticipating future needs that are not now apparent to employers, or other "receiving" organizations.

S 3P2 The College appears to be deeply involved in the local community as a primary means for maintaining relationships, including associations with local schools, employers, and community organizations.

O 3P3 The portfolio indicates that broader strategic data related to student and stakeholder needs are gathered from institutions such as the Missouri Department of Economic and Workforce Development. It is unclear how these data are analyzed and used for decision making in program and course development.

O 3P4 Though this section describes a variety of activities and interactions with stakeholders, communications appear to be one-way, with most of the processes describing how the College tells its story, not how it listens. In addition, lines of responsibility are unclear.

O 3P5 The portfolio identifies the *position* responsible for identifying new needs of student and stakeholder groups, however the identification of new student and other stakeholder groups does not appear to be addressed in a systematic and ongoing manner. Instead, this seems to occur on a relatively ad hoc basis, and the portfolio does not explain which criteria are used to decide when the needs of a given set of stakeholders must be addressed. Without a clear process the College may find it difficult to anticipate future needs.

S 3P6 Complaint/grievance procedures are in place for students and employees. Tracking processes and trend analysis are in the early stages.

O 3P6 The description of the complaint/grievance procedures suggests that the College is willing to listen, however, the burden for proceeding appears to fall heavily on the individuals, particularly students. The Institution may find it helpful to create a more proactive response, especially to complaints, because they are usually considered less formal than a grievance procedure. A proactive effort may make it possible to solicit information that can point out systemic problems in course, program, or administrative effectiveness.

S 3P7 The College uses a variety of tools such as surveys and focus groups, and ongoing relationships within the local community to determine needs. The use of surveys that measure both desired and actual performance levels, thus enabling a gap analysis, is an excellent way to prioritize issues by focusing on those with the largest performance gaps.

S 3P7 Student satisfaction surveys are carried out on a college-wide basis.

O 3P7 It not clear that the College has a clear definition of assessment of learning. In this section assessment of learning is equated with understanding stakeholder needs. Assessment of learning should measure how well students mastered the intended learning outcomes. It is quite possible for students to truly master knowledge that does not meet their needs.

O 3R1 The question relates to student satisfaction, yet the response for the most part does not include student satisfaction data, but data from other stakeholder groups which do not measure satisfaction (e.g., foundation results, ABCD results, sending school results). Further, the presentations of data are inconsistent: 9R1 data uses actual numbers, not percentages, as described in the text; 5C1 is not results data, but descriptive data in a context section.

SS 3R2 Compared with the benchmark group, the students appear to be very satisfied with the quality of their education.

O 3R2 The results from satisfaction surveys are inappropriately scaled, highlighting differences that are very minimal. The College would be better served to have a more accurate representation of results. The performance of the College is at the mean for many of the questions reported from the benchmark project.

O 3R3 The measures in this section appear weak and secondary. Direct measures would be useful.

O 3R4 While the College lists loyalty, endowments, continued support, and student retention as outcomes of its key stakeholder relationships, it is unclear what specific results or measurements support these outcomes. Thus, this section appears to be a statement of belief, not a report on outcomes. Results statements are most useful when they are based on an analysis of information derived. Such data would be available from a systematic analysis of stakeholder needs, resulting in specific actions to meet those needs with outcomes that can be measured.

3R5 There was no response to this section.

O 3I1 The College reports the "Fast Track" as "one of the greatest" improvements in stakeholder relations, a reflection of the enrollment (130) of dual credit students. In effect, this is a short-term enrollment increase, and enrollment increases (reported elsewhere) are expected to put a strain on the system. How will the College assure quality to dual credit students? Savings on tuition and credits earned must be viewed within the context of learning and graduation.

S 3I2 The Dean of Students has recently obtained a written agreement with the two largest transferring institutions for student transfer date. This should assist the College in determining more accurately how well it is preparing transfer students.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

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

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

01b The vision/mission of the College is the building of a "...civil, serving, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

01e The College is committed to creating and maintaining the culture of a very close community, "being a family." A focus on service is reflected in a commitment to Servant Leadership philosophy.

03b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, local taxpayers, and community members.

05a Full-time faculty and staff 185; part-time 189. Faculty full-time 64; adjunct faculty 150; professional staff 57; hourly staff 51, administrators 13. Almost equal number of men and women on faculty. Six of 13 administrators are women. Over 33% of faculty do not have master's degrees. Sixty-six percent of full-time faculty have graduate degrees, and 19% have less than a Bachelors degree.

05b Of 185 employees, 14 (about 7%) are non-Caucasian.

05c There are no organized bargaining units, no tenure, and no faculty rank.

05d Most administrators have teaching responsibilities.

05e Each year over 95% of full-time employees are engaged in organized professional development activities/programs.

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

S 4C1 The College has adopted a philosophy of leadership, termed "Servant Leadership." The central purpose of this philosophy is intended to be inclusive, to create a sense of "family."

O 4C1 ISAAC (Institutional Steering and Assessment Council) serves as the "continuous quality assurance council." It is unclear what this council reviews, or how, and to whom it communicates its findings.

S 4C2 The Institution annually compares its job classifications and salaries with other colleges, primarily with other Missouri community colleges.

S 4C3 The College regularly reviews demographic trends in K-12 student population in the service area in order to estimate the potential for college student enrollment.

S 4C4 Professional development activities have been integrated in a standardized way into the work schedule to enable a large percentage of employees to participate. Two Friday afternoons per month are dedicated to training.

S 4P1 The Institution has developed a thorough hiring process, extending from an initial job analysis when a position becomes open, through the selection decision, with an emphasis on ensuring that those being considered not only have the requisite credentials, but possess values that are compatible with the College's values. After 60 days, the new employees are asked to evaluate the entire hiring and orientation experience.

S 4P2 The College uses several methods to ensure employees are aware of the institution's mission and values including orientation, mentoring, and staff development. To keep salaries and benefits competitive, the College regularly makes comparisons with benchmark colleges.

O 4P2 The College anticipates challenges in changing senior leadership within the next five years.

O 4P2 The board process of "identifying" and "recruiting" replacements, though not uncommon, could lead to a closed system philosophically, politically, and culturally (p. 37). It makes Crowder College appear insular.

O 4P2 Table 4.4 reports 48 new hires in two years, out of a total full time staff of 185. This rate of turnover is 25.9%. This seems to contradict the statement in this section that “Employee turnover has never been a problem

S 4P3 The information technology infrastructure provides strong support for employee communications and collaboration i.e. file-sharing, e-mail, newsletter, etc.

O 4P3 The College identifies focus areas, processes, and activities (Table 4.5). It is not clear how these contribute to college goals or how the results are measured.

S 4P4 “Employee success” is one of the College’s five main goals. The goal is supported through regular staff development sessions. In addition, loans, tuition waivers, and other incentives are in place to encourage continuous professional development.

O 4P5 The annual training sessions seem to be based primarily on individual perceptions of their own training and development needs. Though the portfolio states the needs, “are tied to a planning objective,” it is not clear that training and staff development programs are based on demonstrable organizational needs. There appears to be a lack of organization-wide data on which to develop these programs.

S 4P6 The personnel evaluation is tied directly to the College mission, goals, and Key Organizational Measures.

S 4P7 The College has designed several means, aside from salaries and benefits packages, for recognizing performance, including awards such as CAC, Outstanding Service, and Employee of the year.

O 4P7 It is unclear how employees set professional development goals, or who evaluates whom in the personnel evaluation system.

S 4P8 Factors affecting faculty and staff well-being, satisfaction, and motivation are captured in surveys, personnel evaluations, exit interviews, etc., and the findings are tracked and analyzed. This process sends a strong message that their opinion matters in the life of the College.

O 4P8 The College identifies multiple processes for areas related to faculty and staff wellbeing. If, as the portfolio states, senior leaders and supervisors use the results of the analysis of these data, select key issues, and develop action plans for improvement, it would be helpful to have examples of issues and action plans for improvement in the results section.

O 4P9 The statement regarding the “generous approach” to sick leave appears to be a conclusion without data. A comparison of sick leave available for the College’s employees to that for employees at other colleges would be helpful in determining whether sick leave at Crowder is indeed, generous.

O 4P9 The College identifies the suggestion box as a central point for registering employee complaints, but the process for the appropriate handling of complaints is not clear. This may discourage use of this tool for registering concerns.

SS 4P10 The Institution collects and analyzes an array of measures related to *Valuing People*. This occurs in a systematic, ongoing way and some data are available for several years. Desired vs. actual performance is also captured in some of the data, allowing gap analysis to be conducted.

S 4R1 The College uses several means for measuring *Valuing People*, including salary comparisons, employee turnover/retention, grievances, and attendance at staff development events.

OO 4R1 Five grievances are mentioned in this section. A statement on page 27 indicates that the College has had one grievance in its entire history. This discrepancy in reporting data is confusing, and could cause a reader to question other aspects of the College’s claims and conclusions.

S 4R2 The College uses the “Campus Quality Survey” as a tool for determining employee perceptions/satisfaction with the processes for *Valuing People*.

O 4R2 The “Campus Quality Survey” indicates a relatively high degree of satisfaction with most of the processes of *Valuing People*. There is no indication of assessment of specific procedures, such as employee orientation or the personnel evaluation system. Though feedback from individuals completing orientation (60 days after hiring) may be helpful, it is also possible that a newly hired employee, standing alone, may be reluctant to provide candid feedback.

O 4R2 This section describes gap data (smaller/larger), yet improvements are not subsequently identified that address the largest performance gaps. It is not clear why they are reported.

S 4R3 Conclusions from the data regarding *Valuing People* indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the management /administration of the College.

S 4R4 The Institution benchmarks with other colleges regarding employee retention. This helps the College assess the employment environment relative to their peers.

O 4I1 This section of the portfolio articulates a series of processes rather than actual improvements. Given the amount of data collected and the gaps identified, the College should find it relatively easy to identify and propose improvements.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

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

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

01e The College is committed to creating and maintaining the culture of a very close community, "being a family." A focus on service is reflected in a commitment to Servant Leadership philosophy.

05d Most administrators have teaching responsibilities.

08b Due to retirements, the College expects significant turnover in the next few years.

08d A new college president, and recent changes in board leadership, underscore the significant change taking place in the College's leadership. The impact of these changes on strategic planning and the role of the AQIP accreditation model within the Institution are perhaps not entirely clear because of the long tenure of the former president and board chair, approximately 20 years for each individual.

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

S 5C2 The College has developed and defined roles and responsibilities for several leadership groups, including the Board, President, AC, ISAAC, division leaders and office managers. Processes and procedures appear to be organized to communicate needs from the lower levels of the organization up to the Board and, in turn, priorities and policies are communicated to the faculty and staff through several means.

S 5C3 The Institution has adopted and promotes *Servant Leadership* as a guiding principle and it has identified its organizational values. The values are communicated throughout the College and they are incorporated in the annual evaluation process for employees.

S 5P1 The College shapes its agenda for leadership/communication around seven goals that mirror the nine AQIP Categories. Those are formulated in their 7-step Planning Process, and each are to have measurable objectives, articulated tactics, and reporting intervals.

O 5P1 The staff development sessions, and the clear statement of leadership philosophy, *Servant Leadership*, are useful for providing some content on leadership. A leadership development program could benefit further from strategies that provide outcome or performance data through an action oriented leadership mentoring program.

S 5P1 Each academic program has an advisory committee which meets twice annually. Feedback is integrated into the program planning process and shared with the academic dean. This benefits the College by employing input from area employers into curriculum improvement.

S 5P2 The College appears to have been successful in developing a culture that encourages innovation, as shown in the examples of projects and programs.

S 5P2 Through its close relationships with local business and industry, the College has developed a variety of methods for obtaining feedback for program development purposes.

S 5P2 Most college administrators continue to teach classes, and remain part of the divisions in which the courses are offered. This may be an effective approach for keeping the mission of the College at the center of management. The College is seeking to expand international experience for students where possible.

O 5P2 While the creation of new programs is discussed, the decision process for making final determinations on new program and service offerings is unclear.

O 5P2 No mention is made of environmental scanning or other methods of looking outside of the academic community for opportunities (such as labor market information).

O 5P3 There is no clear indication that the governance system is participatory. Most examples of decision-making reference the AC or EC or department managers, without systematic input from other internal groups (faculty, specialists, etc.). There is an opportunity from input from all via the suggestion box system.

O 5P3 This is the first mention of the Executive Council in the systems portfolio. It is not clear who they are, or what they do.

S 5P4 Key Outcome Measures are reviewed monthly at the ISAAC meetings, ensuring that the important outcomes identified in the strategic plan are addressed periodically.

S 5P4 The College has identified a series of data collection points from offices inside the College, as well as from agencies outside the College.

S 5P5 Key organizational metrics are represented in a “dashboard” for employee and public viewing. Providing this information freely could promote trust in the College and the surrounding community.

S 5P6 The College uses several opportunities throughout the school year to communicate and discuss the mission, vision, and values, and how they relate to practice, including the *All Staff Day* and Friday afternoon staff development sessions.

S 5P7 Most administrators have completed the Greenleaf Foundation's training for the *Servant Leadership* program. The present, and former presidents, have been presenters as this program. One professional employee participates in a local (Neosho) leadership program.

S 5P7 The philosophical position of the College is to nurture leadership and professional development within the existing staff, which is complemented by the policy of advertising all positions with a full open search process.

O 5P8 In reference to the Board (identities unknown), the described practice of selecting board replacements and early resignation to preempt the electoral process are contrary to accepted ethical practices of public bodies, and to *integrity*, as defined in the HLC accreditation criteria, (Category One). Further, (5P5) lunch meetings with the board should be open to the public, even though an agenda is not developed or distributed. Such meetings often create problems and generate negative perceptions in part because they are contrary to open meetings requirements.

S 5P9 The College collects and analyzes data regarding perceptions of leadership, including the evaluation of the president, campus climate survey, and a community survey.

S 5P9 The College may find it useful to construct an assessment of leadership that goes beyond perceptions of performance, to the use of methods described in 5R2, using Key Outcome Measures.

S 5R1 In its results section the College demonstrates a history of staff/faculty evaluation/feedback on leadership qualities. Given a change in leadership, the gaps and categories are important only in the sense that they demonstrate open communication with respect to "top" administration, in an avowedly flat organizational structure.

O 5R1 Significant performance gaps exist in employee satisfaction surveys in the following areas: Communication effectiveness between departments, understanding the AQIP process, and ease in accessing information.

S 5R2 The majority of performance measures regarding leadership support, empowerment, and teamwork exceed 2-year benchmarks.

S 5R2 Results of the communication and leadership members indicate that **the College** compares favorably with other institutions.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

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

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

01a The College is a comprehensive, public community college with a main campus in Neosho, MO., and three satellite educational centers. It is an open-admissions institution. It has been in existence for 40 years.

01c The College serves a largely rural two-county taxing district and a broader nine-county service area in Southwest Missouri. The local population, primarily Caucasian, is reflected in the student population. Of 2,836 FTE students, there are 26 full-time international students. Tuition increases have been lower than those of four-year colleges.

02b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students including, Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high

school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

04b The Foundation Board contributes \$100,000 annually for mini-grants for faculty and staff instructional equipment, and campus beautification.

06a The Institution's residence halls are networked with 12-hour technology support and the campus includes 36 computer labs and 50 "smart" classrooms incorporating computer workstations, VCR/DVD players, projectors, and lap-top connections. The student to computer ratio is 2:1. A totally on-line AA degree is available.

06b Non-traditional course delivery methods include the use of an interactive television network, tele-courses, self-directed learning, and on-line instruction using Blackboard.

06c The College enjoys support from the local communities, which donated or contributed to the acquisition of additional facilities for its satellite educational buildings.

08a Recent significant enrollment growth is increasing the strain on college staff and facilities, and this growth is expected to continue.

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

S 6C1 The College has identified key service processes and organized them into three primary categories: enrollment management, learning resources, and enrichmentbased services. Administrative services are grouped similarly. User requirements identify student and stakeholder process needs.

S 6C2 The portfolio provides two examples of programs that are designed to integrate several existing services, such as the Early Alert program and Think Tank workshops.

O 6P1 The Institution has a clear data-driven process for identifying student support needs. This may help the College ensure its resources are used effectively to benefit students. However, the key processes for identifying student support service needs do not include any examples of how these processes actually have, or may result in, better identification of student support needs. It is unclear if these processes have actually been implemented yet or are in the planning stages.

O 6P1 It appears the College uses indirect means for identifying student support needs. Examples include students, faculty, and administrators as sources of information.

Surveys, as noted in 1P9, focus on “satisfaction” of present and former students. 6P4 mentions “assessment instruments” for “tracking student needs,” however no specific instrument is identified. Unless there are tools for establishing student learning needs more precisely, it is possible that a significant portion of the needs will not be made evident.

S 6P2 There are several mechanisms used to identify administrative support service needs – via the employee associations, suggestion box, employee satisfaction surveys, employee evaluations, or directives from state agencies. The narrative also includes a reference to “contractual obligations.”

O 6P3 While several administrative positions are identified with primary responsibility for day-to-day operations, it is unclear specifically who manages the support services related to enrollment management, learning resources, and other service area within the College.

O 6P3 There is no explanation of the Student Information Network or what data is collected.

O 6P3 Though the College has identified a comprehensive process for improvement of student support areas, it is not clear if the systems described are being developed, or if they exist already.

OO 6P3 The dashboard is mentioned in this section. The measures on the dashboard, why those measures were chosen, and what those measures report are not described. A dashboard is usually a key instrument that college personnel use to decide whether or not the Institution is on track in moving toward established goals. The information in this section is not complete enough to allow a reader to understand what measures are on the dashboard or how those measures are used.

S 6P4 The College has designed a number of processes to collect and manage data about the effectiveness of several student services. Point of service feedback is collected on a routine basis. The College uses an outside firm to review regularly the accounting and financial management of the College. The College AQIP process describes feedback loops and resultant information that may be used to benchmark/improve services.

S 6R1 Fall-to-spring student retention rates have been increasing for the past five years. This positive trend provides verification of institutional support strategies.

O 6R1 The reason for the drop in the degree-seeking rate from F03 to F04 seems unclear. A review of changes in the system may prove helpful.

S 6R1 As indicated by the fund balance and liabilities/assets reports, the College is fiscally healthy and has been able to offset reductions/inconsistencies in state support by increasing revenues from federal funds and tuition.

OO 6R1 The data presentations in 6R1 are unclear, and the narrative does not link the results to the processes presented in the previous section. The relevance of some charts is unclear to those without intimate knowledge of the Institution, making it easy to miss clarifying information and perhaps limiting data analysis for planning.

O 6I1 This section focuses on a process for improvement, not on targeted improvements based on data that has been gathered. The next section (6I2), on the other hand, does identify improvements.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

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

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

O1b The vision/mission of Crowder is the building of "... civil, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

O1c The College serves a largely rural two-county taxing district and a broader nine-county service area in Southwest Missouri. The local population, primarily Caucasian, is reflected in the student population. Of the 2,836 FTE students, there are 26 full-time international students. Tuition increases have been lower than those of four-year colleges.

O5a Full-time faculty and staff 185; part-time 189. Faculty full-time 64; adjunct 150; professional staff 57; hourly staff 51; administrators 13. Faculty gender almost equal men and women. Six of 13 administrators are women. Over 33% of instructors do not have master's degrees. Sixty-six percent of full-time instructors have graduate degrees and 19% have less than a bachelor's degree.

O5b Of 185 employees, 14 (about 7%) are non-Caucasian.

O7a The College feels little competitive pressure at this time because its closest Missouri competition (MSSU) has become a four-year institution and must, within five years, relinquish all two-year degree programs. Student population is growing fast and a state program for funding community college students, A+, supports students financially.

O7b The Institution has not had a written strategic plan in the past, and the use of "strategic planning" in the System Portfolio refers to AQIP planning.

O2b The College provides programs for 3,100 academic for-credit students for high school students, including Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED), programs for migrants, high school equivalency, Upward Bound for Math & Science, and served 4,800 students in the Alliance for Business Consulting and Development.

1C3 The AA transfer program is the College's largest instructional program, with 25 disciplinary programs.

O2c The College offers classes through its Business and Consulting program and through its Environmental Resource Center.

O3b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, and local taxpayers and community members.

O8a Recent, significant enrollment growth is increasing the strain on staff and facilities, and this growth is expected to continue.

O8d The new president and recent changes in board leadership, underscore the significant change taking place in the College leadership. The impact of these changes on strategic planning and the role of the AQIP accreditation model within the Institution are perhaps not entirely clear because of the long tenure of the former President and board chair, approximately 20 years for each individual.

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

S 7C1 The College collects and reports data on 7 goal areas and 14 individual measures. The Institution has a highly developed technology infrastructure that supports datadriven decisions through the secure distribution to stakeholders. The Institutional Research Office collects data and produces an institutional dashboard.

S 7C2 The College has identified key institutional measures that are collected systematically.

S 7P1 The Institution has identified five criteria (relevance, mission specific, quality measure, repeatable, and cost) to determine the discretionary collection of data. This step often results in improved data quality, integrity, and consistency.

S 7P3 The College uses state and federal data for institutional comparisons and has joined with two consortia for comparison purposes.

O 7P3 The College has not clearly established criteria for determining the need for comparative data. New partners are needed to replace consortium members who have dropped out.

S 7P4 Data are analyzed systematically, particularly data related to Key Outcome Measures, in many cases on a monthly basis.

O 7P4 The narrative reports that a Dashboard is the primary means of sharing key data on 7 key institutional measures. Much mention of the Dashboard is made in the Systems Portfolio, but the description of the Dashboard and the process for constructing it are not included. If the Dashboard is a key measurement reporting device, then how it is constructed and used to make decisions needs to be more clearly stated.

S 7P5 The College has designed a process that links data collection and analysis to the Institutional strategic plan. Indeed, the Board uses data collected by the College to develop its plans.

S 7P7 The College has five criteria or data points and regularly scheduled data collection and analysis points for determining the effectiveness of the information technology system.

O 7R1 Measurement results appear to rely heavily on the perceptions of students and employees. Identification and use of more objective measures might yield more useful information. The Institution reports information on student access to computers and employee satisfaction as effectiveness results. It would be appropriate to report qualitative improvements in data to reflect activities described in 7P1 to 7P7, to report how data collected are aligned with institutional priorities for the purpose of collecting meaningful data. These measures fall short of providing sufficient evidence that the College is meeting needs in the Measuring Effectiveness process.

S 7P6 The College employs an Institutional Research Director who serves as an internal auditor at the College. A single point of responsibility helps ensure that this task is achieved. The Institution provides training to make sure that data are in compliance with FERPA and HIPPA privacy requirements.

O 7I2 The College discusses improvements in technology hardware and software, but the process for targeting improvements is unclear.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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

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

01a Crowder is a comprehensive, public community college with a main campus in Neosho, MO., and three satellite educational centers. It is an open-admissions institution. It has been in existence for 40 years.

01b The vision/mission of the College is the building of a "...civil, serving, literate, learning community of responsible citizens."

03b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, local taxpayers, and community members.

07a The College feels little competitive pressure at this time because its closest Missouri competition (MSSU) has become a four-year institution and must, within 5 years, relinquish all 2-year degree programs. Student population is growing fast, and a state program for funding community college students, A+, supports students financially.

07b The Institution has not had a written strategic plan in the past, and the use of "strategic planning" in the System Portfolio refers to AQIP planning (8C, p. 78).

08. Recent significant enrollment growth is increasing the strain on college staff and facilities, and this growth is expected to continue.

08b Due to retirements, the College expects significant turnover in the next few years.

08d A new college president, and recent changes in board leadership, underscore the significant change taking place in College leadership. The impact of these changes on strategic planning and the role of the AQIP accreditation model within the Institution are perhaps not entirely clear because of the long tenure of the former president and board chair, approximately 20 years for each individual.

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

OO 8C1/8P2

The Portfolio indicates that the College does not have an explicit vision for the next 5-10 years. The College's Strategic Plan includes goals and Key Outcomes (KO's); however, these goals appear to be quite general. The College has seldom had a strategic plan; most long-range planning has often been done by the presidents, executive council, and Board. While short-term planning activities are evident, a process for long-term strategic planning is not clear. Without a written plan, showing specific goals, timetables, budget implications, and a means for measuring results, it is unlikely the College can implement a coherent plan, or communicate progress on priorities to its key constituencies.

O 8C1 The College has experienced significant student enrollment increases, and consequently the need for four capital projects were identified in August 2004 to meet this increased demand. It is not clear if the College's planning takes into account if the increase is likely to be sustained well into the future.

S 8C2 Creation of the Executive Council, consisting of leading administrators in four major areas, appears to have created a means for improved communication about ideas for improved planning and progress.

O 8C2 The portfolio indicates that in planning the president sets the agenda, assesses progress, and updates the Board. There is no indication how progress is determined, and no evidence of measures and results that are communicated to the Board.

O 8C2 Table 8.1 (pp. 80-81) shows a general set of goals and key outcomes. There is no indication of more specific goals, outcomes, and no indication of results within this Category.

O 8P1 Planning for improvement is framed within the context of measurement, with outcomes developed by the Assessment Committee and the administrative team. It appears that all planning at the College may be measurement-driven rather than mission-driven. If so, then the College could improve its quality of "measurement" by attempting to measure what matters rather than focusing on what may be readily available to measure.

O 8P1 Strategies for continuous improvement are predominantly short-range rather than long-range.

OO 8P1-2 The recent change of administration and consequent review of the planning process offers an excellent opportunity for the College to re-shape its planning processes, priorities, and strategies.

O 8P1 The planning process appears to have no element of “environmental scanning,” of factors such as social, economic, technological, or political trends, nor a means for systematically determining their possible impact on the College.

O 8P2 The portfolio indicates the need to “re-think” how it perceives the role of institutional planning. There is no indication the College has reviewed systematically its key influences, challenges, and requirements, or how to define or address constituent expectations.

S 8P3/8 Key action plans are based on key outcome measures and managed at the administrator levels of the Institution. There appears to be a clear definition of responsibility, and departments have begun using a common tool (matrix) to display their progress in meeting the Key Outcome Measures.

O 8P3 Oversight of planning initiatives is primarily hierarchical, with first level responsibilities divided among three deans. Thus it appears that planning is a topdown activity, with limited input from other levels in the organization.

S 8P4 A college-wide committee is responsible for alignment of planning and strategy. This centralized system (ISAAC) is used for aligning the planning processes among various institutional levels of the College.

OO 8P4 The portfolio’s description of planning and implementation at the levels below the Executive Council indicates little opportunity exists to integrate the work of the various departments. It appears as though planning and management at the departmental level is maintaining a “silo” approach (a departmental internal focus), and consequently the College appears to be missing opportunities to use data to help the departments see their goals and outcomes in a broader organizational context, and therefore limits opportunities to plan and implement more coherently.

O 8P4 The portfolio explains who is responsible for coordinating and planning strategies, but it does not explain “how” these are implemented.

O 8P5 The process for selecting performance projections for institutional strategic goals is unclear.

O 8P6 The relationships of budget decisions to improvement efforts are not clear and direct.

S 8P7 Staff development is comprehensive. The College appears to emphasize staff development with bi-weekly meetings and training sessions, provides funds for attending conferences, and provides loans for attending courses outside the College. These loans are forgiven after three years of service.

O 8P7 While the College provides avenues for employee development, there is no clear planning process for developing new capabilities in response to changing institutional strategies or conditions.

S 8P8 Effectiveness measures cover a wide spectrum of college activity.

S 8R1 The College has results for significant areas, including the Key Outcome Measures and the results of the Vital Few projects, as well as program evaluations and department/division reports.

S 8R1 Results at the College are compared to other, similar colleges.

O 8R1 Several measures may not be robust enough: the graduation rate data was not thoroughly analyzed; results from two different quality programs were compared (do the differences show improvement, or just differences in measurement technique); the Fall-Spring retention rate was frequently cited but the Fall-Fall retention was not; the Campus Quality Survey measures confidence in planning without evidence of progress in meeting strategic planning goals.

SS 8R1 The decision to improve the program review process, though not a result in itself, is a very positive initiative which can be reinforced by appropriate assessment.

S 8R2 The Campus Quality Survey indicates the faculty and staff have a high degree of confidence in its administrative leadership.

O 8R4 Anecdotal information is presented in this section. Anecdotes are not a substitute for the systematic collection and analysis of data. Decisions based on anecdotal information are often a symptom of an organization that is in the earliest stages of collecting and using feedback. A process for measuring the outcomes of process improvement efforts would be useful.

SS 8I1 Improvement priorities noted appear to be very positive and should help the College differentiate and prioritize its various planning initiatives.

S 8I2 The College has recognized its most significant improvement needs and has set aggressive goals for improvement.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College's performance on this Category as 2 Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

02c The College offers classes through its Business and Consulting program, and through its Environmental Resource Center.

03b The College lists its stakeholders as alumni, area employers, business and industrial clients, feeder schools, receiving schools, state and federal agencies, local taxpayers, and community members.

06c The College enjoys support from the local communities, which donated or contributed to the acquisition of additional facilities for its satellite educational buildings.

06d The College has strong partnerships with the high school districts. A consortium of 42 school districts meets monthly with college personnel to share information and facilitate cooperative staff development activities with businesses and social service agencies.

9C1 The College has divided its collaborative relationships into three primary categories: 1) those with direct authority over accreditation and service delivery, 2) feeder schools, employers, receiving schools, and organizations with financial ties, 3) community organizations and suppliers.

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

S 9P1 The College views partnerships in multiple contexts: being created, built, prioritized. The College is purposeful in selecting partners, organized into three priority categories: primary, secondary, tertiary. It validates relationships with an 8-step, informal process.

S 9P1 Varied and comprehensive measures are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of relationships with the College's partners. The College uses surveys and focus groups to collect data regarding the quality and relevance of the relationships. The portfolio identifies relationships on three tiers. Results are reported in the section, or cross referenced to other criteria.

S 9P1 The Institution has established significant relationships with feeder schools and those relationships are prioritized, maintained, and built with systematic communication tools.

O 9P2 The feedback processes are not clearly described. How are data actually collected?

S 9P3 Through a comprehensive network of standing and ad hoc committees, councils and teams, the College builds and sustains a strong communications network for collaboration and community building.

O 9R1 Several of the measures that are tracked do not appear meaningful. Bookstore sales, for example, are a function of enrollment, costs of texts, etc. Data collection and analysis will more effective if more meaningful measures can be determined.

S 9R1 Results indicate that the College has developed strong relationships with the community in general including employers and feeder institutions. Enrollment by graduates of some area high schools is increasing.

O 9R1 The numbers of high school students attending the College are increasing, but it is not clear whether the percentage of graduates attending has increased.

O 9R1 Table 9.7 is confusing. What options exist for a student other than employment or continuing in education? Do the figures account for students who go to work and also continue their education?

O 9R1 Table 9.10 includes no comparison data, but the text includes a claim that MCCA participation by staff at the College is stronger than at other institutions in the state.

OO 9R2 Some rates that appear to be relatively important given the College's mission are not addressed in depth. For example, transfer rates are not systematically collected.

Enrollment data from feeder institutions are "not available." Also, if 100% job placement is the desired result (according to the portfolio), it is unclear why it would not be measured. Preparation for transfer and for career success are important goals, and routinely assessing the institution's success in meeting those goals will assist in providing the emphasis and recognition that appears to be lacking.

O 9R2 A claim of success for ABCD is not supported by data.

O 9I1 The College relies on largely informal processes for improving collaborative relationships. A more formal process could help in setting priorities, goals and performance metrics.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw the College performance on this Category as 2 Developing, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES FOR CROWDER COLLEGE

Strategic issues are those most closely related to the College's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these issues through analysis of your *Organizational Overview* and the feedback it provided for each Category. This list of strategic issues is included to assist you and your colleagues on prioritizing the important issues facing the Institution. Among these you may discover your vital

immediate priorities, the opportunities and challenges that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Accreditation issues are those that relate directly to your organization's evidence for Commission's five *Criteria for Accreditation* and their Core Components. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these accreditation issues through analysis of your *Portfolio* and the *Accreditation Evidence Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* you prepared to accompany your *Portfolio*. The Team has identified these issues as either an (a) evidentiary accreditation issue, meaning that additional evidence is needed or the evidence is unclear, or as an (b) accreditation issue, meaning that it must to be addressed prior to your *Quality Check up* and your *Reaffirmation Review*.

AQIP expects an institution to have three or four vital Action Projects at a time in order to encourage administrators, faculty, and staff to prioritize their efforts and resources. The Systems Appraisal Team has listed more than three or four issues, trusting that the College will discuss and prioritize those it concludes are most critical. If the team has identified accreditation issues, you must respond to those either by providing an addition to your portfolio (for evidentiary accreditation issues) or by including in your Action Projects one that addresses an accreditation issue that must be addressed prior to your *Quality Checkup* and *Reaffirmation Review*. This *Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis* is intended to intensify your continuing quality efforts as well as to provide you feedback on your continued fulfillment of the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*.

Accreditation Issues

The one concern that emerged from the analysis suggests the College review noted in 5P8 of this report. The full statement in this report is included below. This point relates to section Category One, Core Component 1e of the Higher Learning Commission's "Category for Accreditation." See more detail in the Handbook of Accreditation.

O 5P8 In reference to the Board (identities unknown), the described practice of selecting board replacements and early resignation to preempt the electoral process are contrary to accepted ethical practices of public bodies, and to *integrity*, as defined in the HLC accreditation criteria, (Category One). Further, (5P5) lunch meetings with the board should be open to the public, even though an agenda is not developed or distributed. Such meetings often create problems and generate negative perceptions in part because they are contrary to open meetings requirements.

Strategic Issues

The College acknowledges the need to shift from the present top-down approach to an inductive, bottom-up approach. The data-driven approach of a quality improvement system may well challenge what appears to be a culture tradition of primary control and management by the President and Board of Trustees. Implementing a data-driven approach is likely to shift more authority and control for planning and implementation to lower organizational levels. As the College increases the number of part-time workers and student workers, including staff and students in strategic decisions will become more difficult unless the College develops a comprehensive plan for shared decision-making.

Though the College is extensively involved in quality improvement processes, much of the narrative is about results and processes, with very little analysis of results, about their importance, and how they might be used for improvement. Evident throughout the portfolio are many committees, meetings, and reviews, but the results of these efforts are not clearly evident. The Institution is in the early stages of implementing quality processes in strategic planning and process alignment. It recognizes its core competencies and customers, and collects data in most areas of the organization. The collection and compilation of data is important in understanding the effectiveness of key areas of operation, however the College does not make evident the processes that can effectively and efficiently implement change when the data indicate the need for program and process improvement. While the College readily admits there is a disconnect in its strategic and long term planning, there appears to be no method or process in place to immediately meet this need as evidenced by changing national and international markets. To meet the needs of students in a timely manner, the College could benefit from developing a shorter process for approving and developing its programs as well as processes to meet the needs of both its internal and external customers. While there is a good deal of data collection, more important are how the data are used in achieving quality continuous improvement.

Though the College has devised a number of tools and processes for data collection and analysis, it also appears as though these processes have had little or no impact on the management of the organization. There is no evidence of "team management" issues that cut across the Institution. For example, individual administrators appear to have a dominant role, much as they would in a traditional organization. The problem is that administration practices could be limited or expanded depending heavily on the interests or limitations of individual administrators.

APPRAISAL SUMMARY FOR CROWDER COLLEGE

The Systems Appraisal conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement Program of The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools provides a comprehensive examination of the Crowder College conducted by a trained team composed primarily of higher education peer reviewers. In order to provide fresh and objective insights and perspectives the team also included reviewers from outside higher education. Following is the Appraisal Team's summary evaluation of Crowder College's current performance in each of the nine AQIP Categories.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: *Helping Students Learn* identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and cocurricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives,

faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: *Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs* examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: *Valuing People* explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward,

compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and wellbeing;

measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: *Leading and Communicating* addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: *Supporting Institutional Operations* addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning

and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: *Measuring Effectiveness* examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: *Planning Continuous Improvement* examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: *Building Collaborative Relationships* examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.