SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

CINCINNATI STATE TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

September 12, 2005

Academic Quality Improvement Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Systems Appraisal conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement Program of The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools provides a comprehensive examination of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College conducted by a trained team composed primarily of higher education peer reviewers. In order to provide fresh and objective insights and perspectives the team also included reviewers from outside higher education. Following is the Appraisal Team's summary evaluation of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's current performance in each of the nine AQIP Categories. These evaluations are in the form of rubrics, or descriptive statements concerning the team's perception of your current level of institutional maturity for process design, process deployment, performance results, and improvement cycles for each Category. The single words AQIP uses to refer these rubrics are:

- **Beginning.** Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.
- **Developing.** Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. Anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals is provided.
- **Maturing.** Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of

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outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

- **Proficient.** Practical, sturdy processes that generally achieve their fundamental goals are in place. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used throughout the institution. Mid-term (two-four years or more) data on performance results exist in most areas. Shorter trends (under five years) of improving levels of performance can be found in some areas. Information collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes is used systematically in a few significant areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in a few significant areas. A record of significant improvements resulting from systematic multi-year (two - 10 year) improvement processes is provided.
- **Accomplished.** Robust, experienced processes exist that usually achieve many of their goals. Successful approaches and processes are often adopted and used throughout the institution. Mid-term (two-four years or more) data on performance exist in many significant areas. Shorter trends (under five years) of improving levels of performance can be found in many or most areas. Information collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes is used systematically in many areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in many areas. The organization identifies a record of concrete advances in a few areas resulting from rapid improvement cycles occurring at least annually.
- **Commendable.** Strong, established processes exist that usually achieve most of their goals. Successful approaches and processes are frequently adopted and used throughout the institution. Long-term (five years or more) patterns of high performance exist in most areas. Long-term trends (five years or longer) of improving levels of performance can be found in many areas. Information collected on performance of world-class organizations with similar processes is used systematically in many areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in most areas. The organization identifies a record of concrete advances in many areas resulting from rapid improvement cycles occurring at least annually.
- **Outstanding.** Vigorous, tested processes exist that consistently achieve all of their goals in all or most areas. Successful approaches and processes are fully deployed throughout the institution. Long-term (five years or longer) patterns of high performance exist in all or most areas. Long-term (five years or longer) trends of improving levels of performance can be found in all or most areas. Information collected on performance of world-class organizations

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with similar processes is used systematically in all or most areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in all areas. The organization has a record of significant advances in all or most areas that resulted from rapid improvement cycles occurring at least annually.

The complete Systems Appraisal Feedback Report contains evaluation of the processes, performance results, and improvement strategies under each of these nine AQIP categories, pointing out where the team sees Cincinnati State Technical and Community College current activities and practices as strengths and where it sees in them opportunities for improvement.

As you study the results of this Appraisal, do *not* ignore your strengths and focus *solely* on the possibility of improvements. Your strengths offer significant opportunities as well: they can be celebrated as model practices, deployed or imitated in programs throughout the institution, and used to inspire new approaches to performance enhancement in other areas.

Rubrics assigned by Systems Appraisal Team's to describe Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's current performance on each AQIP Category	
1: Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Developing**
2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. These are *distinctive* in that they distinguish your institution from other institutions, which likely have different sets of purposes and goals. 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.	**Developing**

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3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Beginning**
4: Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of employees — your faculty, staff, and administrators —- since the coordinated efforts of all these people 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.	**Beginning**
5: Leading and Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Beginning**
6: Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Developing**

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7: Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. Since AQIP Category requires measures of the success of the processes within it, your measures for Category 7 will track your institution's *overall* performance in collecting and distributing the right data to the right people at the right time.	**Beginning**
8: Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Developing**
9: Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.	**Maturing**

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that these are the STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES for Cincinnati State Technical and Community College:

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 identifier your institution's

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

Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies. The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues (labeled S) to assist Cincinnati State Technical and Community College in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to

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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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

S	Budget - Finance	CSTCC faces on-going financial challenges with the continuing decline in state contributions to funding. CSTCC's portfolio indicates that enrollment increases are linked to increased expenditures, which result in higher expenses per FTE than at three out of four of its competitors. Further projected enrollment increases will challenge the College to develop new sources of revenue if it is to maintain low tuition and ensure access. In order to meet its goal of becoming the college of first choice, the institution may need a strategic plan that is tied to a sound financial plan for the future.
S	Communication	Although CSTCC has identified numerous cross-campus communications mechanisms and opportunities for shared decision making, faculty and staff still identify intra-campus communication as a problem. Yet the portfolio does not seem to address the need to find new approaches for improving the communication pathways between the College leadership and its constituents. The College is engaged in processes and shared governance to the point that processes themselves seem to be breaking down, key constituents are not participating and purposes are lost as noted in Category Two in the CSTCC portfolio. In addition, mechanisms for measuring the effectiveness of communication and employee satisfaction with communication systems are lacking. Without two-way communication and a "closing of the loop" between leadership and the rest of the institution, it is not clear how the institution will reach its strategic goal of becoming first choice. Leaders may want to pinpoint specific sources of discontent and put a plan in place to address improvements.

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S	Diversity	The institution's mission indicates respect for diversity (of ideas and people). While the institution indicates that it offers some programs such as TRIO targeted to diversity, there appear to be no other prioritized short- or long-term goals or indicators for providing learning or support services focusing on diversity of ideas and people, or improvement projects that address other "diversity" needs.
S	Assessment-Measurement	CSTCC should be praised for its work in beginning to define desired outcomes for general education and adding that effective collaboration between faculty and administration will be needed to develop and implement appropriate quantitative and qualitative assessment methods to determine how well those outcomes are being met. The same approaches will need to be applied to specialized programs. Assessment of student support services could also be considerably strengthened by defining desired outcomes (beyond usage statistics) and assessing for them.
S	Assessment-Measurement	The College lacks a system for monitoring the effectiveness of its measurement and evaluation processes as evidenced in Category Seven of the portfolio. As procedures for assessing learning, strategic planning, and other performance evaluation are developed and implemented, the College should also work on approaches to measuring the effectiveness of its measurement systems.
S	Assessment-Measurement	CSTCC seems to have an abundance of reporting mechanisms across the institution, a great deal of decentralized data collection. Within the Portfolio, CSTCC notes there seems to be contradictions between data collected and survey information and use of the information. CSTCC seems to struggle to develop methodologies for data use and to report specific targets for improved performances. Without measurable objectives, the institution will not know when it has achieved its goals. For example, there is a disparity between the scorecard measures and the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, as the scorecard is based on the former strategic plan.

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S	Assessment-Measurement	The effectiveness of key College activities and processes, including student learning, community outreach, collaborative relationships, and achievement of other distinctive objectives appears to be measured primarily by numbers and percentages. Numbers are often presented in the portfolio without interpretation or explanation of the scales used, comparative data or performance targets, making it difficult to determine the level of success that the numerical measures represent. As the College continues to develop its strategic planning processes and key performance indicators, leaders may want to consider setting specific objectives that are qualitative as well as quantitative-for example, establishing measures of effectiveness for collaborative relationships.
S	Institutional Effectiveness	The institution appears to be in the early stages of the "quality journey" and has a number of new or redesigned projects and processes, including new student orientation, a new strategic planning process, and a new program review process, among others. The institution also indicates in the "improvement" sections of the portfolio that it has identified many plans for improvement. In addition, the institution notes that it wants to expand its AA and AS programs and create a brand image, yet there appears to be no carefully laid out plan for achieving this new image and this new brand, to make the institution unique, distinctive, and first choice. The institution may need to prioritize and focus more closely on just a couple of key issues and improvements, especially for purposes of resource allocation and financial stability-rather than on so many areas and issues.
S	Leadership Succession	Following the national trend, many faculty, administrators, and staff at CSTCC are retiring in the next ten years. As CSTCC notes in the Portfolio, it needs to develop a succession plan for its classroom and administrative leadership.

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S	Faculty Development-Evaluation	CSTCC occasionally refers to campus-based faculty development activities and groups, but leaves the impression that there is no centralized, formal faculty development office or program. The College may want to consider the feasibility of centralizing faculty development and creating a program. Such a program could be particularly helpful with improving assessment of learning and identifying unmet student learning support needs.
S	Faculty Development-Evaluation	The College may wish to bring in external experts for assistance in developing a faculty performance evaluation system. Implementation of a formal faculty development program may be a catalyst for faculty to see the value in implementing their own performance evaluation system. Aligning faculty development and the performance evaluation system may result in improved faculty morale, teaching effectiveness, and student success.
S	Advising	CSTCC would like to establish a mandatory advising program. At present, students can self-advise and register for classes. Self-advising can be problematic because information such as course sequencing, prerequisites, and graduation balance sheets do not seem to be accessible to students.

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

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lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned?

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

Cincinnati State Technical and Community College 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, significant issues for your institution, and an Appraisal Rubric score for each Category. These are presented in four sections of the Feedback Report: Critical Characteristics Analysis, Category Feedback, Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis and the Appraisal Summary. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

Each member of the Systems Appraisal Team devoted many hours to analyzing and reacting to your *Systems Portfolio*, first individually and then via a consensus process. There are no one-

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person idiosyncratic, or subjective opinions here. Most of the team's members have had executive responsibilities in colleges and universities, but the team also included at least one person whose work and experience lie outside of higher education, and who could help the team maintain perspective on the work higher educators still have to do to bring quality principles into all areas of the Academy. All team members are committed to promoting continuous quality improvement in higher education and have received training in quality processes. We know that you and your colleagues will find the astuteness of their perceptions, as embodied in this report, useful in your commitment for continuous quality learning.

Good as the team was, however, it is important to remember that they had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are 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.

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. At the end of the list of strengths and opportunities for each Category is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Category. This section consists of a series of statements reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality

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characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, 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.

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

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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's, 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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

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OO1a	Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (CSTCC), located in Cincinnati, Ohio, is a public two-year institution serving the greater Cincinnati area and southwestern Ohio.
OO1b	CSTCC has an annual enrollment of over 15,000 students (unduplicated headcount).
OO1c	CSTCC changed its mission from being strictly a technical institution to that of a community and technical college in 1994.
OO1d	CSTCC states that it is committed to providing learning environments that value diversity.
OO1e	In 2005, CSTCC adopted new vision, mission, and values statements that focus on technical and general education, academic transfer, and workforce development.
OO1f	The institution began its Quality Management Initiatives (QMI) in 1999. Quality improvement initiatives include AQIP, Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), the Ohio Award for Excellence, and its use of "Good to Great" as a management tool.
OO1g	CSTCC participates in the Ohio College and University Performance Study to provide increased accountability.
OO1h	Built in 2004, the Advanced Technology and Learning Center (ATLC) building includes 230,000 square feet dedicated to student services and activities aimed at promoting student access and success through high tech learning spaces to support the new mission and vision.
OO1j	CSTCC requires all students to participate in "real-world" work experience through cooperative education, clinical experience, or internships.
OO1k	CSTCC engages in quality assessment benchmarking through the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN).
OO1l	CSTCC's four selected AQIP action projects focus on technology infrastructure to support teaching and learning, advising, the "Answer Bank," and general education assessment.

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OO1 m	CSTCC is striving for national recognition and to become a first choice school in the local area.
OO1n	Distinctive features of the college include the focus of access, cooperative education and Workforce Development.
OO2a	The institution's educational offerings include 63 associate degree programs (AAS and AAB), four of which received Ohio State excellence awards, and 47 certificates as well as customized workforce development training. CSTCC also offers associate degrees in rats and associate degrees in Sciences as the foundation for transfer to baccalaureate programs. Eighty-four percent of students participate in the occupational programs and 16% participate in AA and AS programs.
OO2b	Educational programs and services are provided at a main campus with three buildings, two extension campuses at Harrison and Evandale, and five other regional sites.
OO2c	The college has established articulation agreements through Tech Prep and High Schools that Work to improve transfer opportunities for secondary graduates into technical programs.
OO2d	The college provided 200 courses via distance education or web enhanced in 2004-a 41% increase from the prior year
OO3a	Sixty-one percent of the students are part-time, 57% are female, 68% receive financial assistance, the average age is 27.6, 28% are minorities (greater percent at CSTCC than the proportion in the general population), and 87% need remediation.
OO3b	The geographical distribution of enrolled students is as follows: 71% are from Hamilton county and 15% from adjoining counties, while 88% are from the state of Ohio.
OO3c	Most CSTCC students are first in their families to attend college. The median household income is $30,000 to $39,000.
OO4a	CSTCC's partnerships include businesses, advisory boards, community organizations, suppliers, higher education consortia, the Foundation, and external organizations that enhance internal support services and learning.

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OO5a	There are 378 full-time equivalent employees, 180 of whom are full-time faculty, 62 administrators, and 136 staff. There are six employee organizations and three bargaining units, AAUP for the faculty. There are more women faculty (and total employees) than men, 24% of the employees are minorities, and many of the faculty are nearing retirement age. The ratio of administration to faculty to staff is 1 to 3 to 2.25
OO6a	Technical resources on the main campus include 1700 workstations, 30 servers, and 51 computer labs, 21 of which are in the new building. The institution is moving to implement a wireless computer environment.
OO6b	CSTCC is accountable to numerous national, state, and regional agencies, among them FERPA, OSHA, EPA, and so forth.
OO6d	CSTCC governance is guided by both an Ohio Board of Regents and an institutional Board of Trustees.
OO7a	Although in a very competitive environment, CSTCC seeks to position itself as the technical college of choice in the area by establishing a clearly defined niche with its relatively low tuition, unique academic programs and cooperative learning component.
OO8a	CSTCC identifies seven strategic challenges, including the importance of building community, the need to be more cost efficient because of decreased funding, student retention strategies for first-generation and developmental students, the increase in competition, lack of institutional identity, lack of agility, and importance of meeting workforce needs.
OO8b	Eighty-six percent of entering students need one or more developmental courses.

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

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stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN 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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

OO1e	In 2005, CSTCC adopted new vision, mission, and values statements that focus on technical and general education, academic transfer, and workforce development.
OO1h	Built in 2004, the Advanced Technology and Learning Center (ATLC) building includes 230,000 square feet dedicated to student services and activities aimed at promoting student access and success through high tech learning spaces to support the new mission and vision.
OO1j	CSTCC requires all students to participate in "real-world" work experience through cooperative education, clinical experience, or internships.

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OO2a	The institution's educational offerings include 63 associate degree programs (AAS and AAB), four of which received Ohio State excellence awards, and 47 certificates as well as customized workforce development training. CSTCC also offers associate degrees in arts and associate degrees in Sciences as the foundation for transfer to baccalaureate programs. Eighty-four percent of students participate in the occupational programs and 16% participate in AA and AS programs.

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

S	1P1	The eleven common learning objectives, the General Education Competencies (GEC's), reflect internal and external expectations for CSTCC graduates and were created by a process that involved input from faculty, academic leaders, and the Executive Team.
S	1P2	CSTCC has a defined 10-step Academic Program Development Process for determining the feasibility, identifying needs, and developing and evaluating new programs. This process involves all stakeholders.
O	1P2	Figure 1.4 shows the process for new academic program approval. It is unclear how long this process takes and if a program can be developed on a timely basis to meet stakeholder needs.
S	1P3	All students are assessed to determine skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. An orientation course, College Success Strategies, is required for all degree seeking CSTCC students. It provides information to students on requirements for programs of study and student resources.
O	1P4	Although a variety of offices provide information to current and prospective students regarding the expectations for student preparation for the various programs, it is unclear how web-based and distance learning students receive specific services from Admissions, the Registrar's Office, and Advising Services.

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OO	1P5	Although students receive some career counseling and gain insight about learning styles in their orientation course, it is not evident how CSTCC students who are not prepared to be in a program are channeled into other majors, especially since advising is not mandatory.
S	1P6	CSTCC has a new faculty mentoring program, assigned by the Faculty Senate, that provides feedback on teaching effectiveness and strategies for improvement by a team of experienced faculty; CSTCC also has a faculty tenure process, a student feedback process, and student learning results in portfolios that suggest faculty effectiveness.
O	1P6	There are no consistent or systematic processes for linking teaching and faculty evaluations with learning effectiveness.
S	1P7a	The faculty "Course Owner" system ensures consistent learning outcomes, lab/clinical assignments, textbooks and materials. The "Course Owner" recommends changes to the Program Chair and faculty.
S	1P7b	CSTCC's calendar of five ten-week terms, daytime, evening and on-line courses allows students opportunity to complete an associate degree in two calendar years with nearly one year of cooperative education experience.
O	1P8	An academic program process provides programmatic review of student educational, developmental, and well being needs by examining both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Inclusion of job placement data would enhance the review process.
O	1P10	A full-time director and an assistant director of Student Activities oversee all student activities and ensure alignment of curricular and co-curricular objectives by working with the Academic Deans. The portfolio does not, however, provide details about how this process employs consistent/systematic conceptualization, implementation or assessment processes.

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S	1P11 a	The academic assessment process, designed by faculty in 1997, uses formative and summative assessment tools to assess students at various stages in their development. These assessments include course level direct measurements, program level capstone courses, and methods at the institutional level.
O	1P11 b	Application of academic assessment varies across the college. Full implementation would allow for replication of best practices for assessing teaching and learning.
S	1P12	The CSTCC cooperative education model contains several methodologies (licensure results, capstone course review and several surveys) to measure student preparation for employment or further education with high success rates for graduates.
O	1R1	General Education Competencies assessment results and other specific institutional and programmatic assessment results of learning objectives are not reported in the portfolio.
S	1R2	Passing rates on student certification programs provide evidence that students have acquired knowledge required by the professional associations; trend and comparative data shows a high percentage of degrees earned, higher attendance at four-year institutions, and employer satisfaction rates than at other institutions.
O	1I1	CSTCC has developed several processes to improve course changes, curriculum, and academic policies; a custom-designed database has been created to publish changes; and Faculty Senate is creating methods to ensure efficiencies among standing committees. It is unclear how these systems will be evaluated and improved upon.
O	1I2a	The College has recommended and is working towards mandatory student advising. It is unclear how they will implement, measure and set up benchmarks for their advising program.
S	1I2b	Specific priorities are established for aligning student learning needs with the development of the Strategic Plan.

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Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Developing:

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

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

OO1j	CSTCC requires all students to participate in "real-world" work experience through cooperative education, clinical experience, or internships.
OO1m	CSTCC is striving for national recognition and to become a first choice school in the local area.
OO4a	CSTCC's partnerships include businesses, advisory boards, community organizations, suppliers, higher education consortia, the Foundation, and external organizations that enhance internal support services and learning.

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OO8a	CSTCC identifies seven strategic challenges, including the importance of building community, the need to be more cost efficient because of decreased funding, student retention strategies for first-generation and developmental students, the increase in competition, lack of institutional identity, lack of agility, and importance of meeting workforce needs.

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

S	2C1	Three institutional objectives are in line with helping students: affordable access, Co-Op, and workforce development.
S	2P3	Faculty and staff needs concerning the distinctive objectives of the institution (access, Co-OP education, and workforce development) are determined through an annual review of positions and strategic planning, service reports, and union bargaining agreements.
S	2P4-2P5a	Figure 2.3 provides key quantitative measures and results, e.g., numbers of students and credit hours used for assessing three distinctive objectives; access, Co-Op, and Workforce Development.
O	2P4-2P5b	The analysis of distinctive objectives could be strengthened with the addition of some qualitative measures, for example, measures that indicate what learning outcomes result from Co-Op placements, and measures that indicate student rating of the value of the Workforce Development programs.
SS	2R1-2R2a	The Ohio Board of Regents data indicates that students taking "any remedial" return/transfer to another institution at a rate higher than those who take no remedial and also higher than the total of "all" students, remedial and non-remedial (Figure 2.10-11). Likewise, the data indicate that credits successfully completed by those taking Developmental Education are better than at three other institutions.

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O	2R1-2R2b	CSTCC has a greater percent of minority students compared to other area institutions and has more first generation college students than other area institutions (Figures 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8). The rate of increase in minority student enrollment, however, has not kept up with the rate of increase in enrollment at the college in the last five years. In addition, there appears to be no institutional priority to increase minority enrollments relative to demographic changes of the area.
SS	2R1-2R2c	CSTCC's emphasis on cooperative education, with 75% of graduates involved in cooperative education and a 96% placement rate, has led to national recognition.
O	2R1-2R2d	Enrollment in Co-Op placement has declined in the last five years, as have overall earnings, yet the enrollment in the College as a whole has increased in the last ten years (Figs 2.12, 2.13, 2.14). The College's current standing regarding cooperative education is not clear.
O	2I2	It is not evident how CSTCC communicates results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Developing:

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

AQIP CATEGORY 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and

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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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

OO1a	Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (CSTCC), located in Cincinnati, Ohio, is a public two-year institution serving the greater Cincinnati area and southwestern Ohio.
OO1d	CSTCC states that it is committed to providing learning environments that value diversity.
OO2c	The College has established articulation agreements through Tech Prep and High Schools that Work to improve transfer opportunities for secondary graduates into technical programs.
OO3a	Sixty-one percent of the students are part-time, 57% are female, 68% receive financial assistance, the average age is 27, 28% are minorities (greater percent at CSTCC than the proportion in the general population), and 87% need remediation.
OO4a	CSTCC's partnerships include businesses, advisory boards, community organizations, suppliers, higher education consortia, the Foundation, and external organizations that enhance internal support services

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

S	3P1-3P2	CSTCC describes in its portfolio a comprehensive program for reaching out to prospective students, both traditional and non-traditional, and has also developed specific strategies and programs to stay connected to current, prospective, and former students

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S	3P3-3P4	CSTCC indicates several ways it identifies changing community needs, what data sources are for each, and how results are communicated.
O	3P5	The process for identification of new student groups and associated programs does not appear to be aligned with the strategic planning process.
O	3P6	Although CSTCC indicates that it is developing the "Speak Out" online anonymous process to identify and resolve student problems and complaints, it is not clear how student complaint information is currently analyzed and used to drive improvement.
O	3P7	Although CSTCC identifies a dozen data source instruments-processes-by which it measures student and stakeholder satisfaction, portfolio Figure 3.4 (which also includes results numbers) provides no explanation of the meaning of the numbers or the scale on which they are based.
S	3R1	In a period of three years, alumni satisfaction has improved in eight of the ten areas surveyed. In addition, Noel-Levitz comparative categories and performance gaps areas are better than national figures in almost all eleven areas, including instructional effectiveness and advising. Other survey data collected since 1997 provide consistent data for decision-making.
S	3R2	Success in building relationships is reflected in improved enrollment growth (by 47%) over a period of ten years.
O	3R4-3R5	CSTCC does not provide trend or comparative data about external stakeholder satisfaction, or methods of addressing these groups' particular needs.
OO	3I1	As the College lacks centralized, systematic processes for improving its processes and systems for understanding the needs of students and other stakeholders, and it recognizes that it should look to develop a centralized data warehouse that can be accessed appropriately by stakeholders
OO	3I2	CSTCC has identified improvements made since 1999 in response to results documented in the Noel Levitz survey, but it has not set new targets. It is not apparent how CSTCC communicates current results and improvement priorities.

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Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Beginning:

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

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

OO1e	In 2005, CSTCC adopted new vision, mission, and values statements that focus on technical and general education, academic transfer, and workforce development.
OO1m	CSTCC is striving for national recognition and to become a first choice school in the local area.

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OO5a	There are 378 full-time equivalent employees, 180 of whom are full-time faculty, 62 administrators, and 136 staff. There are six employee organizations and three bargaining units, AAUP for the faculty. There are more women faculty (and total employees) than men, 24% of the employees are minorities, and many of the faculty are nearing retirement age. The ratio of administration to faculty to staff is 1 to 3 to 2.25

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

SS	4P2	CSTCC has a systematic process for identifying required/desired employee skills and for hiring people who possess those skills.
S	4P2a	CSTCC strives to hire a diverse and talented faculty and staff through the use of its Multicultural Affairs Office, use of a Human Relations liaison with all hiring committees, and implementation of appropriate hiring and diversity language and practices in its publications, advertisements, and training.
O	4P2b	It is not clear whether the institution sets specific, systematic targets for attracting and hiring diverse faculty and staff or what specifically it does to retain minority faculty and other employees.
S	4P3a	CSTCC has established a cross-functional system of Quality Management Teams and Standing Committees to encourage cooperation, high performance, innovation, and organizational learning. Teams use the Plan, Do, Check, Act processes.
O	4P3b	It is not clear how the Quality Management Teams and Standing Faculty Committees are aligned and integrated with the functional organization of the College.

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O	4P5a	The College appears to lack a systematic faculty development program or planning process to focus on Helping Students Learn, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives, and contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.
OO	4P6	The portfolio does not describe how CSTCC designed and implemented its new evaluation system or how this system aligns with learning.
O	4P7	Although the College offers a variety of teaching and service awards, it is not clear how awards, compensation, and promotion are aligned with the objectives of Helping Students Learn or Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.
O	4P8	While CSTCC has used and analyzed the Organizational Culture Inventory several times to evaluate employee satisfaction and motivation, it is not clear what systems and processes are in place for using the resulting data to guide improvement.
O	4P10	CSTCC does not present any direct measures for valuing people in its portfolio.
O	4R14	Employee retention figures are high, but category 4 offers little meaningful information about results related to the criterion. The raw statistics offered in the figures do not clearly demonstrate real improvement in valuing people.
OO	4I1-2a	CSTCC recognizes the need to develop an effective faculty performance evaluation system and has worked to remediate gaps identified in its evaluation system. CSTCC does not set forth any plan for using a new evaluation system to improve results for valuing people. It appears that systems are not yet in place for improving processes for valuing people or for setting and communicating improvement targets.
OO	4I1-2b	Further, the College may want to cast a wider net in its search for effective, appropriate instruments and systems for faculty performance evaluation. A multitude of instruments and abundant expertise are available nationally, accessible through literature review and numerous national conferences and speakers.

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Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Beginning:
Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

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

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

001e	In 2005 CSTCC adopted new vision, mission, and values statements that focus on technical and general education, academic transfer, and workforce development.
OO1f	The Institution began its Quality Management Initiatives (QMI) in 1999. Quality improvement initiatives included AQIP, continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), the Ohio Award for Excellence and its use of "Good to Great" as a management tool.

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005a	There are 378 full-time equivalent employees, 180 of whom are full-time faculty, 62 administrators, and 136 staff. There are six employee organizations and three bargaining units, AAUP for the faculty. There are more women faculty (and total employees) than men, 24% of the employees are minorities, and many of the faculty are nearing retirement age. The ratio of administration to faculty to staff is 1 to 3 to 2.25.
006d	CSTCC governance is guided by both an Ohio Board of Regents and an institutional Board of Trustees.

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

S	5P1	CSTCC leaders set strategic direction through the strategic planning and evaluation processes. They ensure that departmental and individual goals are aligned with associated budgets and the planning process, and are in keeping with the institutional mission.
O	5P3	Although decisions are made with stakeholder input and by using feedback from institutional committees, it is not clear what measures are used in this process, or how consistent the process is.
S	5P4	CSTCC uses a scorecard system with key performance indicators to guide decision making and to monitor its overall well being in critical areas. This information is shared with the Board at monthly meetings.
S	5P5	CSTCC uses a comprehensive communication system that includes an integrated IT system, e-mail newsletters, all-college forums, convocations, and active senior leadership participation.
O	5P7	It is not clear how CSTCC leaders work collaboratively with employees to develop a shared understanding of institution-specific best practices, knowledge, and leadership skills.
O	5P8	CSTCC appears not to have a leadership succession plan.

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O	5R1	CSTCC provides no comparative data from external organizations in the areas of leadership and communication; in addition, the five-year-old OCI data provided in Figure 5.7 shows only slight improvements in nine areas.
OO	5I1	CSTCC recognizes that the AAUP bargaining unit is dissatisfied with implementation of quality management teams. There is also dissatisfaction with inconsistencies in communication from the President's Quality Council.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Beginning:
Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

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OO1h	Built in 2004, the Advanced Technology and Learning Center (ATLC) building includes 230,000 square feet dedicated to student services and activities aimed at promoting student access and success through high tech learning spaces to support the new mission and vision.
OO1l	CSTCC's four selected AQIP action projects focus on technology infrastructure to support teaching and learning, advising, the "Answer Bank," and general education assessment.
OO5a	There are 378 full-time equivalent employees, 180 of whom are full-time faculty, 62 administrators, and 136 staff. There are six employee organizations and three bargaining units, AAUP for the faculty. There are more women faculty (and total employees) than men, 24% of the employees are minorities, and many of the faculty are nearing retirement age. The ratio of administration to faculty to staff is 1 to 3 to 2.25.
OO8a	CSTCC identifies seven strategic challenges, including the importance of building community, the need to be more cost efficient because of decreased funding, student retention strategies for first-generation and developmental students, the increase in competition, lack of institutional identity, lack of agility, and importance of meeting workforce needs.

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

SS	6P1	CSTCC uses a range of approaches, including focus groups, surveys, advising, meetings with community agencies, and tracking of student usage of services, to determine student support service needs.
O	6P2	The portfolio does not describe a systematic approach to identifying support service needs of faculty, staff, or other stakeholders. Readers are referred generally to categories 7 and 8, but not to specific sections or displays.

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O	6P3a	Management of support services seems largely "day-to-day" and reactive to demand. It is not clear whether units encourage innovation or empower employees. In the case of student services in particular, the College may wish to consider a more proactive approach that takes into account student learning and support needs identified through assessment of student learning outcomes.
O	6P3b	The effectiveness of support services is measured mainly by usage statistics. The response does not address how or whether feedback from students and other stakeholders is used to improve processes.
S	6P4	Units collect and analyze data for CQI, while audits and reviews by external evaluators provide feedback to help the College set goals for improving student services.
S	6P5	The College has developed and begun to track an extensive set of measures of the effectiveness of student and administrative support services (Data - Figure 6.1).
O	6R1	Results are displayed and reported in this section with little analysis or interpretation, making it difficult (for the reader and possibly for the College) to determine the effectiveness of student support services.
OO	6R2	CSTCC has implemented cost containment strategies and budget reallocation to address declining state funding and rising enrollments. The College is currently struggling to provide adequate support for student needs and facilities, while maintaining comparatively low tuition to ensure access.
OO	6R3	Very few comparative data seem to be available.
O	6I1	CSTCC has implemented numerous best practice strategies and policies to manage costs, but no timelines, goals, or measures are indicated. In addition, as the College implements more widespread assessment of student learning, engagement, and success outcomes, it should develop ways to use assessment findings to identify student support areas needing improvement.

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S	6I2a	Improvement targets are set by aligning department goals and resource allocations with institutional priorities. The process is being implemented on an annual basis.
O	6I2b	The College has identified the need to build a data warehouse to improve data access for management reporting and analysis. Program cost analysis and a quality review process are also needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of support areas.
O	6I2c	It is unclear how CSTCC communicates results and improvements in student and administrative services areas to students and other stakeholders.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Developing:

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

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

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

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OO1f	The Institution began its Quality Management Initiatives (QMI) in 1999. Quality improvement initiatives included AQIP, continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), the Ohio Award for Excellence and its use of "Good to Great" as a management tool.
OO1l	CSTCC's four selected AQIP action projects focus on technology infrastructure to support teaching and learning, advising, the "Answer Bank" and general education assessment.
OO6a	Technical resources on the main campus include 1700 workstations, 30 servers, and 51 computer labs, 21 of which are in the new building. The institution is moving to implement a wireless computer environment.

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

O	7P2a	A strategic planning process, drafted in 2002 and updated in 2005, includes identification of department and unit information and data needs which is a positive step in clarifying needs through out the entire institution. It is not clear if there is a central data collection point or if data is collected and stored by each individual unit.
OO	7P2b	Although CSTCC has a strong IT network in place, there is no evidence to indicate how the institution measures the effectiveness of the implementation of its data retrieval systems. It clearly measures the effectiveness of the IT systems, but there is a lack of evidence of how these systems measure specific programs, processes, or program reviews, and in what form the evidence is presented.
S	7P4	CSTCC has a variety of systems and programs in place for analyzing and sharing performance data through such vehicles as the Graduating Student Survey, Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the annual Alumni Survey, enrollment trends by semester, and program reviews which are reviewed by the Board of Trustees and President's Council.

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S	7P5	There are processes for aligning data with overall strategic issues and student learning objectives. For example, the AQIP Action Project on General Education Competencies aims to develop a plan for using assessment results to improve programs.
O	7P6	The process for aligning the departmental and unit analysis of information with student learning goals does not appear to be fully implemented and deployed. The strategic goals and objectives are reviewed by key stakeholders, but it is not evident how the departmental and unit performance analysis of information and data aligns with the strategic plan.
OO	7R2a	It appears CSTCC measures the effectiveness of its IT systems rather than talking about how it measures specific processes or systems as a whole. It is not clear if CSTCC understands the questions in Criterion 7.
S	7I2	CSTCC successfully pilots infrastructure and technology improvement plans and communicates them through committee and Board of Trustees presentations and e-mail and portal websites.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Beginning:

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

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action

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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 Cincinnati State Technical and Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:

OO1e	In 2005, CSTCC adopted new vision, mission and values statements that focus on technical and general education, academic transfer, and workforce development.
OO1f	The institution began its Quality Management Initiatives (QMI) in 1999. Quality improvement initiatives included AQUIP, Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), the Ohio Award for Excellence, and its use of "Good to Great" as a management tool.
OO1k	CSTCC engages in quality assessment benchmarking through the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN).
OO1m	CSTCC is striving for national recognition and to become a first choice school in the local area.
OO8a	CSTCC identifies seven strategic challenges, including the importance of building community, the need to be more cost efficient because of decreased funding, student retention strategies for first generation and developmental students, the increase in competition, lack of institutional identity, lack of agility and importance of meeting workforce needs.

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

S	8P1	The new strategic planning process is well developed and inclusive of College members. The planning process (Plan, Do, Check, Act) in Figure 8.3 demonstrates the strong relationships between planning and the mission, vision and continuous improvement.
O	8P3a	Figure 8.1, Step 5 notes that progress on plans is communicated to stakeholders, but no details are provided on how this is done.
S	8P3b	Action plans have been developed for all strategies and are tied directly to annual budget allocations.
S	8P4	The College aligns its QMI scorecard with key performance indicators (Figure 8.5).
S	8P6	As part of the planning process, individual departments make budget resource requests; these are reviewed and prioritized by the Executive Team, which makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
O	8P8	Category 8 seems to address direct measures of performance rather than measures of effectiveness of the planning process itself.
S	8R1	The College provides the Key Performance Indicator results, including increased enrollment, increased overall retention, improved alumni satisfaction, and revenues exceeding expenditures (Figure 8.5).
OO	8R1-8R3	CSTCC notes that the strategic planning process is being redesigned and the projections will not directly correlate with the results in Figure 8R1. The College is not yet at a point where it can present comparative data.
O	8I2	It appears that the current scorecard is not aligned with the new strategic plan. The scorecard could be updated to reflect measures associated with the new strategic plan, thus providing an opportunity to track achievement of the new initiatives.

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Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Developing:

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

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

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

OO1j	CSTCC requires all students to participate in "real-world" work experience through cooperative education, clinical experience, or internships.
001n	Distinctive features of the college include the focus of access, cooperative education and Workforce Development.
OO2c	The college has established articulation agreements through Tech Prep and High Schools that Work to improve transfer opportunities for secondary graduates into technical programs.
OO4a	CSTCC's partnerships include businesses, advisory boards, community organizations, suppliers, higher education consortia, the Foundation, and external organizations that enhance internal support services and learning.

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OO8a	CSTCC identifies seven strategic challenges, including the importance of building community, the need to be more cost efficient because of decreased funding, student retention strategies for first-generation and developmental students, the increase in competition, lack of institutional identity, lack of agility, and importance of meeting workforce needs.
008b	The College identifies seven broad key relationships and partnerships with state and federal governments, public schools, industry and the community; purposes of the relationships; connection of the partnerships to the college's mission and results of the key relationships. (Figure 9.1).

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

S	9P1a	The mission of CSTCC is supported through the various key collaborations.
S	9P1b	Seventeen full- and part-time faculty Co-Op Education coordinators provide outreach to industry. Partnerships allow for a wide variety of Co-Op opportunities.
O	9P1c	The College appears to have no systematic process for prioritizing relationships and partners. Development of partnerships seems to occur because of the initiative of individuals or groups rather than as a result of a plan to identify and develop particular partners for particular growth or quality improvement reasons.
S	9P2a	CSTCC employs a variety of methods to ensure stakeholders' needs are being met, including gathering survey information, measuring numbers of grant partnerships, tracking partner attendance at key events, and surveying employers of graduates about their assessment of the quality of a CSTCC education.

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S	9P2b	CSTCC identifies a number of programs that are accredited by national accrediting bodies. Accreditation bodies' requirements for internships and work experience are enhanced by the college's Co-Op Education initiative.
S	9P3a	CSTCC uses cross-departmental teams and committees to create and build internal relationships.
O	9P3b	Throughout the portfolio there is evidence of disagreements between the faculty union and administration about internal communication and goals for the strategic plan. It is not evident how CSTCC is working to build a sense of community among faculty, staff, and administration.
O	9P4	The institution documents the number of partners, number of advisory committees, and amount of money collected from external partners. However, quantity does not necessarily indicate quality or improvement.
S	9R1a	Articulation agreements between the college and local, state and national four-year institutions have supported growth in CSTCC transfer programs (AA and AS). Enrollments in transfer programs have increased from 450 to over 700 in the last five years.
O	9R1b	The institution provides no comparative data in this category.
S	9I1	CSTCC belongs to a number of organizations focused on building and enhancing collaborative relationships, and constantly builds new relationships and refines existing relationships. CSTCC's relationships with organizations open up new opportunities for students and graduates.
S	9I2	Figure 9.15 reports incorporation of industry partners in the academic program review process.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most

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areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

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