

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio of*

CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

December 21, 2004



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

**30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, Illinois 60602-2504
www.AQIP.org
AQIP@hlcommission.org
(800) 621-7440**

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT
In response to the *Systems Portfolio* of
CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

December 21, 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Using the Feedback Report	5
Critical Characteristics Analysis	5
Criteria Feedback	8
<i>Helping Students Learn</i>	8
<i>Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives</i>	12
<i>Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs</i>	15
<i>Valuing People</i>	18
<i>Leading and Communicating</i>	21
<i>Supporting Institutional Operations</i>	24
<i>Measuring Effectiveness</i>	26
<i>Planning Continuous Improvement</i>	30
<i>Building Collaborative Relationships</i>	33
Strategic Issues Analysis.....	36
Appraisal Summary	39

INTRODUCTION

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

Each member of the Systems Appraisal Team devoted many hours to analyzing and reacting to your *Systems Portfolio*, first individually and then via a consensus process designed to ensure that all feedback you receive is the agreed-upon conclusion of an entire group of intelligent, trained peers. There are no one-person opinions here, no idiosyncratic, subjective opinions. Most of the team's members have had executive responsibilities in colleges and universities, but the team also included at least one person whose 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. Many team members have also had experience with Baldrige-type quality award programs. We know that you and your colleagues will find the astuteness of their perceptions, as embodied in this report, useful in your commitment for continuous quality learning.

Good as the team was, however, it is important to remember that they had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are, in fact, already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If it was unsure about an area, we urged the team to err on the side of giving your institution the

best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Critical Characteristics: 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 Criterion are identified in the Report.

Criteria Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Criteria 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 Criterion, 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 Criterion is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Criterion. This section consists of a series of statements reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Criterion covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Criterion to another.

Strategic 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these issues through analysis of your *Organizational Overview* and the feedback it provided for each Criterion. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, and can serve 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 Criteria. The summary indicates the team's consensus on the developmental maturity of each Criterion description.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

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

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Central Arizona College's identity, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates to you, when you study *the Feedback Report*,

that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Central Arizona 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.

- O1a CAC operates through a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles.
- O1b In all of its guiding documents CAC considers the “learner” to be any individual associated with CAC.
- O1c CAC has adopted the Learning College philosophy and is in a state of transition and re-organization.
- O2a AA, AB, and AS degrees allow direct transfer without loss of credit to Arizona public universities.
- O2b CAC has a specialized transfer degree, AAEE, developed in response to stakeholder need.
- O2c Learning programs and environments are evaluated on a three-year cycle.
- O3a CAC ranked first or second in Arizona community colleges for graduations rates (28%) over the last five years.
- O3b Demographics: 42% minority, 74% have pre-college developmental needs, 71% part-time, 85% 1st time degree seeking receive financial aid, 28% graduation rate (rank 1st or 2nd in Arizona community colleges).
- O3c 85% of first time certificate/degree seeking students receive financial aid.
- O3d A majority of the students (71.3 %) are part-time.
- O4a Display O4a. outlines the collaborative relationships of CAC. These relationships help the college better understand and respond to external needs.
- O5a CAC offers a Learning College Academy for new employees to orient them to the Learning College culture.

- O5a CAC values its staff and has a philosophy of treating all staff with dignity and respect.
- O5a Faculty and staff: Faculty FT 95, PT 265. Diversity of faculty and staff does not match student population, especially among faculty and administration. 12 Faculty have only an Associate Degree or no degree.
- O5b More ethnic diversity among classified and maintenance staff than administrative, faculty, and support staff.
- O5c Selection and hiring are outlined as critical processes for the transformation and future success of the organization.
- O5d Full time employees are expected to attend educational offerings to assist staff in understanding their role in the new culture.
- O5e Over the past three years, CAC has experienced a slight reduction in total employees. The largest increase has been in administrative positions. The largest reduction in staff has been in non-teaching, part-time classifications.
- O6a CAC has expanded the ITV system to include all campuses and the two area high schools.
- O6b Signal Peak Campus is the main campus for CAC, which also provided Residence Life and Athletic programs.
- O7a CAC competes for students with three state universities, Pima Community College and Maricopa Community College System, resulting in pressure on CAC to offer most critical programs.
- O7b Competition exists from ever-expanding online learning options.
- O8a Pinal County's population is predicted to be one million by 2025.
- O8b Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.
- O8c CAC expects to see a continued decrease in the amount of state funding it receives.

08d A bond feasibility study has begun to examine the educational needs and desires of the community.

08e CAC plays a major role in workforce development for the area.

CRITERIA FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Criteria, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Criterion. The symbols used in these “strengths and opportunities” sections for each Criterion 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 CRITERION 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 Criterion 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 1, *Helping Students Learn*:

- 1a. CAC operates through a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles.
- 1b. In all of its guiding documents CAC considers the “learner” to be any individual associated with CAC
- 1c. CAC has adopted the Learning College philosophy and is in a state of transition and re-organization
- 2a. AA, AB, and AS degrees allow direct transfer without loss of credit to Arizona public universities.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Central Arizona College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Criterion 1, *Helping Students Learn*.

- S 1C1 & 1C2. CAC articulates a set of learning objectives and General Education Learning outcomes for all students based on mission documents (display 01a).
- S 1C3. In order to ensure learners are receiving the same opportunities for achieving the learning objectives the Expanded Modalities Committee was formed. The committee is responsible for maintaining the integrities of learning experience regardless of delivery system.
- O 1C4. While diversity is addressed by a variety of activities, it is not clear how the college ensures this information is incorporated into design and delivery of student learning options. If a systematic process does not exist, the college may not be incorporating this strategic organizational objective appropriately into al courses offered.
- S 1P1. A set of learning outcomes for associate degree (policy 402 display) was adopted as a governing board policy.

- S 1P1. The general education curriculum was reviewed by the CLASS office to assure that all of the learning expectations of the CAC Mission & Policy 402 were covered in the curriculum.
- O 1P2. CAC did not identify how it recognizes or meets student needs in designing or offering curriculum and incorporating that information into the design of new curriculum or programs.
- S 1P5. CAC is currently undertaking an improvement project to strengthen processes that assess, advise, and place prospective students as part of an AQIP Action Project (#2).
- O 1P6. Although CAC uses a number of survey instruments, such as CCSSE, it is not clear how academic units or the institution in general will directly measure the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Direct measures are not identified.
- O 1P6. CAC uses the CCSSE and surveys with questions that have a correlation to learning but it is not clear that there is a process for measuring direct achievement of the General Education Learning Outcomes or program assessment outcomes.
- OO 1P7. CAC is currently evaluating its processes in regard to program review and delivery choices and “still has a way to go in balancing the needs of students with those of the institution’s.”
- O 1P7. The mechanism or systematic process is not described for communicating or linking expectations for teaching and learning effectiveness across the institution.
- S 1P8. Courses are updated with competency based learning outcomes and professional standards.
- OO 1P10. CAC does not address the alignment of its co-curricular goals to its curricular learning objectives. While the overview discusses a resident life program and a “quality” athletics program, CAC does not address their connection to curricular learning objectives.
- OO 1P11. A systematic process for the design, administration, analysis, or communication assessments is not evident.

- O 1P12 Although CAC has available a process for tracking transfer students, there is no evidence of student performance at the transfer institutions and no comparison of CAC transfer student performance with transfers from other community colleges.
- OO 1R2. "CAC does not currently have an assessment plan in place that specifically addresses its general education outcomes." Only indirect measures (surveys) are discussed with low response rates.
- OO 111 & 2. Data collection processes and systems are not clearly described.
- O 111 & 2. It is not clear how the feedback system for the review of courses and programs is part of an improvement cycle process.
- S 111 & 2. The three AQIP Action Projects are in the early stages of producing actionable data that can be used for process improvement. Strategic goals have created focus for the institution and operational plans are assisting with alignment and deployment of these objectives. The advising process is furthest along in collection and use of data to drive and improve the advisement process.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 2, *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*:

- 1b. In all of its guiding documents, CAC considers the “learner” to be any individual associated with CAC
- 4a. Display O4a outlines the collaborative relationships of CAC. These relationships help the college better understand and respond to external needs.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.
- 8e. CAC plays a major role in workforce development for the area.

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

- S 2C1 & 2C2 CAC collects, interprets, and provides economic data for Pinal County to local businesses and contributes to strengthening the community through its economic development and research programs.
- S 2C1 & 2C2 The CAC Foundation provides student scholarships and recognizes individuals and entities that make outstanding contributions to education.
- S 2C1 & 2C2 CAC’s commitment to the community is a fundamental part of their ODOs.
- SS 2C1 & 2C2 CAC Foundation Fund Promise for the Future is a dynamic program designed to develop Pinal County.
- S 2P1 & 2P2 CAC uses multiple sources of information from a wide variety of stakeholder groups to help determine other distinctive objectives for the College. Objectives are

reviewed on a regular basis to ensure alignment with organizational and strategic objectives.

- SS 2R1 Workforce Development programs generated over 30% of CAC's FTSE in 2003-2004 at low cost to the institution.
- S 2R1 Some 1200 students from 17 high schools participate in the CAC Foundation Promise for the Future Program, which provides mentoring and support to help increase high school graduation rates.
- S 2R1 Workforce Development results demonstrate some positive trends with regards to generating full time student equivalency at a low cost per FTSE during 2003-04. This model may be an opportunity for sharing as a best practice within CAC traditional academic areas.
- S 2R2 CAC is in the developing to maturing stages of comparing its services against that of peer institutions. Continued efforts with these comparisons may yield additional insight for continuous improvement efforts that can be shared across the institution.
- S 2I1 CAC's Residence Life program is implementing new learning communities to assist student success.
- S 2I1 CAC is actively assessing its other distinctive programs such as the Center for Economic Development, Residence Life, the Athletic Division, and Workforce Development to plan for improvements.
- S 2I2 CAC's athletic programs are targeting improvement priorities to include maintaining and increasing student athlete GPA and placement rate at 4-year institutions.
- O 2P3 There does not appear to be a systematic process for determining faculty and staff needs in relationship to distinctive objectives. Without a systematic process, CAC may not be fully addressing the needs of this critical group of stakeholders, thus sub optimizing efforts to accomplish these objectives.
- OO 2P4 CAC does not account for how feedback (assessment) is incorporated for improvement or support in/of decision making.

- OO 2R1 CAC claims to want a quality residence life and athletics program, but neither defined what quality means nor supported the claim with data.
- O 2R1 Results for distinctive objectives appear to be largely anecdotal and do not directly align with measures outlined in Display 2c. By more closely tying measures with results, CAC will be in a better position to evaluate its efforts toward the achievement of these objectives.
- O 2R1 Although CAC appears to have a strong Foundation which provides scholarships and recognitions; it is unclear how the activities of the foundation influence the achievement of the three distinctive objectives identified: support economic development, provide a quality residence life program, and provide a quality athletic program.
- OO 2R1 Although CAC does report some current results for its distinctive objectives; there is no trend data to show changes or stability of performance over time. The results presented only represent a subset of the assessments listed in Display 2b. Limited comparison data for these distinctive objects is provided. The justification for selecting the “benchmark” institutions is not clear.
- O 2R3 It is unclear how the CAC Foundation’s fundraising efforts strengthens the institution or the community. The link between the foundation and the accomplishment of the three distinctive objectives is unclear.
- OO 2I1 Improvement seems spread out among diverse areas. CAC would benefit from examining the total picture in order to establish appropriate priorities.
- O 2I2 Residence life targets for improvement are identified, however, there is no indication of the baseline data or any other results associated with residence life.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College’s performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

Reliable processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are being developed and implemented. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used in units other than where they originated. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in a few areas. Evidence exists of recent (within last two years) of improving levels

of performance in a few areas. Anecdotal information (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 3, *Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs*:

- 3a. CAC ranked first or second in Arizona community colleges for graduations rates (28%) over the last five years.
- 3b. Demographics: 42% minority, 74% have pre-college developmental needs, 71% part-time, 85% 1st time degree seeking receive financial aid, 28% graduation rate (rank 1st or 2nd in Arizona community colleges).
- 3c. 85% of first time certificate/degree seeking students receive financial aid.
- 3d. A majority of the students (71.3 %) are part-time.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.

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

- S 3C1 Student groups are segmented into three categories and other stakeholder groups are clearly defined. Display 3a summarizes student and other stakeholder expectations of CAC.
- S 3P2 & 3 CAC has a plethora of processes to build and maintain relationships with students. While mostly focused on current students, these processes appear to be in the early stages of addressing new and prospective needs as well. However, it is important to note that serving stakeholder needs in targeted areas is aligned with one of CAC's strategic goals.
- O 3P7 While CAC has a beginnings of a process for determining student and other stakeholder needs and uses other measures to help validate findings and uncover additional areas for investigation, the process does not seem to be systematically deployed across the organization. Further use of this information in decision making processes may allow CAC to better align its services to the needs of its students.
- S 3R1 Current and former student satisfaction results (Display 1k, 1l, 1m & 1n) have identified four areas where CAC is performing above 89% which include: registration, class size, attitude of students toward faculty and readability/understandability of college catalog.
- S 3I1 & 2 CAC is currently working on a formalized plan for evaluating other stakeholder needs and satisfaction. Display 3f. outlines a new systematic approach and is committed to assessing student and stakeholder needs and satisfaction. CAC understands what it needs to do before it can begin targeting improvement; the next step is to deploy and evaluate the results from the plan.
- OO 3P1 & 3P3 CAC's objective to "conduct regular and periodic assessment to determine community and employer needs for programs and services..." and student needs are determined through on-going survey tools and stakeholder needs are identified using a variety of methods, however it is not clear how this process functions and if the information is analyzed and courses of action are modified and changed considering

- those needs. By developing a systematic process to take student and stakeholder needs and incorporate findings into current action plans, CAC may be able to better align organizational efforts with ever-changing student and stakeholder needs.
- O 3P6 As identified by CAC, a comprehensive process does not exist to effectively collect and analyze complaint information. A process or central location to collect and analyze summative complaint data would enable CAC to aggregate data, identify trends and determine appropriate improvements.
 - OO 3R1 & 3R3 CAC data on stakeholder satisfaction survey results present is not aligned with student and stakeholders expectations outlined in Display 3a. By obtaining results and focusing improvement in these areas, CAC may better align its efforts in the areas of greatest impact based on student and stakeholder needs.
 - O 3R3 & 3R4 While CAC does not have data on its performance or stakeholder satisfaction, they are currently working on formalizing a mean to measure and report on stakeholder satisfaction of performance.
 - O 3I1 & 2 CAC has a “proposed” data collection schedule and no targets for improving student and stakeholder groups’ satisfaction. It is too early in CAC’s assessment process for CAC to determine target for improvement.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College’s performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

AQIP CRITERION 4: VALUING PEOPLE

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

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

- 1b. In all of its guiding documents CAC considers the "learner" to be any individual associated with CAC.
- 5a. CAC values its staff and has a philosophy of treating all staff with dignity and respect.
- 5a. CAC offers a Learning College Academy for new employees to orient them to the Learning College Culture.
- 5c. Selection and hiring are outlined as critical processes for the transformation and future success of the organization.

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

- S 4C1 The Learning College philosophy has generated a list of activities that are designed to encourage learners at all levels of the organization (faculty members, staff and students) and places the learner at the center of its activities.
- S 4C4 Through its training initiatives, CAC demonstrates that it values people. CAC promotes training initiatives that emphasize diversity, quality improvement, communication, technology, and institutional goals and are linked with the CAC

- strategic objectives. CAC has a process to link training initiatives to both institutional and employee needs, The Learning Academy for new employees focuses on institutional mission, values, and policies.
- S 4P1 CAC details a thorough process of employee selection.
 - S 4P2 CAC has a very systematic process for recruiting, screening and orienting employees. Multiple tools help employees understand organizational mission, vision and strategic goals. Supervisors use a New Employee Checklist to orient new employees within the first week of their employment; providing a standardized introduction to the organization.
 - S 4P3 CAC is in the early stages of developing their organizational learning methods and processes. A Learning Forum allows employees to share their best practices. The President's Award and Teaching Excellence promotes innovation and the sharing of best practices.
 - S 4P6 All employee evaluations are reviewed for trends emerging regarding employee development needs. These trends are discussed in cabinet and the bi-annual Learning Forums. Employee evaluation is linked to the AQIP criteria and employee awards are based on the Learning College Principles.
 - S 4R1 & 4R2 CAC's 2001 OEI outlined for CAC areas it needed to address. The increase in employee satisfaction as seen in the 2003 OEI Survey indicates CAC utilized the 2001 OEI Survey and addressed concerns.
 - SS 4R1 & 4R2 CAC analyzes data from its learning college inventory study and CCSSE as well as employee evaluations to implement improvements in its processes.
 - S 4R2 CAC has a Policies and Procedures Committee that reviews all institutional policies annually and recommends quality changes, e.g., a new system regarding conflict resolution is the result of recommendations from the advisory council with input from employee groups.
 - S 4R4 CAC's CCSSE results compared significantly higher than other mid-sized community colleges in multiple areas.

- S 4C3 CAC acknowledges the need to diversify its faculty in order to provide additional role models to all learners and recognizes its changing needs relative to growing minority populations in the community it serves.
- O 4P1 and 4P2 While required skills and credentials are thoroughly addressed during the hiring and selection processes, it is not clear that CAC has a systematic process to ensure that new hires possess values that are required to be successful in the Learning College environment. CAC has low turnover rates however, it is not clear that the institution has a systematic process to plan for changes in personnel.
- O 4P3 The CAC Declaration of Civility for a Learning College establishes standards for ethical behavior, however it is not clear how these expectations are communicated across the multiple campuses and what process is used to ensure that the principles are converted into practice.
- O 4P4 Although Display 4d outlines several training initiatives; however it is not clear how training is reinforced to ensure that all faculty contribute fully and effectively throughout their career. It is not evident that CAC has a systematic process to identify training needs. The absence of a process to aggregate individual needs may not be placing training in the appropriate areas to positively influence continuous improvement efforts and organizational direction.
- O 4P5 Although CAC provides a variety of training opportunities (Display 4d.), it is not clear that a process is in place to measure the effectiveness of training or improve the delivery of training initiatives.
- O 4P10 CAC does not identify measures for valuing people.
- O 4R1 and 4R2 Although CAC has several methods for gathering employee satisfaction data, limited results are presented. Trend data for key indicators of these measures would help to determine if action plans are leading to improvements.
- OO 4R3 Results from the CCSSE show areas for improvement in faculty and staff offering support and help to students.

- O 4R4 CAC's results in valuing people are limited and confusing. Comparisons for instruments other than the CCSSE are not provided. Additional measurements may prove to be useful.
- O 4I2 CAC needs to identify specific targets for improvements.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 5, *Leading and Communicating*:

- 1a. CAC operates based on a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals reflective of the Learning College Principles.

1c. CAC has adopted the Learning College philosophy and is currently in a state of transition and reorganization.

8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to assess the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially as state funding continues to decrease.

8d. A bond feasibility study has begun to examine the educational needs and desires of the community

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

- S 5C1 The current leadership structure was developed utilizing quality systems and the Academic Quality Improvement (AQIP) model.
- S 5C2 The operational planning process, developed by all departments, links directly to the Strategic Goals (developed over an 18- month period with external and internal stakeholder input) and drives budget requests as well as resource allocation.
- S 5C3 CAC has a specific operational objective that underscores its expectations of social responsibility, civility, and respectful behavior among all employees and students.
- S 5P3 CAC has moved to placing decision-making in the hands of those closest to the work and having decisions made by individuals closest to implementing the work.
- S 5P1 CAC uses the Learning College Inventory (Display 5c) to measure its progress in incorporating the Learning College Philosophy into its institutional policy and practice.
- S 5P1 Improvement in processes and systems of leading and communications at CAC appear to be assessed at regular intervals with appropriate feedback mechanisms in place.
- O 5P4 CAC recognizes the challenge of changing its historical approach to decision-making. Fully deploying the decision-making approach to all units within the institution and communicating the committee structure and function will help facilitate the change. It

is not clear, however, that CAC has a process in place to determine the effectiveness of its change in decision-making or to incorporate it into an improvement cycle.

- O 5P2 While the CAC President holds numerous conversations to develop relationships within the community, it is not evident that these efforts assist with building and sustaining a learning environment.
- O 5P2 CAC is conducting a Bond Feasibility Study and the development of an Educational Master Plan which will help identify targets for improvement.
- O 5P1 Although the leadership of CAC actively seeks input from stakeholders outside the institution, it does not address how decisions in strategic planning take into account student and stakeholder expectations or focus on students and learning.
- O 5P3 Collaboration is encouraged both within the institution and between the institution and the community. This will allow CAC to be responsive to institutional and community-based needs for change and to optimize and coordinate the development and allocation of resources.
- O 5P3 Although CAC has begun a significant transformation within the institution by implementing the philosophy of a Learning College, to achieve the next level, the organization may need to change the decision making model to more closely reflect the Six Learning Principles (Display 01a.).
- O 5P3 CAC is faced with maintaining many programs with various needs for many constituencies. The processes for making decisions about multiple program needs are not apparent.
- O 5P8 In order for CAC to maintain clear and successful leadership and communications functions, given the challenges presented by a changing environment, the establishing of a succession plan may do much to pave the way for positive and effective transitions as well as additional community support.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *maturing*, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance exist 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. There is a record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives.

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 6, *Supporting Institutional Operations*:

- 1a. CAC operates based on a Strategic Plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles.
- 2c. Learning programs and environments are evaluated on a three-year cycle.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially as state funding continues to decrease.

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

- S 6P4 CAC has multiple avenues of communication which serve as positive support processes for administration, students, and other stakeholders.

- S 6P5 Significant data is collected and utilized to determine most student services needs and the degree to which they are being met, and decisions are encouraged and made at the lowest appropriate level.
- S 6P5 Student Services needs appear to be adequately measured through the use of surveys, special classes and other applied methods.
- O 6P2 Given the changing environment, CAC may be able to reduce future costs and time lost due to necessary program adjustments by codifying and institutionalizing a stakeholders needs assessment process.
- O 6P5 CAC might increase its sources of student survey data beyond a single instrument in order to provide a broader view of the student experience.
- O 6R2 CAC's Administrative Support Services will need several years of measured results in order to realize useful trend analysis data.
- O 6R2 While CAC has currently managed itself into a positive cash-flow position, codifying the process involved, to some degree, may be helpful.
- O 6I2 The utilization of data in the development of target-setting for improvement will be more constructive if clarified.
- O 6 Continued extensive resignations of key personnel may create a backlog of necessary work and processes for CAC.
- OO 6C1 There appears to be a need for specific academic support services to be identified for helping students learn, succeed in classes, and achieve educational goals.
- OO 6I2 In supporting its institutional operations, CAC may be better served by incorporating a more systematic approach to setting targets and establishing measures.
- O 6P2 A more systematic and measured approach to the identification of Administrative Support Services for faculty, staff, and administrators needs may contribute to a more planned and targeted distribution of resources.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 7, *Measuring Effectiveness*:

- 1a CAC operates through a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles
- 2a AA, AB, and AS degrees allow direct transfer without loss of credit to Arizona public universities.
- 2b CAC has a specialized transfer degree, AAEE, developed in response to stakeholder need
- 2c Learning programs and environments are evaluated on a three-year cycle

8b Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease

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

- S 7C1 CAC has identified the need for reliable, actionable data to drive performance improvement efforts. In response to this need the CASA system was developed. CAC is also expanding access to Banner as well as working to improve the consistency of use and the dissemination of data for decision-making.
- S 7C1 The ASSIST information network allows CAC to track its students educational progress throughout the entire Arizona higher education system.
- S 7C1 CAC's ASSIST, CAS, ACRES, & ACETS Data Tracking Systems are a distinctive feature of the college and should be applauded.
- O 7C1 CAC recognizes deficiencies with its web-based information services. However, it is not clear that CAC has an improvement process in place or where the responsibility for making improvements lies within the institution.
- O 7C1 CAC has a number of data collection process deployed, e.g., SCT Banner, ASSIST, CASA, ACRES. There is no evidence that CAC has a process to coordinate these systems. It is also unclear how the results are woven into improvement efforts in any systematic way.
- O 7C2 CAC has identified key institutional measures for each of the five foci, Student Focus, Employee/Faculty Focus, External Stakeholders Focus, Financial Focus, and Strategic Focus (Display 7b.). It is not clear from Display 7b how column two measures related to the measures identified in column three. However, it is not clear how these foci fit with the Strategic Goals (Display 8a.), how these measures were developed, who is responsible for assessing these measures, and what results exist from many of these measures.
- O 7P1 Although CAC says an institutional structure for collecting, managing, and using informational exits, the process is unclear. There is no evidence of a systematic

process for determining what data is selected, how it is analyzed, and how it is managed.

- S 7P2 As a result of AQIP Action Project 3 CAC has deployed a process, ISUG, to manage and prioritize requests for institutional data from internal stakeholders.
- O 7P3 While several sources of comparative data are identified, it is not clear that CAC has a systematic process for selecting comparative data sources. It is not clear that the comparative data sources align with the strategic goals, mission, vision or values of the institution without clarification of the process used to select sources of that data.
- OO 7P4 CAC describes a decentralized system of information management. There is no evidence of centralized warehousing of data and reports or centralized collection and analysis of data. This may be a result of personnel transitions in institutional research. Clarifying the responsibilities for data management will be essential to the systematic incorporation of institutional data and analysis into operational and strategic planning and budgeting.
- OO 7P5 It is not clear that processes are in place or, if developed, are being used to ensure that there is alignment between unit/department analyses of data and the institutional goals. There is no evidence of a person or unit being responsible for aligning data collection and analysis across departments or units with the institutional mission, vision, values, and Strategic Goals.
- O 7P6 CAC has only recently deployed many of the structures for using and maintaining data and information systems. However, there is no evidence of any process to measure the effectiveness of the data management systems. It is difficult to determine if there is any process in place to manage and ensure the integrity of data in the electronic databases, the institutional server, and the CAC web interfaces.
- S 7P7 Participating in the ASSIST database provides CAC access to transfer success data for students transferring to other institutions within the Arizona state system of higher education. Longitudinal data gathered from the ASSIST system can provide information to improve curriculum and student success.

- S 7P7 CAC tracks the use of student services at the venue where used through the use of student scan cards. The data informs budget and resource allocation decisions for the institution.
- O 7R1,7R2 Results reported are limited to performance on the CCSSE which is not mentioned as a measure of the effectiveness of CAC's system to measure effectiveness in 7P7. Student use of the library and learning resources center and success of transfer students are mentioned as indicators but have not results presented.
- S 7I1 A revised Academic Program Review will directly link the review of academic programs, budget, short-term and long-term Strategic Goals, student learning, and AQIP Action Projects.
- S CAC describes an approach for improving information management processes in order to develop consistent data reporting and assist with the measurement of effectiveness.
- OO 7I2 No evidence is provided in 7I2 that performance targets have been set for the key measures identified in Display 7b. Without performance targets it is difficult to determine if process improvement is being achieved.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 8, *Planning Continuous Improvement*:

- 1a. CAC operates through a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles.
- 1c. CAC has adopted the Learning College Philosophy and is in a state of transition and reorganization.
- 2c. Learning programs and environments are evaluated on a three-year cycle.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.
- 8d. A bond feasibility study has begun to examine the educational needs and desires of the community.

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

- S 8C1—As Part of the AQIP process, a map for continual improvement was identified through a collaborative strategic and institutional planning process (Display 8a). Six strategic goals, both short- and long-term, were identified through a strategic and institutional planning process, which provides a strong and dynamic plan for the next five to ten years and involves multiple stakeholders. CAC is developing a process to assess the effectiveness of its strategic planning as well as integrating greater agility

into the process. This process has helped CAC identify several key trends they must address to be competitive in the coming years.

- S 8 CAC has a well articulated set of short- and long-term strategies that are directly linked to each of the six Strategic Goals. Strategic goals are used to drive the Operational Plans and budget allocations. Measures and performance targets are determined by those closest to the action. The measures and performance targets must be in alignment with the CAC Strategic Goals.

- S 8R1 thru 8R4—Display 8c lists future strategies, desired results, and planned (anticipated) evidence to support CAC in their successful implementation of it Actions Projects. Further, it relates how CAC will utilize future assessment data and measures indicating incorporation of current (though missing) planned assessment activities.

- S 8I1 & 8I2 CAC’s current improvement activities include its LCI and The Performance Planning Systems Update, as well as assessment, planning and benchmarking through AQIP Systems Improvement. However, the process is not yet full implemented and no targets are set. Further efforts in these areas may allow CAC to leverage its learnings in these areas to drive breakthrough improvements in the coming years.

- O 8P1—While CAC is beginning to implement its planning and performance system update, the steps of the Planning and Performance System Update are not clearly described and is described by CAC as “not yet achieved full alignment within the organization. Further, it is not clear how action plans are created to support accomplishment of planning and improvement activities. Continued effort in this area may improve communication around organizational goals and improve performance in priority areas.

- OO 8P5— Although CAC has just hired a new director of institutional planning and research who’s first goal will be revising and determining multiple data measures/standards for assessment implementation throughout the college, no measures for setting organizational level performance projections are described. CAC is still in the process of selecting measurements and performance projections for institutional strategies and actions plans.

- O 8P6—While an Operational planning and QI program Review process is outlined, the process does not appear to be in place at this time. Further deployment of this process will help CAC successfully allocate resources to support organizational improvement.
- O 8P7—It is not evident that CAC has processes to ensure faculty and staff are developed to support changing organizational needs and priorities. Developing plan to ensure faculty and staff capabilities are supportive of organizational directions will demonstrate valuing people and giving them the tools and opportunity to make a difference in the strategic direction of the organization.
- OO 8R1 thru 8R4— A majority of the results are “future” oriented and very few have been implemented. Results from Display 8c are not clearly aligned with strategic goals outlined in Display 8a. While this area appears to be currently under development, there is no evidence of current performance or of performance trends.
- O 8 Although CAC compares its performance to benchmark institutions (i.e. San Juan CC), it is not clear what process is in place to determine what “best practice” is for a given criterion or to determine which institutions would best serve as benchmarks.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College’s performance on this criterion as *beginning*, characterized by:

Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed primarily in those units that develop them; widespread deployment is just beginning. Results showing how successful approaches and processes within this criterion are just beginning to be gathered. Generally, performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns, and the institution does not yet systematically collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used as effectively as possible to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

AQIP CRITERION 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 Central Arizona College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Criterion 9, *Building Collaborative Relationships*:

- 1a. CAC operates through a strategic plan driven by a set of strategic goals that are reflective of the Learning College Principles.
- 2a. AA, AB, and AS degrees allow direct transfer without loss of credit to Arizona public universities
- 4a. Display O4a. outlines the collaborative relationships of CAC. These relationships help the college better understand and respond to external needs.
- 8b. Considering growth projections, it is critical for CAC to evaluate the evolving needs and demands of the community, especially if state funding continues to decrease.
- 8e. CAC plays a major role in workforce development for the area.

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

- S 9C1 & 9C2—Display 9a. outlines Key Relationships for CAC. Entities are outlined seven areas and the nature of the relationship is described. The context for these relationships is described in great detail.
- SS 9C1 & 9C2 CAC's numerous collaborative relationship is most impressive and should be applauded.

- SS 9C1/2. An extremely high number of collaborative relationships from K-12 to business and industry as well as other colleges is a major advantage to their students and community they serve.
- SS 9C1 & 9C2 CAC lists numerous collaborative relationships which offer opportunities to students, the extended college community, and the external community.
- S 9C1 & 9C2 CAC has established a well-developed and diverse set of collaborative relationships at the local, state, and national levels.
- SS 9C1 & 9C2 CAC's articulation agreements, the AGECE is a distinctive feature of the institution.
- SS 9C1 & 9C2 CAC's has numerous articulation agreements with all colleges in the states of Washington, Oregon, Kentucky, Illinois, Minnesota, Arizona, New York, and Wisconsin.
- OO 9P1 thru 9P4—While Key Relationships are outlined, it is not evident that CAC has systematic processes to design, prioritize and build these relationships to support organizational goals and improvement. Without a comprehensive process to align, develop and improve all of these collaborative relationships, CAC may not be able to fully address all aspects of its mission and strategic goals.
- OO 9P1 CAC does not address how it prioritizes its relationships for growth. (This remains a concern.)
- O 9P4 & 9I1 CAC lacks a well developed plan, methodology, & timeline for measuring it collaborative relationships.
- O 9P4. An identified need to develop a plan, method or timeline for measuring collaborative relationships.
- O 9P4. There is no evidence provided to suggest that a systematic process exists for selecting, prioritizing, or evaluating collaborative relationships.
- O 9P4. CAC is in the early stage of developing and planning methodology and timelines for measuring collaborative relationships.

- O 9R1—CAC presents a limited number of results for collaborative relationships.
- S 9R1 & 9R2 There are numerous examples of results available from the collaborative relationships. In one example CAC performance, nursing graduation rates, is compared to national data.
- O 9R2—While results for Nursing graduation and Dietetic programs compare favorably to national comparisons, no other comparative results for key collaborative relationships are presented.
- S 9R1 CAC lists a cross-section of its results in displays 9c-9l.
- S 9R1—Display 9c. demonstrates positive growth in Promise for Future Enrollments from 2001 thru 2004. CARLOTA data demonstrates that 87% of the students enrolled in this program are graduating over the past three years. Other results are also provided.
- S 9R1 Display 9J indicates high achievement and increased success rates for its nursing students; 100% placement, 100% Licensure exam pass rate.
- O 9R1 Not certain date presented reflects CAC's effectiveness in building relationships.
- O 9I1 & 9I2—There is no evidence that CAC has a systematic process for improving the processes to build and develop collaborative relationships.
- O 9I1/2. A formal measuring and reporting process is needed in order to identify needed improvements and set targets.
- O 9I1 & 9I2. CAC identifies the need for a formalized measuring and reporting system for their collaborative efforts.
- O 9I1 & 9I2 A formalized process for collecting, measuring, and reporting needs to be created and put in place for this area.
- O 9P4 & 9I1 CAC makes no mention of addressing its need for developing an assessment measurement system to determine the effectiveness of its collaborative relationships.
- OO 9I1 & 9I2 Again, CAC makes no mention of prioritizing its targets for improvements.

S 911 & 912. CAC has identified an Action Project to address data collection, processing, and dissemination.

O 9 It is not clear how the development and maintenance of collaborative relationships is woven into strategic planning.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Central Arizona College's performance on this criterion as *developing*, characterized by:

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

STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

Strategic issues are those most closely related to Central Arizona College's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these issues through analysis of your *Organizational Overview* and the feedback it provided for each Criterion. This list of strategic issues is included to assist you and your colleagues on prioritizing the important issues facing Central Arizona College. Among these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, the opportunities and challenges that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. AQIP expects an institution to have three or four vital Action Projects at a time in order to encourage administrators, faculty, and staff to prioritize their efforts and resources. The Systems Appraisal Team has listed more than three or four issues, trusting that Central Arizona College will discuss and prioritize those it concludes are most critical. Hopefully, this *Strategic Issues Analysis* will intensify your continuing quality efforts.

1. As a strategic issue, CAC's commitment to current AQIP Action Projects could be strengthened by a focus on system results for process improvement.

The decision to join AQIP was motivated by the continuous improvement focus and the learning-centeredness of the program aligning nicely with the newly adopted learning-college philosophy. Display 01A outlines the Six College Learning Principles.

Many areas currently tracking performance effectiveness measures lack trended data, comparisons with like institutions, or best-in-class comparisons. Additional processes producing results that can compare CAC with peer institutions should strengthen the College's ability to gauge its progress toward achieving specific goals relative to best practice. The focus of the AQIP Action Projects

Action Project 1: Improve data collection, data processing, & information dissemination methods for learning

Action Project 2: Strengthen & enhance student assessment & advisement to promote learner success

Action Project 3: Improve data collection, data processing, & information dissemination methods for learning support

2. CAC's commitment to strategic planning is evident in the description of direction.

CAC has not yet compiled evidence of the effectiveness of its new strategic planning system. Although trends and patterns may not yet be evident, it would be beneficial to begin documenting early evidence, such as the number of participants involved in the planning process, which College departments are involved, and employee and stakeholder satisfaction with the new process.

3. Key collaborative relationships are outlined in display 04a – Key Collaborative Relationships.

4. CAC's process for and commitment to a quality Residence Life and a quality Athletics Program (2C1 and 2C2) could be strengthened by a definition of "quality" and an outcomes focus for measurement of the goal.

5. CAC's system portfolio could be strengthened by a consistent focus on assessment and outcomes measures as they link to systems for institutional improvement.

Although CAC provides some comparison of results with other institutions related to relationships dealing with faculty and students, it does not provide comparative results related to

its collaborative relationships with such groups as local communities, educational institutions, regulatory and accrediting bodies, and business and economic development entities. This makes it difficult to ascertain how effective these collaborative relationships are as compared with those of other institutions.

6. Funding is identified as a key issue for CAC.

Funding is a primary concern of the institution and is used to evaluate the quality of programs, quality of teaching effectiveness and other measures of success, particularly in the area of student learning. Although resource allocation, application for external funding and numbers of applications submitted may be an important part of the institution, the addition of other factors to determine faculty teaching excellence and student learning would provide a systems link for institutional funding priority.

CAC's processes for and commitment to Supporting Institutional Operations and for determining priorities in choosing/implementing/eliminating new and existing programs in regard to budget allocation needs to be addressed.

APPRAISAL SUMMARY FOR CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

AQIP CRITERION 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 Criterion 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.

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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.

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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.**

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 4: VALUING PEOPLE

***Valuing People* explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional**

success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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.**

The institution's effectiveness for this criterion is at a maturing stage. 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 exist 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. There is a record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives.

AQIP CRITERION 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.**

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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.**

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.

AQIP CRITERION 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.**

For this criterion, the institution is at a beginning stage. Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed primarily in those units that develop them; widespread deployment is just beginning. Results showing how successful approaches and processes within this criterion are just beginning to be gathered. Generally, performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns, and the institution does not yet systematically collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used as effectively as possible to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

AQIP CRITERION 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.

The institution is at a developing stage for this criterion. 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 (rather than systematic data) is on hand about processes and performance of other organizations. Feedback is occasionally used to set performance targets in a few areas. There is anecdotal evidence of improvements, occurring at irregular intervals.