

February 14, 2013

Alan Marble  
President  
Crowder College  
601 Laclede Avenue  
Neosho, MO 64850

Dear President Marble:

Enclosed is a copy of Crowder College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. It begins with a concise Executive Summary, intended for those general readers that do not require a high level of detail. Your Systems Appraisal Team provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's Accreditation Liaison a copy of this report.

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

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

Sincerely,



Mary L. Green  
AQIP Process Administrator

# **SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT**

**in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of**

## **CROWDER COLLEGE**

**February 12, 2013**



**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CROWDER COLLEGE

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

- Crowder College has made some progress in developing its processes for Helping Students Learn. Core Student Abilities have been identified and are communicated through numerous methods including a mandatory new student orientation program. Crowder may accelerate its process improvement development by clarifying how different components of its systems connect, especially in assessing student learning and development. A number of different assessment points and tools are identified, but a limited number of support service results were shared so it remains unclear how they connect into a well-integrated, systematic approach to determining whether students learn what is expected of them. Program reviews are in place and some programs have documented performance results, yet it remains unclear if data are collected and how data are analyzed to provide for lasting improvements in all programs.
- Crowder College is taking steps to develop processes to identify distinct objectives that are aligned with the mission and vision of the college, are developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and, when fully developed, can be measured for effectiveness. The college might benefit from developing a definition of what constitutes a non-instructional objective to provide more focus and further advance the non-instructional priorities of the college. There is opportunity for Crowder to identify performance and impact measures for several of its non-grant funded initiatives to provide better evidence under this category. The processes used to evaluate the Perkins and ABE programs may serve as a model. The implementation of the new ERP system should assist in these efforts and in improving the key processes for identifying, managing, measuring and evaluating all non-instructional objectives.
- The college has a number of formal and informal mechanisms for collecting and analyzing information about student and other stakeholder needs, and for maintaining those relationships. The next stage in Crowder's quality journey may be to pull these mechanisms together into a more systematic, college-wide approach that includes clarifying what measures it will use to evaluate how well programs and services are meeting the changing needs of students across their educational experience.
- Crowder College has a variety of programs and processes in place associated with valuing people. Processes and programs include hiring, orientation, training and development, servant leadership,

personnel evaluation systems and ethical behavior—and appear to be systematic and standard in the majority of cases. However, there is an opportunity for the institution to develop comprehensive targets and benchmarks to evaluate results in many of the aforementioned areas.

- Crowder has processes that develop its mission, vision, and goals and leadership and communication processes that help to assure that alignment occurs throughout the institution. There are opportunities to better document the processes surrounding the review of the institution’s mission, preparing for leadership succession in administrative and faculty positions, and communicating to coordinate college actions. For the next stage of its AQIP journey, the college can consider further linking its decision-making and improvement targets to data analysis and reporting processes and to provide trend data for this category.
- Crowder College demonstrates its intention to be an effective college in terms of supporting institutional operations. They have identified several key processes for both student support and administrative services. There is a significant opportunity for the college to approach these processes as a system, to develop documentation and evaluation of processes, and to analyze results for use in planning for improvement. The new data collection system and Continuous Tactical Planning process should help with this.
- Crowder appears to have made some progress in Measuring Effectiveness since its last Systems Appraisal, including implementing its Jenzebar EX ERP system, acquiring the TK20 assessment system, and identifying sources of comparative data. The college has opportunities to further develop its processes for selecting, managing, and distributing data; for selecting comparative data sources; and for defining and collecting measures of its information and knowledge management systems.
- Through the TK20 outcomes-assessment software and its new Tactical Planning model, Crowder has begun to develop the infrastructure for coordinated planning. Crowder also appears to be in a state of transition with both short- and long-range planning for the institution. It has a significant opportunity to continue this progress by documenting the new processes, clarifying roles, ensuring alignment across different divisions and committees, setting and measuring performance, and benchmarking its performance with other organizations to learn if improvements are being made.
- Crowder appears to have strong partnerships with secondary schools and other higher education institutions. The institution is actively involved with community organizations, professional

affiliations and with state-level groups. Crowder's Foundation is growing and provides both operational and capital funding for college projects. The college has some measures related to these relationships but there is an opportunity to delve more into what impact each relationship has for both Crowder and its partners.

Crowder may now have the tools to compare itself to others in this general area, however it remains unclear since there is no documentation.

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

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## **ELEMENTS OF Crowder's FEEDBACK REPORT**

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

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

**Executive Summary:** Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

**Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis:** Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your Organizational Overview and the feedback it provided for each Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

**Critical Characteristics:** Your Systems Portfolio's Organizational Overview provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

**Category Feedback:** The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report.

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## STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution into jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

**Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*.** An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institution's systems and processes under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Crowder College has presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the *Criteria* will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

**Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies.** The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Crowder College in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Crowder will discuss these strategic



issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems

Appraisal Team identified:

- AQIP encourages institutions to take a process-oriented approach to continuous improvement. Crowder has a significant opportunity to develop its expertise in developing, documenting, and analyzing its processes. Many of the processes presented in the portfolio appear to be loosely connected events; consequently, it is difficult to determine if an overall systematic approach is in place. Developing the capacity to document and analyze processes should help the institution build its system to make improvements.
- AQIP institutions need to be dedicated to the development of an assessment and effectiveness culture, using data, annual planning, and reporting. As previously observed in the 2009 Feedback Report, and continuing with this Portfolio, Crowder's quality improvement efforts need systemic development in regards to identifying, analyzing and using data to determine effectiveness throughout the organization. While Crowder has presented some measures in this Portfolio, it has not been consistent and there is inadequate evidence that performance targets are established, results monitored, and information is used for planning and improvements. Enhancement of the college's institutional research function may help with this and the use of external benchmarks provides a technique to ensure that continuous improvement is not strictly inward looking and takes advantage of the success of other institutions with similar operations and goals. This helps the institution to discern a fundamental question in quality improvement efforts: "how good is 'good' ".
- Throughout this portfolio, Crowder has identified goals set by the Board, annual goals, and goals set by divisions/departments. The college has also discussed a current state of transition from long-range to short-range goals. However, it is not apparent from the portfolio how planning is conducted using an intentional process that aligns goals of its board, college annual goals, and the goals of departments; it appears that this observation was also seen as an Opportunity in the 2009 Feedback Report. Planning is fundamental to continuous improvement efforts. Absent this process, it is difficult for the institution to articulate its strategic plan. With planning, Crowder can focus on key priorities and strategies for its future and can align resources to make the greatest impact.

- Crowder’s recently initiated major changes, such as the Continuous Tactical Planning model and TK20 program, may have significant impact on planning and for providing the documentation for the college’s next portfolio. Recognizing the newness of these changes, Crowder has multiple opportunities to implement these tools, to assess the impact of their use, and to use those results to improve both its systems and its results.

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## USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP’s core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration and integrity. Based solely upon an organization’s *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report’s chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other

methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

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## 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 Crowder College, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes [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.

### Item Critical Characteristic

- OV1a Crowder is a comprehensive public community college that serves a rural, nine-county region in southwest Missouri through a main campus in Neosho, three full-service attendance centers in Webb City, Cassville, and Nevada, and several smaller community facilities and on-line courses.
- OV1b Crowder's vision is to build a civil, serving, literate learning community of responsible citizens and it operates with a "Servant Leadership" approach toward institutional governance.
- OV2 Crowder offers AA, AS, and AAS degrees, a range of certificates, community education programs, customized training, and consulting services for business and industry. The college also operates an area technical school for secondary students and a fully-developed system of TRIO programs.
- OV3 Overall enrollment has grown by 58% in the last five years. While the vast majority of enrollment is on one main campus, distance education-- including online and high school dual credit—is a growing delivery method. "Off-campus" attendance centers have also grown over the past few years. 45% of all enrollments are full-time students.

- OV4 Crowder maintains collaborations with business and industry through program and academic advisory committees and with K12 and other regional higher education institutions through a variety of mechanisms. Of interest in future planning is the expansion of 2+2 partnerships through the University Center (UC); currently, Crowder students can earn several four-year degrees through collaborations with Missouri State University and Missouri Southern State University.
- OV5 As of the fall 2011 semester, Crowder College had 99 full-time faculty teaching 43% of course offerings and 357 adjunct faculty members teaching the other 57%. The group is almost equally divided between males and females; its ethnicity roughly correlates with that of the region.
- OV6 The College's main campus is located in Neosho, Missouri and it operates three attendance centers located in Nevada, Cassville and Webb City. Facility plans include an additional location in McDonald County and improvements and expansion of the main campus.
- OV7 Crowder primarily competes for students with Missouri Southern State University, which is located 20 miles north of Crowder's Neosho campus. There are three other public two and four-year competitors in the region as well as two private, for-profit technical colleges.
- OV8a Key opportunities include anticipated growth in two areas (Webb City campus and delivery center in southern McDonald County), a strong Foundation whose efforts resulted in a \$2.2 million contribution to two capital projects, and growing interest in alternative energy and two online health programs (Applied Behavior Analysis and Addictions Counseling).
- OV8b Challenges include accommodating very rapid enrollment growth with limited full-time employees, growing expenditures associated with developmental course offerings, rising operational costs attributable to technology needs of faculty, staff and students, and a leveling off of high school graduates... all within a context of finite resources.

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## 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.

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## **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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:**

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- OV2      Crowder offers AA, AS, and AAS degrees, a range of certificates, community education programs, customized training, and consulting services for business and industry. The college also operates an area technical school for secondary students and a fully-developed system of TRIO programs.
- OV3      Overall enrollment has grown by 58% in the last five years. While the vast majority of enrollment is on one main campus, distance education-- including online and high school dual credit—is a growing delivery method. “Off-campus” attendance centers have also grown over the past few years. 45% of all enrollments are full-time students.
- OV8b      Challenges include accommodating very rapid enrollment growth with limited full-time employees, growing expenditures associated with developmental course offerings, rising

operational costs attributable to technology needs of faculty, staff and students, and a leveling off of high school graduates... all within a context of finite resources.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1P1	S	Crowder College has identified Student Abilities in which it expects to document rising student competency. The Student Abilities reflect the College's mission and vision statements and the institution is now beginning to measure success in these areas.
	O	Crowder College mentions an extensive process used to develop its Student Abilities, but this process is not described, nor is it clear which stakeholder groups were involved nor how measuring success is completed. As such, Crowder will have the opportunity to document and make adjustments accordingly to ensure students are growing in the areas identified.
1P2-1P3	S	Crowder has developed a new program/project planning process to feed into the Curriculum Committee. The process will help to assure that new programs and courses integrate the Student Ability goals and align with Missouri's state articulation agreement as appropriate.
	O	While the college affirms that student abilities are addressed in the new program/project planning process, it is unclear where outcomes are reviewed in the processes described in 1P3. Clarifying how student learning outcomes are identified and who is involved in those discussions may help the college and reviewers provide input on their alignment with the principles of high performing institutions.
1P4	S	The college uses various standard indicators to assess curricular currency and effectiveness; these are strengthened by the analysis of external data such as job market information, business and alumni surveys, and input from the program advisory committees.

1P5	S	Crowder College is an open-door institution that requires students to demonstrate basic levels of college preparation through the use of common tools such as ACT scores and/or the COMPASS assessment while providing alternative testing options as needed for special populations.
1P6	S	Crowder College communicates preparation and learning requirements via the College website, course syllabi, student orientation, admissions and recruitment materials as well as through faculty and staff.
1P7-1P8a	S	Crowder College utilizes several interest inventories and an “intrusive” advising system to guide students in identifying their learning goals and curricula. Crowder’s open-access mission extends to several student assistance programs including Academic Resource Center, Student Support, and College Assistance Migrant Program.
1P7-1P8b	O	Although Crowder discusses the availability of assessment tools to assist its students, it is not clear the extent to which these are used nor the effectiveness in assisting students.
1P9a	S	Crowder’s first-time college student orientation course identifies each student’s learning style. This information is used to help students develop as learners. College instructors receive professional development to address different learning styles.
1P9b	O	Although instructors are encouraged to utilize activities that appeal to diverse learning styles, the process through which these techniques are actually employed is not clear.
1P10	O	While Crowder identifies services available to students with disabilities, it does not address how it meets the needs of other on and off campus student subgroups. Clarifying major stakeholder groups, their needs and how those needs will be met may help Crowder improve enrollments and retention of these students.
1P11	S	Crowder College has systems in place for defining, documenting and communicating across the institution expectations for teaching and learning: course grades, transfer reports, various assessments and testing, faculty evaluations and community and business surveys.

- 1P12 S Crowder determines its course delivery using an intentional system that balances the assessment of student need/demand with institutional capabilities and resources. The range of course delivery modes includes traditional, online, hybrid, and Student Directed Learning.
- O It is unclear how the voice of students is incorporated into the development of course schedules.
- 1P13 S Crowder uses an annual program review and advisory councils – made up of employees, students, and industry representatives - to ensure that courses and programs are up-to-date.
- 1P14 S Crowder has identified a process for the discontinuation of courses and programs that is based on market analysis, student enrollment, and the demand for graduates. A process is in place for discontinuation of a course or program that includes notification to affected faculty, staff and students.
- 1P15a S Crowder uses surveys to assess student and faculty support needs. Those needs are then met by support service areas like the Academic Resource Center and the Teaching Technology Center and through the budget development process.
- 1P15b O Although the college has addressed the professional development needs of faculty, it is unclear if there is a formalized process to solicit information on other needs.
- 1P16 O It is unclear what goals exist for the co-curricular programs and how the college ensures the goals align with curricular goals. Clarifying how these co-curricular programs develop students and support the mission may help to ensure that alignment is intentional and capable of being evaluated.
- 1P17 OO It is unclear what processes Crowder uses to ensure that students receiving awards have met the college's expectations for learning and development. Developing such processes may help the institution collect data to support improvement and accountability.
- 1P18a S Crowder College organizes student assessment around its nine core abilities as they are articulated in the program, course, and co-curricular contexts. Various



- internal and externally normed measures are utilized as assessment instruments. A related action project is planned.
- 1P18b O The college has an opportunity to clarify how course, program, co-curricular and institutional levels of assessment and assessment activities come together into a system that provides actionable information on how students are progressing and whether they have met the performance expectations at various levels of the college.
- 1R1-1R2 OO Crowder College has the opportunity to report on the direct measures, particularly for the Student Abilities, which assess student learning and development across the college curriculum. While the college describes having these processes, it would be useful to see what data has been collected and analyzed to assess Student Abilities.
- 1R3 O Although Crowder presents some results for some programs such as the water treatment program and the EMT/Paramedic Technical Skills Assessment, it is not clear how these results are utilized by the college, nor if the college has data for program-level outcomes in all of its other programs. Clarifying how program-level outcome assessments are deployed would help the college assess its progress in consistently evaluating learning at the program level.
- 1R4 S Crowder College tracks student three-year completion of program data for annualized cohorts. The college uses the CAAP instrument to collect evidence on how well graduates perform in reading, writing, math, science and critical thinking relative to national norms.
- 1R5 O Aligning more specific satisfaction measures, rather than relying on only one collective measure, may help the institution gain actionable insight on which support services to improve. Multi-year trends may be beneficial for Crowder to document to determine effectiveness of improvements.
- 1R6 S The college has multi-year, comparative data on C-BASE pass results and surveyed students are satisfied with their experience at Crowder College and would choose this institution again. Crowder is a participant in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) and is better able to understand its completion and success results in the context of peer performance.

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- 111 S The college has invested in a data collection system and has redesigned its Assessment Steering Committee to assist leaders in developing a more systematic approach to processes and results in Category One.
- 112 O It is unclear how the advisory committees and the continuous tactical planning process will help the institution select specific Category One processes to improve and to set performance targets. Clarifying how these processes will assist in this work may help to ensure it happens and is evaluated for effectiveness.

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- OV1a Crowder is a comprehensive public community college that serves a rural, nine-county region in southwest Missouri through a main campus in Neosho, three full-service attendance centers in Webb City, Cassville, and Nevada, and several smaller community facilities and on-line courses.
- OV1b Crowder's vision is to build a civil, serving, literate learning community of responsible citizens and it operates with a "Servant Leadership" approach toward institutional governance.
- OV4 Crowder maintains collaborations with business and industry through program and academic advisory committees and with K12 and other regional higher education institutions through a variety of mechanisms. Of interest in future planning is the expansion of 2+2 partnerships through the University Center (UC); currently, Crowder students can earn several four-year

degrees through collaborations with Missouri State University and Missouri Southern State University.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2P1-2a	S	Crowder has developed a process for identifying a wide variety of non-instructional objectives aligned with the mission and vision of the college, including athletics, student life, environmental health, capital growth and lifelong learning. This process appears to include all major stakeholder groups and includes a series of questions to assist in evaluation of proposals for new objectives.
2P1-2a	O	It is unclear from this portfolio how the College operates and manages its non-instructional objectives. Clarifying this, including how measures and targets are established, may help the institution in assessing the impact on core mission responsibilities.
2P3	S	Crowder employs a variety of both formal and informal means to communicate expectations including governance structures, funding source compliance efforts, and both internal and external media.
2P4a	S	The institution has established processes for assessing and reviewing objectives with oversight from the appropriate vice-president and involvement of Institutional Research and others to provide data
2P4b	O	Crowder has an opportunity to more clearly define measures for non-grant related objectives and to clarify how improvement recommendations are implemented. This could give the college some tools to evaluate the effectiveness of non-initiatives.
2P5-6	O	While there is some evidence that faculty and staff input is included in the review of objectives, it is unclear how objectives are adjusted in response to any identified needs relative to the non-instructional initiatives. Clarifying this part of the process may help to communicate shared expectations.

- |         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| 2R1,2R4 | O | Crowder has an opportunity to refine its definition of “other distinct objectives” to provide better evidence in response to the questions of this Category.  |
| 2R2-3   | S | Crowder provides results for specific initiatives of Student Support, High School Equivalency Program, and Educational Opportunity Center-- which compare favorably with comparative data from other institutions   |
| 2R1-2a  | S | Crowder College recently implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) which should result in improved collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of data for use in planning, implementation and evaluation of identified initiatives. |
| 2R1-2b  | O | Crowder has the opportunity to enhance the quality improvement process and subsequent performance by developing a more strategic method through which targets are set.  |

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### **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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs:**

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

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|------|---|
| OV1a | Crowder is a comprehensive public community college that serves a rural, nine-county region in southwest Missouri through a main campus in Neosho, three full-service attendance centers in Webb City, Cassville, and Nevada, and several smaller community facilities and on-line courses. |
| OV2  | Crowder offers AA, AS, and AAS degrees, a range of certificates, community education programs, customized training, and consulting services for business and industry. The college  |

also operates an area technical school for secondary students and a fully developed system of TRIO programs.

OV3 Overall enrollment has grown by 58% in the last five years. While the vast majority of enrollment is on one main campus, distance education-- including online and high school dual credit—is a growing delivery method. “Off-campus” attendance centers have also grown over the past few years. 45% of all enrollments are full-time students.

OV4 Crowder maintains collaborations with business and industry through program and academic advisory committees and with K12 and other regional higher education institutions through a variety of mechanisms. Of interest in future planning is the expansion of 2+2 partnerships through the University Center (UC); currently, Crowder students can earn several four-year degrees through collaborations with Missouri State University and Missouri Southern State University.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3P1	S	Crowder College surveys students, gathers input from student government, and consults profiles of area high school students to identify needs. Data is shared with the College Council, the board, and college departments for further review and evaluation.
3P2a	S	The college builds and maintains relationships with students through a variety of actions and services that extend the college mission (recruitment/marketing, student services, and faculty involvement) and join external stakeholders to students and to the institution.
3P2b	O	Developing a more systematic and intentional approach to building and maintaining relationships may help the institution to identify those that most contribute to the college’s goals and to learn whether the programs and services cover the full relationship from initial inquiries through alumni relations.

- 3P3a            S        The college uses a variety of direct and indirect mechanisms to gather feedback from official data sources, alumni, parents, employers, members of the community and legislators.
- 3P3b            O        The college has an opportunity to create more formal mechanisms to systematize its processes and analysis of data in this regard.
- 3P4             S        Crowder provides a large number of communication and relationship building tools to interact with internal and external stakeholders including social media networks. The HireCrowderFirst system provides an innovative link for graduates and employers looking for qualified employees.
- 3P5a            S        Crowder College utilizes environmental scanning to determine new student and stakeholder offerings and services and to direct institutional consideration to appropriate university constituencies.
- 3P5b            O        While some general criteria are in place for analyzing a potential educational offering or service, it is unclear how the college decides whether to pursue an initiative or not. Clarifying this aspect of the process can help to ensure greater consistency in which opportunities are pursued.
- 3P6a            S        Crowder College expects its employees to elicit feedback from students and stakeholders and to use that information in making improvements that serve their needs. It has identified a process by which faculty and student complaints are addressed at the institution as well as a process through which suggestions and complaints are handled via the Human Resource department.
- 3P6b            O        While the College has processes to receive complaints from students and external stakeholders, it is unclear how the complaints are tracked, analyzed and trends communicated.
- 3R1a            S        Crowder utilizes a variety of formal surveys to measure results in this category. These include academic assessments, surveys of student engagement and satisfaction, "Rate our Service" forms, and employer and third-party surveys.
- 3R1b            O        While Crowder College has demonstrated additional methods for collection of stakeholder feedback, there is the opportunity to supply results stemming from this collection of results.

3R2	S	Crowder reports Student Satisfaction Survey results and Student Engagement Survey results. While recognizing that longitudinal results are limited, these show high levels of overall satisfaction when compared to that found in peer institutions-- especially considering the institution's rapid enrollment growth with limited additional resources.
3R3a	S	The college has data demonstrating success in building relationships with students. Student organizations, the work of a retention specialist and freshman experience activities, tutoring, academic alerts, and library instruction services are among the vehicles for continuing this success.
3R3b	O	It is unclear how Crowder defines its measures of effectiveness for relationships with students. Data provided are for a variety of service areas or experience clusters (i.e., CCSSE benchmarks). By identifying the exact questions from the national surveys that would provide the most actionable insight into its relationships with students, the college may be able to target improvements more effectively.
3R4	S	Crowder College's performance results for indirect measures regarding relationships with key stakeholders include increased scholarships and numbers of college projects, increased repeat customized projects, and low employee turnover.
3R4-3R5	O	While Crowder provides some data on external stakeholder satisfaction, it has an opportunity to include data from the processes described (e.g., course satisfaction surveys) and from the general trends described in building relationships with stakeholders (e.g., Table 3.7). Providing this data may help to assess how well stakeholder needs are being met.
3R6	OO	Crowder College has a significant opportunity to define measures to compare its performance in satisfaction and relations with student and stakeholders. Data provided are not analyzed to identify actionable insights. Benchmarking may help to provide context for current performance.
3I1a	S	Crowder has created an Institutional Planning System and inclusive processes for identifying student and other stakeholders' needs. The system relies on surveys

and other feedback mechanisms to help identify needs, measure results, and provide feedback on improvements.

- 3I1b O Crowder College has an opportunity to report improvements made to processes and systems for understanding students' and stakeholders' needs.
- 3I2a S Crowder College sets priorities for improvement by enrollment trends, surveys, best practice methods, and the institutional planning process. Analogous processes inform targeting for communications outcomes.
- 3I2b O Crowder College has an opportunity to establish a more strategic method by which to target improvement opportunities.

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#### **AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- OV1b Crowder's vision is to build a civil, serving, literate learning community of responsible citizens and it operates with a "Servant Leadership" approach toward institutional governance.
- OV5 As of the fall 2011 semester, Crowder College had 99 full-time faculty teaching 43% of course offerings and 357 adjunct faculty members teaching the other 57%. The group is almost equally divided between males and females; its ethnicity roughly correlates with that of the region.



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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4P1	S	Crowder College identifies the specific credentials, skills and values required for all faculty, staff and administrators through position descriptions. Supervisors and/or administrators that oversee the position then review and modify as needed.
4P2	S	Crowder College uses a standard process for filling open positions within the institution. Pre-screening is conducted by Human Resources and a selection committee; successful candidates then participate in a face-to-face interview. Faculty positions require a teaching demonstration and criminal background checks are conducted on all new employees.
4P3	S	Crowder College appears to use processes for recruitment and hiring that are standard in higher education. It recruits both internally and externally through classified ads, posting announcements on the college web-site, notifications to regional university placement offices, and other publications as appropriate. Crowder retains its employees through: effective hiring practices, orientation, mentoring, shared governance and competitive wages.
4P4	SS	All new employees are introduced to Crowder's vision, history, mission, AQIP and values through a series of orientation activities. Each new employee is assigned a mentor from his/her department to work with while acclimating to the college environment.
4P5	S	Personnel changes are managed through institutional processes for filling vacancies. Crowder emphasizes professional development, employee demographics, and the tracking of enrollment to anticipate any additional personnel needs.
4P6a	S	Crowder has identified several mechanisms through which the communication of work processes occur: computer network accounts, email, distribution of information, employee awards and recognition events, year-end reports and a College Council to name a few.

- 4P6b O Crowder College may have an opportunity to strengthen collaborative efforts in that it is unclear from the portfolio the exact processes used to obtain input regarding employee satisfaction from part-time and off-campus employees.
- 4P7 S Crowder orients all employees to its culture of ethics and compliance, requires affirmation of state ethics requirements, and supports administrators and staff in participating in professional development activities.
- 4P8 S Crowder College uses a Staff Development Committee that polls employees annually to identify training needs. All training is designed to assist college personnel in fulfilling the institutional mission.
- 4P9 S Crowder provides employees with professional development sessions offered throughout the year. These sessions are based on personal objectives and are related to organizational objectives. Rewards are tied to professional development and include prizes, awards, certificates and positive performance evaluations.
- 4P10 S Crowder College utilizes a systematic personnel evaluation system that is tied to the institution's mission and goals and is organized around the objectives of personal and institutional improvement. All evaluations are analyzed and reviewed by the Human Resources department.
- 4P11a S Crowder College deploys a variety of recognition, rewards and compensation practices that are tied to the values of caring, lifelong learning, creativity and innovation, ethics, collaboration and serving of others.
- 4P11b O It is unclear how the college's many different recognition and reward processes come together into a systemic approach that aligns with objectives for instructional and non-instructional programs and services. Mapping the processes into a system may help leaders identify possible gaps in reinforcing key outcomes.
- 4P12 S Crowder uses a variety of formal and informal mechanisms to collect information about employee motivation. Data collected is analyzed to identify improvement strategies, and where appropriate, the employee providing the information is informed of any action taken.

4P13	S	Crowder College conducts an institutional climate survey as well as an evaluation of the president to assess employee satisfaction. Crowder also provides employees with an active wellness program and has maintained a positive safety record. For each of the areas (employee satisfaction, employee health and safety, employee wellness) Crowder has identified support processes and associated evaluation tools.
4R1a	S	Crowder regularly collects and analyzes data related to areas such as grievances, turnover, absenteeism and salary comparisons to name a few.
4R1b	O	There may be an opportunity to establish and report on measures and goals for valuing other stakeholder groups such as students, vendors, and community partners.
4R2a	S	Crowder College reports a variety of positive results related to metrics associated with valuing people. Additionally Crowder was named one of the “great colleges to work for” by <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> .
4R2b	O	There is the opportunity to develop additional targets and benchmarks and seek opportunities for participation in AQIP projects from those who work night shifts or at off-campus sites.
4R3	O	Although Crowder appears to have some measures in place through which it assesses employee productivity, it is not clear that they are systematic in nature. There may be an opportunity to clarify how the reported measures align with the mission and goals of the college; in turn allowing for the institution to gauge effectiveness.
4R4	O	Crowder may have an opportunity to select and track more precise measures of employee productivity. Limited results and comparisons have been made available.
4I1-4I2	O	Crowder College has an opportunity to develop more systematic processes for designing areas of improvement and the establishment of goals. Very limited data has been presented in the area of improving people processes and setting targets for improvement.

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## 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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 5, Leading and Communicating:**

*Item Critical Characteristic*

- OV1a Crowder is a comprehensive public community college that serves a rural, nine-county region in southwest Missouri through a main campus in Neosho, three full-service attendance centers in Webb City, Cassville, and Nevada, and several smaller community facilities and on-line courses.
- OV1b Crowder’s vision is to build a civil, serving, literate learning community of responsible citizens and it operates with a “Servant Leadership” approach toward institutional governance.
- OV5 As of the fall 2011 semester, Crowder College had 99 full-time faculty teaching 43% of course offerings and 357 adjunct faculty members teaching the other 57%. The group is almost equally divided between males and females; its ethnicity roughly correlates with that of the region.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5P1a	S	Crowder has a process that develops its mission and values and it is able to articulate those products through a set of beliefs and avowed practices.
5P1b	O	It is unclear what process is used to define and update the mission. Providing additional detail would help to confirm how the process exemplifies the principles of high performing AQIP institutions.

5P2	S	The college has a philosophy of leadership at all levels of the organization and has several means in place to inform the college community of its priorities and progress including: College Council, administrative communications, annual retreat, and all-staff workshops each semester. The employee handbook provides access to policies and practices of the college.
5P3	S	College administrators, faculty, and staff follow a Servant Leadership Model in articulating Crowder’s mission and values. Senior leaders review each element on an annual basis to develop improvement strategies as needed. Annual retreats, innovation project teams, and long-range planning, the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, and publication of college performance measures provide the college with mission-driven direction.
5P4	S	Crowder’s president plays an active role in addressing the institution’s future needs and opportunities. This is accomplished through engagement with external stakeholders and periodic retreats with internal stakeholders. In addition, faculty and staff are active in organizations that involve peer institutions. Students are also involved in both societal and institutional issues through “think tank” sessions open to the entire campus community.
5P5	S	The college emphasizes decision-making at the level that is most invested in and impacted by the decision-- usually departmental. It strengthens this approach by granting significant autonomy to unit-level supervisors. Several broader forums for the identification of issues needing action and for decision-making itself are provided; the College Council is one such structure.
5P6	O	While Crowder has several mechanisms in place for collecting information about trends in higher education and workforce needs, it is unclear how this data is used in decision-making. Detailing how information is synthesized, analyzed, and communicated in decision making may help the college assess how well these processes inform decision-making.
5P7a	S	Crowder College has identified various venues for communicating between and among all institutional levels: monthly packets for its board, staff reports, informal discussions, publication of meeting minutes as well as formal

distribution methods, weekly newsletters, staff development sessions, standing committees, and a suggestion box.

- 5P7b        O        While the college relies on a number of events, meetings, and committees to facilitate communication, it is unclear how systematic these mechanisms are across the institution; consequently it is difficult to assess how fully they are deployed to coordinate action.
- 5P8         S        All Staff Days and staff development sessions, employee orientations, the college's professional development and staff evaluation program, employee handbooks, and a commitment to staff participation in institutional committees are among the means through which the college communicates a shared mission, vision, and high expectations.
- 5P9-10a    S        Crowder uses several processes for encouraging, developing, and strengthening leadership abilities. Some are formal, such as the Greenleaf Foundation's professional development program, while others are more informal, and take the form of chairing committees and leading projects.
- 5P9-10b    O        Although there is some evidence that the institution has thought about the qualities that a CEO should possess, there does not appear to be a programmatic approach for the succession of other key administrative and faculty positions. Crowder could strengthen its organizational resiliency by considering how it would respond to unexpected personnel changes and providing for continuity of mission, values, and leadership.
- 5R1a        S        The systems appraisal notes use of annual presidential evaluations and campus quality climate and community surveys to measure leadership and communication.
- 5R1b        O        While innovative measures and timelines are identified, actual results of each of these surveys are not documented. By providing results, Crowder has the future opportunity to demonstrate the value of these measures to the employees and community surveyed.
- 5R2         O        Crowder has participated in both the 2007 Campus Quality Survey and the 2012 Great College Survey. There are now opportunities to commit to either or both

- instruments to obtain a more reliable set of results and to accomplish the longitudinal analysis that cannot be obtained through varied assessments. Given the importance the college places on leadership and teamwork at all levels, having clear measures of collaboration and communication (especially across divisions) would be important.
- 5R3a            S        Crowder participates with the other Missouri Community Colleges in the National Community College Benchmark Project to have a comparative basis for its results in several quality survey areas; it appears to measure higher in most categories related to leading and planning.
- 5R3b            O        Crowder College has an opportunity to collect and analyze trend results with respect to peer institutions. Through such comparisons, the institution may discern its relative strengths or concerns when facing leadership or communication issues.
- 5I1              S        The college documents significant improvements in its evaluation processes—specifically including that of the CEO. Further, the process incorporates a “bottom up” element in which department managers evaluate vice-presidents and managers are evaluated by those they supervise. This is capped by a program of professional development and evaluation for the board of trustees.
- 5I1-2           O        Based on the data presented in the portfolio it is not clear how the institution sets improvement targets in a systematic and standardized way.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS**

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

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

*Item      Critical Characteristic*

- OV1a    Crowder is a comprehensive public community college that serves a rural, nine-county region in southwest Missouri through a main campus in Neosho, three full-service attendance centers in Webb City, Cassville, and Nevada, and several smaller community facilities and on-line courses.
  
- OV6     The College’s main campus is located in Neosho, Missouri and it operates three attendance centers located in Nevada, Cassville and Webb City. Facility plans include an additional location in McDonald County and improvements and expansion of the main campus.
  
- OV8b    Challenges include accommodating very rapid enrollment growth with limited full-time employees, growing expenditures associated with developmental course offerings, rising operational costs attributable to technology needs of faculty, staff and students, and a leveling off of high school graduates... all within a context of finite resources.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6P1a	S	Crowder identifies student support needs by analyzing both quantitative and qualitative measures including surveys, employee and advisory committee input and other institutional research.
6P1b	O	There may be benefit to the college to more fully describe how the processes work (involvement, timelines, etc). This could help the institution assess whether its mechanisms for collecting student support information are sufficient and efficient.
6P2	S	Crowder collects information on employee and other stakeholders’ needs through employee association meetings, surveys, and a suggestion box. It appears that the College Council regularly reviews the information.



6P3a	S	The college has various methods to educate and inform employees and students concerning safety and security issues and has established a tornado safe room as an outreach to community stakeholders.
6P3b	O	It is unclear how safety and security needs are evaluated and how processes are developed and managed. Clarifying and communicating these processes may help to demonstrate a systematic approach to providing a safe college environment.
6P4	S	Crowder has identified four critical student support services and six administrative services as well as user requirements and key measures for each.
6P5	OO	While the college has identified processes it uses, there is no evidence for how the college documents or supports these processes. This is an opportunity for the college since AQIP's approach to continuous quality improvement is based on process documentation, management and evaluation. There is also an opportunity to describe how these separate processes may function as an intentional system.
6R1-5a	S	Crowder has trend data available for some institutional and departmental measures and multiple years of student satisfaction surveys and comparative data with national benchmark colleges.
6R1-5b	OO	Crowder does provide limited results data, but there is no detail on how the information is analyzed and used in planning for improvement. The college also has an opportunity to develop data for all the key student support and administrative service processes identified in 6P4.
6I1	O	Although the college has identified some developments that may help it accomplish process improvements in the future, it has not addressed any improvements it has made in this category since the last Systems Appraisal.
6I2	O	Crowder has an opportunity to use the newly established Continuous Tactical Planning process to provide a basis for enhancing the setting of improvement target at the institution.

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## 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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:**

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- OV8a    Key opportunities include anticipated growth in two areas (Webb City campus and delivery center in southern McDonald County), a strong Foundation whose efforts resulted in a \$2.2 million contribution to two capital projects, and growing interest in alternative energy and two online health programs (Applied Behavior Analysis and Addictions Counseling).
- OV8b    Challenges include accommodating very rapid enrollment growth with limited full-time employees, growing expenditures associated with developmental course offerings, rising operational costs attributable to technology needs of faculty, staff and students, and a leveling off of high school graduates... all within a context of finite resources.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
7P1a	S	Crowder has identified key elements of its system for selecting, managing, and distributing data, including primary data requesters, key reports, and common uses for the data. Responsibility for the system rests primarily with Institutional Research, though other departments do collect and manage their own data.

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| 7P1b | O | Crowder has an opportunity to further clarify how it selects, manages and distributes data. Clarifying these processes can help the institution assess how well data systems meet the needs of instructional and non-instructional programs, and how well they are integrated with systems supporting program improvement.   |
| 7P2a | S | The college's Instructional Councils, Board of Trustees, and college administration select planning data. Each group manages and uses the data according to its operational purposes. Improvements to the Mathematics curriculum represent a good instance of data used to guide improvements.   |
| 7P2b | O | Crowder has an opportunity to further clarify processes used to select, prioritize, manage, and distribute data to support planning and continuous improvement. It appears that data are selected based on ad-hoc requests from groups like the College Council, but in other areas of the portfolio, the college reports identifying indicators of institutional health and goal-related measures as part of its planning process. Clarifying how these processes work may enable the institution to assess how intentional, consistent, and well deployed these processes are. |
| 7P3a | S | Data needs are determined by each department and division in coordination with the respective vice president. Reports are made available to all employees through the college's safe network drive and ERP system. The college is working to more fully utilize the capabilities of its ERP system and to implement an online degree audit system.   |
| 7P3b | O | Crowder has an opportunity to develop a more systematic, proactive process for determining needs specific to data collection, analysis, storage, and accessibility. No process is described for proactively determining the needs of the various departments. Clarifying these processes will help the institution assess whether its systems are meeting stakeholders' needs.   |
| 7P4  | O | Although the structures responsible for analyzing institutional data and results are identified, it is not clear that Crowder has developed a systematic and standardized process for analyzing institutional data and sharing the analyses with the organization to drive improvement. Having a clear process may help to   |

ensure all stakeholders understand the information and can help to transform it into action.

- 7P5a S Crowder seeks comparative data through a variety of sources, including the National Community College Benchmarking Project, Noel-Levitz, IPEDS, and the Campus Climate Survey. When the college's performance falls below national norms, departments or task forces follow up to seek additional information or take action.
- 7P5b O It is unclear what criteria and methods are used to select sources of comparative data. Current sources appear to be selected based on availability. Clarifying the purposes for which particular sources of comparative data are needed may help the institution better meet stakeholders' needs and college priorities.
- 7P6 S Crowder has a process in place to set department/division goals that includes collection of data, setting of annual targets, and review by administration to align with institutional objectives. One improvement made was the addition of 20,000 square feet at the Webb City site when the need was identified.
- 7P7a S Crowder has protocols in place to help ensure the security of its information systems. Timeliness of the information generated is achieved through a prioritization process within the Institutional Research Office.
- 7P7b O Crowder has an opportunity to define measures and feedback processes relative to the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of its information systems. Building in these measures and feedback loops may help to ensure the systems meet people's needs and continuously improve.
- 7R1 O While Crowder has developed some of its processes for evaluating the effectiveness of goals and comparing results, it does not provide measures for the performance of its information and knowledge management systems-- which is the focus of this Category. Defining goals for its data-enhanced decision-making culture and infrastructure, the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of its data systems, and so on, can help the college track whether it is making progress in this area.

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| 7R2  | O | While Crowder does provide one example of how measures and data are used to track the progress of its institutional goals, no data are provided that demonstrate that its system for Measuring Effectiveness meets the institution's needs.   |
| 7R3  | O | While Crowder has established state and national benchmarks for results in several areas, no results are provided for its system for Measuring Effectiveness.   |
| 7I1a | S | The college has invested in software to support its outcomes-based assessment system (TK20) which promises to enable assessment functions to be more aligned and systematic. It has also maintained internal committees, like the Instructional Council, to regularly review performance data. These represent individual efforts to improve the processes in this category.  |
| 7I1b | O | Although the participation in NCCBP and the acquisition of the TK20 system will provide technical support for the college to document its effectiveness, there are opportunities to strengthen the evidence that it provides, support effective target setting, and strategize on how it may create an institutional culture that embraces process improvement.   |
| 7I2  | O | Crowder cites its AQIP Action Project selection process as an example of how the culture and infrastructure help it select opportunities for improvement; however, it is unclear whether this process has been relevant to selecting specific processes and setting targets for improved results in its system for Measuring Effectiveness. Having processes for improving the systems for collecting, analyzing and using performance data can help to ensure they mature with other systems in the college. |

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## **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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:**

*Item      Critical Characteristic*

- OV8a    Key opportunities include anticipated growth in two areas (Webb City campus and delivery center in southern McDonald County), a strong Foundation whose efforts resulted in a \$2.2 million contribution to two capital projects, and growing interest in alternative energy and two online health programs (Applied Behavior Analysis and Addictions Counseling).
- OV8b    Challenges include accommodating very rapid enrollment growth with limited full-time employees, growing expenditures associated with developmental course offerings, rising operational costs attributable to technology needs of faculty, staff and students, and a leveling off of high school graduates . . . all within a context of finite resources.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
8P1a	S	Crowder maintains an annual planning process that involves key stakeholder groups. At an annual retreat, leaders review the mission, vision, and values; they also set goals and outcomes. Measures are established by the administrative team and College Council. The president and administrative team then use each key outcome to establish short- and long-term strategic objectives and action plans. Additionally the college’s board holds a semi-annual review as well as a summative review of the annual goals. The AQIP Steering Committee with cross-functional representation oversees the planning process.
8P1b	O	It is not clear what processes are in place to ensure the planning process is evaluated and improved over time. The college may want to consider identifying and monitoring measures of its planning process to assess how well it meets stakeholder needs.
8P2	O	Crowder acknowledges that it currently lacks clear distinctions between long- and short-term planning and has based assumptions on past practices. These

- distinctions may help the institution define how short-term actions support long-term goals and help them coordinate actions across divisions and departments.
- 8P3 O Although Crowder allows each department, division or unit to develop its own action plans, it is not clear how these plans tie to the college’s objectives. Additionally, it is not clear how these plans are rolled together to ensure alignment and minimize duplication of effort. Clarifying these processes may help to ensure coordination sufficient to accomplish college-wide goals.
- 8P4a S The College Council allows for representation from all areas and levels of the institution. Identified action plans are tracked by the vice presidents, and results are reported to the Council.
- 8P4b O Although Crowder identifies the College Council as its coordinating body, it does not explain how the group aligns and coordinates goals, strategies, and action plans. Developing this process may help to ensure consistency and transparency in the work of planning.
- 8P5 O Crowder provides the criteria it uses to define measures—i.e., relevant, capable of being compared, standardized—, and it defines performance targets at *acceptable* and *optimum* levels. However, the process used to define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets is not provided. Clarifying these processes may help to ensure measures and targets meet the college’s criteria, and their development is guided by input from appropriate stakeholder groups.
- 8P6a S The college uses its budget process to address long- and short-term goals with reference to evaluations and to performance outcomes from the previous year.
- 8P6b O It is unclear how strategy selection and action plans are linked across divisions and how the results of institutional assessment inform budget development. Clarifying how these decisions are made across divisions may help to ensure institutional goals and strategies are supported.
- 8P7 O Potential risk areas are identified through weekly administrative planning meetings. However, it is unclear what process is used to identify potential risks, evaluate risks identified, and take appropriate action. Clarifying these processes may help to ensure risks are identified and assessed effectively.

- 8P8a            S        The college has programs and other resources in place—including college credit coursework, bi-weekly sessions, and a sabbatical policy—to help faculty and staff develop their professional capabilities.
- 8P8b            O        Human resources and the college staff development committee incorporate some planning themes into the schedule of their bi-weekly development sessions. However, it is unclear how the college identifies key training needs and aligns development opportunities with the college’s strategic goals.
- 8R1             OO       Eight measures are identified, but most of the measures appear to be processes (e.g., strategic quality planning, quality assurance, AQIP system portfolio appraisal, program evaluation), data collection instruments (e.g., community survey), and reports (e.g., departmental and divisional reports). It is unclear whether the institution has yet identified measures of its planning processes. By defining measures, the college can more effectively evaluate whether the processes meet stakeholders’ needs.
- 8R2a            S        Crowder has effectively planned and funded recent new facilities on campus. In addition, other action projects are on track for completion on designated timelines.
- 8R2b            O        Crowder has an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive set of results for its strategies and action plans than the completion of two building projects and the timely progress of its current three AQIP action projects. The college may want to identify key measures whereby it can assess its processes for developing, aligning, and implementing goals, strategies, and action plans across the institution.
- 8R3             OO       The college has a significant opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of its Continuous Tactical Planning model by clarifying how it enables the projection of future performance levels and by providing examples of targets set through the process.
- 8R4             O        Crowder does not have results to report for its planning processes. Defining measures that would enable comparison with other organizations and higher education institutions may help the college evaluate its new processes.



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| 8R5  | OO | It is unclear the extent to which Crowder College can document the effectiveness of its current planning process despite its recent modifications and evidence of institution-wide participation. Clarifying these processes may help the institution collect the evidence to determine if changes are effective. |
| 8I1a | S  | Crowder has recently launched an outcomes-based assessment software program and is currently in the process of working with pre- and post-tests for measurement of student learning.  |
| 8I1b | O  | Crowder has an opportunity to demonstrate how the outcomes-based assessment software program will be used to inform the selection and prioritization of objectives, strategies, and action plans.   |
| 8I2  | O  | While some aspects of the planning process appear to be inclusive, there is continued opportunity for Crowder to document how and where its institutional culture is supporting continuous quality improvement.   |

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## **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 Crowder College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships:**

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- OV4      Crowder maintains collaborations with business and industry through program and academic advisory committees and with K12 and other regional higher education institutions through a variety of mechanisms. Of interest in future planning is the expansion of 2+2 partnerships through the University Center (UC); currently, Crowder students can earn several four-year

degrees through collaborations with Missouri State University and Missouri Southern State University.

OV8a Key opportunities include anticipated growth in two areas (Webb City campus and delivery center in southern McDonald County), a strong Foundation whose efforts resulted in a \$2.2 million contribution to two capital projects, and growing interest in alternative energy and two online health programs (Applied Behavior Analysis and Addictions Counseling).

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1	S	Crowder uses a number of mechanisms to build and maintain relationships with educational institutions. It uses a series of key questions to decide whether to pursue partnership opportunities, including consideration of shared expectations, communication strategies, and decision-making processes.
9P2	S	Crowder College has identified various strategies through which the institution builds relationships with educational organizations and employers. Some of the means by which they do this include: networking, articulations, surveys, transfer fairs, local needs, employer feedback and customized training.
9P3	S	A variety of partnership and consortia agreements extend relationships with student service providers. These include Cottey College, MOIUS/SWANN, tutoring and food services, and area agencies, as well as the Crowder Foundation and Missouri A+ program.
9P4a	S	A general process for selecting suppliers appears to be in place, including policies, decision makers, and criteria for selecting vendors.
9P4b	O	While the response indicates collaboration with vendors and others providing materials and services, a deliberate process to evaluate the collaboration and mutual benefit for the college is not described.
9P5	S	The college follows applicable regulations and policies for its relationships with educational associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the community. As an accredited institution and a state-funded institution of higher

		education, member of the Missouri Community College Association, and active community partner, the institution complies with and endorses responsible practices in these relationships.
9P6	S	Relationships are maintained and continuing interaction occurs through a program of meetings and outreach. This is supplemented by the regular exchange of information between the partners—including feedback reports, survey results, and outcomes data.
9P7	S	Crowder uses regular committee meetings, distributed meeting minutes, all-campus meetings, and other formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate communication across campus.
9R1a	S	The institution has identified a series of primary, secondary, and tertiary measures that reflect its effectiveness in this Category.
9R1b	O	Reports and data are cited, but providing more detail on what measures within these reports and data collections are reviewed may help to ensure information collected relates to the desired outcomes of these partnerships.
9R2a	S	The college documents favorable performance results in the following areas: enrollment from feeder schools; its dual credit program; its relationships with transfer/receiving institutions; exit surveys of graduates; Foundation gifts and bequests; its partnership with Missouri Southern State University, and its membership in MCCA.
9R2b	O	It is unclear how the results provided tie to the college's goals or targets for this area. While results are generally favorable, there is the opportunity to identify them as the product of an intentional process with specified performance objectives.
9R3a	S	Results comparisons through the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) are documented in other areas of the Systems Appraisal and reveal several areas of comparative strength. Documentation is also provided in respect to Crowder's Dual Credit program and Alliance-program-funded customized training projects.

- 9R3b            O        The college's comparative results are not documented across all 20 areas covered by the NCCBP; similarly there may be an opportunity to compare Crowder's Foundation statistics with those other institutions.
- 9I1a            S        The college utilizes several informal and formal mechanisms to improve its processes and systems for building collaborative relationships.
- 9I1b            O        Crowder recognizes an opportunity to further define data elements for this category and to develop a process to share the information more efficiently and effectively.
- 9I2a            S        Targets are set by reviewing college and department goals and current performance data annually. Progress on the targets is reviewed through mid-year and annual progress reports.
- 9I2b            O        Although some improvements are cited, there is further opportunity to document how improvements flow from an intentional process and how the institution's culture may support quality improvement.