

## Quality Summary

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### Institutional Update

Columbus State Community College has undergone significant change in recent years. A number of factors and events have converged within close proximity to create a transformative moment in time. These factors include the conversion to a semester-based academic calendar, the opening of the college's campus in Delaware County, the hiring of a new president and other associated leadership changes, and most importantly, a systemic college-wide focus on student success. During this time, the college also saw the most rapid growth in its history, experiencing an enrollment growth of more than 8,000 students from 2008 to 2011, a growth rate of more than 35 percent. The college has used this period of rapid change to develop leaders among faculty and staff, build systems and practices focused on quality improvement, and position the college as a regional leader.

The imminent transition to semesters has been a significant focus for the college. As a part of the Ohio Board of Regents' *Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2008-2017*, Columbus State and 16 other public institutions in Ohio were encouraged to convert from a quarter-based academic calendar to one based on semesters by Autumn 2012. This effort impacted every area of the college, and it was led by a large cross-functional team of faculty and staff. Columbus State's "Switch to Semesters" initiative is on track for a successful conversion in August 2012. The semesters conversion has led to a review of student and financial processes and procedures, as well as unprecedented curriculum evaluation.

Another significant change for the college was the opening of the Delaware Campus in September 2010, after more than six years of planning and construction. The location in the fastest growing county in Ohio is of strategic importance not only to the college, but to the entire region. The resulting organizational changes and increased communication demands proved to be an important growth experience for faculty and staff.

David T. Harrison began as Columbus State's fifth president in July 2010. Since Dr. Harrison's appointment, and with strong support from the Board of Trustees, the college has proceeded methodically to organize its work with a focus on student success, college completion and a commitment to community engagement. The unit formerly known as Learning Systems was reorganized to create offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, and in the spring of 2011, the President appointed a Vice President of Student Affairs and a Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs. Additional leadership roles within these divisions have been identified and are being implemented strategically.

As a part of the college's focus on student success, in 2009, Columbus State's Board of Trustees approved and funded a series of targeted initiatives, including career assistance for undecided students, adjunct faculty support, and a focus on the first-year experience for students. Outcomes of these projects resulted in the administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and participation in the two Foundations of Excellence programs (first-year experience and transfer experience). These projects were important catalysts for conversations and project work around student success. This process has continued as the college identifies major projects during the budgeting process and seeks support for these projects through funds approved by the Board.

Dr. Harrison also implemented new master planning and strategic planning processes for Columbus State. In 2011, the college launched a master planning process in order to align with community and regional initiatives and to help set a course for infrastructure expansion. In 2012, Columbus State simultaneously

launched a strategic planning process and became an Achieving the Dream (AtD) institution, setting the stage for an integrated, data-driven approach to student success and credential attainment.

With a focus on access and college readiness, student success and attainment, workforce development and economic impact, the strategic planning team is developing proposed drafts of the college's updated mission, vision, values and goals. The proposals will be subject to college-wide review and approval by the Board of Trustees. This new articulation will largely be driven by AtD principles, with an emphasis on increasing student completion and closing achievement gaps within student groups. The disciplined approach to data analysis called for in the AtD approach will provide a framework for Columbus State's revised operational measures, continuous improvement initiatives, and the annual budget planning process.

A cornerstone of Columbus State's student success work is a network of deep partnerships with other colleges and universities in the region and high schools in Franklin, Delaware, Madison and Union counties. Two regional factors are driving these new collaborations: rising four-year college admission standards and the need to reduce remediation.

First, while Columbus has one of the nation's largest populations of college students, admission requirements are increasing rapidly. This is especially true at The Ohio State University (OSU), whose stated goal is to recruit more out-of-state and international first-year students. These rising standards have made it more difficult for local students to be admitted as first-year students. In response, Columbus State and Ohio State collaborated on the "Preferred Pathway Program." Launched in 2011, the program guarantees admission to OSU for Columbus State graduates, requires a four-year degree plan for students, and provides integrated orientation and advising services from both institutions. Similar partnerships are in place or under development for other colleges and universities.

Second, even as more recent high school graduates begin at Columbus State with the goal of transferring to a baccalaureate institution, placement tests indicate that more than 80 percent are unprepared to do college-level work in mathematics and/or English. Recognizing that there was a need for a regional approach to increasing student attainment, Columbus State led a series of regional summits in 2011 and 2012. The feedback from participating school districts, area colleges and universities, and business leaders was encouraging. These summits led to the creation of the "Central Ohio Compact," a regional strategy committed to ensure that 60 percent of Central Ohioans will hold a postsecondary credential by 2025. Strategies of the Central Ohio Compact include reducing remediation through early assessment and dual enrollment with high schools, increasing transfer opportunities for associate degree graduates, and providing unique learning options for adult, working and part-time students.

In the *2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*, the use of data and analysis in our partner relationships was cited as an area of opportunity. Today, not only Columbus State, but also every Central Ohio Compact school and organization, relies on data for their remediation program design.

## **Current State of Continuous Quality Improvement**

Over the past several years, the continuous quality improvement process of the college has matured. In November 2010, a team of faculty, staff and administrators, including President Harrison, attended an AQIP Strategy Forum for three days to generate strategies for moving forward with action projects and continuous quality improvement at Columbus State. Several action projects resulted from their focused work during that forum, including Helping Undecided Students, Switch to Semesters, and Making Sense of CCSSE.

Recently, the college deployed a two-tiered process that broadens the scope of involvement and decision-making in the continuous quality improvement process. The first tier of the college process is the Operational Steering Committee. The committee is composed of leadership within the college faculty, staff and administration. This committee, under oversight by the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and led by a faculty fellow, identifies the work to be done within the AQIP process and provides information and recommendations to the Strategic Steering Committee, which is composed of the President and his Cabinet.

The method for the selection of an action project provides an example of how this two-tiered process works. First, the Operational Steering Committee generates a list of potential projects that encompass the many activities occurring or beginning around campus. Once the Strategic Steering Committee vets the master list to ensure impending projects are not missed, the Operational Steering Committee prioritizes the list and sends the top seven potential action projects to the Strategic Steering Committee for the final selection of the three projects for the year. All large projects are organized under project management principles, and this is a further reflection of continuous quality improvement at Columbus State.

## **Action Projects**

Since the last Systems Portfolio in 2009 (<http://csc.edu/about/acc/portfolio.shtml>), the college completed four Action Projects, and three are in process: Helping Undecided Students; Switch to Semesters (S2S); and the Master Plan (<http://www.csc.edu/about/acc/aap.shtml>). Helping Undecided Students and S2S were continued over several years in multiple phases, and the Master Plan will become a multiple-year Action Project during the 2012-13 year.

Career Assistance to Help Undecided Students is a multiple-phase Action Project that began in 2009 and will conclude in 2012. This Action Project provides intrusive counseling to students with undeclared majors. The college determined that students who had not declared their course of study during their first or second quarter at the college were at high risk for not continuing past their second quarter. The college's findings were supported by national research indicating that students who have a declared major succeed at a higher rate than undeclared students. The Project spanned a three-year period to allow for cohort identification, counseling and evaluation. In 2009, the college placed a restriction on the records of a cohort of undeclared students that prevented them from registering until they met with an advisor to discuss choosing a major. Of these students, the ones who declared a major had more success than those who did not. Specifically, declared students had an 85 percent course completion rate compared to 79 percent for undeclared students. Declared students had a higher GPA average of 2.58 compared to 2.32 for undeclared students. In terms of retention, the Autumn 2009 to Autumn 2010 retention rate was 71 percent for declared students compared to 14 percent for undeclared students. The Autumn 2010 to Autumn 2011 cohort yielded similar results.

The Switch to Semesters multiple-phase Action Project involved converting the college from a quarter-based curriculum to a semester-based curriculum. This massive undertaking took place over three years and engaged the work of every department in the college. A steering committee, with membership from a cross-functional team of faculty, staff, and administrators, guided the process. Beyond meeting the State's objective of changing to a semester format, faculty members engaged in a rigorous peer review process to ensure the high quality of the semester curriculum. To facilitate a smooth transition within the information technology system, the college created an inventory of affected systems and developed and implemented test scripts. To prepare for advising students, the college developed a *Semester Conversion*



*Advising Reference Guide* and placed it on a wiki so that it could be easily accessed and updated (<http://cscs-advising-services.wikispaces.com/Guidelines+for+Math+%28SEMESTERS%29>). Feedback from the first phase of the Switch to Semesters Action Project proved helpful in the second phase. In particular, the college expanded the student participation component and surveyed students to gauge their awareness of the switch. This project concludes as the college begins semesters in Autumn 2012.

The Master Plan is the third Action Project for the 2011-2012 year. In 2011, the college launched a master planning process to help set a course for infrastructure expansion. Through this process, the college sought input from multiple stakeholders including college employees, community members, and business leaders. The first phase of the Master Plan has been completed. The report summarized the collective concerns and aspirations regarding the current and future physical environment of the college. This data will be used in the second phase of the project to develop a plan for the future needs of Columbus State. This Action Project will extend into the 2012-13 year.

Finally, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2010 Action Project must be referenced, because it is a critical representative of the college's larger student success initiative. In 2009, Columbus State became a member of the Foundations of Excellence. From that starting point, the college began a much more intentional journey to understand our students and to collect data that would inform decisions about supporting student learning and success. The CCSSE provided one of those significant data sets, and an Action Project was chartered to analyze, use, and distribute the data to the college. In addition to evaluating the CCSSE results, the college designed a process for handling future data sets.

One of the compelling findings of the CCSSE indicated that only 19 percent of the surveyed students reported using college career counseling services. This is below the 31 percent reported by other extra-large community colleges. This data supported the need for intrusive student counseling, as previously mentioned in the discussion of the Career Assistance Action Project. This finding also provided support for the creation of the position of Director of Career Services in an effort to provide more comprehensive services to students who need assistance in choosing their educational direction. Further, the findings supported the need for students to have mandatory orientation to the college as well as a student success course during their first term at the college. Both of these items are being developed within the Student Success and Attainment initiative that began in 2011.

While the foregoing discussion summarizes the college's recent Action Projects, it is important to emphasize that the college is engaged in continuous quality improvement in many areas. At the Spring 2012 In-Service Day, the President asked the college community to complete a form that described any continuous quality improvement activity they were working on in their departments. More than forty activities were identified, which demonstrates a solid culture of continuous quality improvement at Columbus State.

## **Distance Learning**

Columbus State offers a significant number of online and hybrid distance education courses. During Autumn Quarter 2011, the college had an unduplicated enrollment of 30,839 learners. Forty-four percent of these learners (13,709 students) enrolled in at least one distance education course. In addition, 48 percent of these learners (6,632 students) were exclusively taking distance education courses, representing about 22 percent of the college's total unduplicated enrollment for Autumn Quarter 2011. Currently, the college offers 460 distance education courses per academic term.

The college maintains data on distance education courses that include: success, retention and completion rates; demographics; statewide and national benchmarking on completion, enrollment and academic success; and comparative data between distance and traditional delivery of Columbus State courses. Please see the distance education evidence website at [http://courses.csc.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/Academics/Other/Evidence\\_of\\_Quality/index.html](http://courses.csc.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/Academics/Other/Evidence_of_Quality/index.html).

In 2003, the college's Teaching and Learning Roundtable (TLTR), distance learning lead faculty and senior academic leadership developed the "Distance Learning Course Quality Review Process." This process requires that all distance learning courses undergo a technical quality review (TQR) and an academic quality review (AQR). Columbus State established a quality practice framework to ensure the highest level of academic quality for distance learners. The Columbus State distance learning framework of quality practices includes the following: annual evaluation of student success (GPA distribution, retention, etc.); distance learning faculty orientation and training; distance learning student orientation and training; faculty online observation; student evaluation of online instruction; and the academic and technical quality course review.

The online course quality review process is designed to ensure that the course learning experience and academic rigor/parity are acceptable and consistent with academic department, division and college quality standards. The AQRs are conducted by a departmental review committee. The TQRs are designed to ensure that courses are operational and that technical aspects meet the college's defined standards. Instructional Technologies and Distance Learning (ITDL) staff completing TQRs will report recommendations to the faculty member who developed the course, the department distance learning lead faculty member, and the department chairperson. As of May 2012, the college has completed 324 AQRs and 466 TQRs.

The ITDL staff and faculty that teach distance learning courses continue to enhance feedback mechanisms for students. Distance learning courses are evaluated by students as a part of the institution's regular process for course evaluation. In May 2012, the TLTR piloted a new student evaluation process for online courses that will provide faculty who teach distance courses greater opportunity for student feedback. Results of this pilot will be posted on the evidence website. The ITDL department also solicits student comments from the college's distance education website. ITDL staff gather and review the comments, use them to improve aspects of the website and forward them to appropriate college personnel as needed. Please see the evidence website for examples of distance education student comments.

Finally, Columbus State is one of four institutions that manage the Ohio statewide Quality Matters (QM) Consortium. The consortium is an affiliate of the national Quality Matters organization. The consortium provides QM support to member institutions through dialogue, engagement, training, and dissemination of the QM model. The consortium assists member institutions with fostering a culture of continuous improvement in online and blended distance education course development and delivery. The Ohio QM Consortium is the largest statewide QM consortium in the country, and it is led by Columbus State Community College, Bowling Green State University, Akron University and Cuyahoga Community College.

## **Delaware Campus and Regional Learning Centers**

Columbus State Community College is comprised of two distinct campuses and Regional Learning Centers (RLC). Columbus State's Delaware Campus and the Regional Learning Centers operate in accordance with the policies and procedures of the college for Academic and Non-Academic Operations. Instruction is overseen by the academic departments located on the college's Columbus Campus. As

enrollment increases at Delaware, it will develop its own academic leadership. However, faculty will continue to be on joint curriculum committees with Columbus colleagues to ensure consistency in curricular offerings at each campus. Academic chairpersons assign faculty to teach all sections regardless of location or modality and, in conjunction with appropriate campus or site personnel, provide the necessary support for the faculty and for the administration of instruction. The standards and controls for instructional and operational quality established by the college are uniformly applied across all disciplines and departments.

Appropriate facilities and equipment are maintained at each location to support necessary services to ensure learner success. The college has established a code of building and equipment standards that is consistently implemented and maintained across the college. Within the established building and equipment parameters, facilities at each location are designed to meet instructional and learner needs.

The descriptions below outline the facilities and resources provided at the Delaware Campus and the Regional Learning Centers.

### **Delaware Campus**

The academic building on the Delaware Campus houses 27 state-of-the-art classrooms equipped with furniture, whiteboards, overhead LCD projectors, and well-equipped instructor stations. Two science labs allow for instruction of biology, physics and chemistry. The infrastructure supports videoconferencing, electronic document sharing, connectivity to the Internet, and distance learning. Four classrooms are equipped with virtual computer workstations. Instruction and learners are supported by a Learning Center with an open computer lab and tutoring services, a Student Services Center with cross-functional advisors, and a Testing Center with 28 workstations and four private testing rooms. Academic support is complemented by the Cybercafé and Columbus State Bookstore.

### **Regional Learning Centers**

The college maintains contractual agreements for the physical maintenance of each RLC. Comprehensive standards and guidelines are used to determine the appropriate building amenities, classroom/lab equipment and space, office furniture and fixtures. Annually, the college undertakes a capital equipment planning process that fields requests in support of instructional and non-instructional needs. The RLCs are part of this review process, thus allowing the RLCs to meet the needs of students and program offerings. Those centers offering associate degrees support testing, tutoring and advising services for Columbus State students.

Success with the opening of the Delaware Campus led the Student Affairs Division to duplicate the cross-functional model for the advising personnel at the Regional Learning Centers. Staff there are trained to provide students information from the applicant stage to successful matriculation, utilizing a one-staff-member/one-stop-shop model.

Columbus State maintains a set of standard reports for persistence, retention and completion. These reports are developed, monitored and updated as required to meet standards set by state, federal and accrediting bodies. The reports contain aggregated data for two campuses and multiple Regional Learning Centers. Enrollment data is captured and analyzed on a quarterly basis for each location and modality. Specialty reports tracking quarter-to-quarter or year-to-year enrollment trends are requested and delivered on a routine basis. The data are used to support requests for additional staff, services and programs.



The college's established policies and procedures are outlined in the Student Handbook for student complaints and grievances. The Delaware Campus and Regional Learning Centers administer quarterly course evaluation surveys as part of the college-wide quality review process. Additionally, the Delaware Campus and Regional Learning Centers administer surveys to assess registration decisions and satisfaction with services.

## **Addressing Strategic Issues**

The *2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* identified two primary insufficiencies at the college: the use of data and the methods for incorporating stakeholder needs or benchmarking into the decision-making process. In recent years, Columbus State has made important progress in addressing each of these concerns.

The college has engaged its stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and employers, to gather information about community needs. The CCSSE process provided a good baseline of student input, and started important college conversations, including student focus groups. The Foundations of Excellence process engaged more than 100 faculty and staff and helped identify best practices in student success. As a result of this work, the college is moving toward mandated orientation for new students, a required college success course and organizational changes to enhance advising services.

A methodology to capture employer needs was developed through grant-funded work in logistics and bioscience. Dr. Harrison is one of two Ohio community college presidents serving on the Governor's workforce forecasting team. This group of leaders is helping the state of Ohio's Workforce Development Division create a routine process whereby employers document their projected employment needs. This information will be used for program planning and student advising. Also in 2012, Columbus State participated for the first time in the "Best Colleges to Work For" survey through the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, which will be a good starting point for moving toward best employment practices.

In order to ensure that timely, accurate and relevant data are available to guide decision-making, Dr. Harrison created the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in July 2012 and approved the implementation of a data warehouse. Similarly, the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs restructured the college's approach to academic assessment by appointing faculty fellows to lead the work.

The Achieving the Dream process will ensure both data discipline and ongoing benchmarking. During 2012-2013, Columbus State's data team will work with faculty and staff to clearly define the data elements that will be used to track student progress over time. The college will populate the AtD database annually and use this framework as a means of assessing progress toward greater student completion and parity among student groups. Columbus State is one of 150 AtD institutions, and this process also provides immediate opportunities for benchmarking by comparing institutional data.

Another strategic issue expressed in the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* was a perceived lack of data in the assessment of student learning. The student assessment work completed at the college did exist, but it was unfortunately not well-documented in the 2009 Systems Portfolio. After the Systems Portfolio in 2009, the Center of Assessment for Student Learning created a website (<http://www.csc.edu/assessment/>) to store the results of each department's/program's annual assessment plan and results. In addition to housing assessment data, this website has evolved into a "treasure chest" for college educators to locate evidence of assessment work, rubrics, online presentations, forms, plans and step-by-step guides.

The website also contains the comprehensive Assessment for Student Learning Handbook, a hallmark of the college's work that has gained accolades across the United States. Further, in 2009, the college governance Assessment Committee of the Instructional Council developed Policy and Procedures for Assessment for Student Learning.

In Autumn 2011, the college added a college-wide Assessment Committee to the existing structure of department and division assessment committees. The college-wide Assessment Committee was staffed with faculty from both the Arts and Sciences and Career and Technologies Divisions, in order provide a more cohesive effort. This committee is charged with revising the current assessment process, with particular emphasis on exploring ways to improve the feedback loop between assessment and more effective instruction. During Summer 2012, the Assessment Committee conducted a pilot of a process to complete the loop between assessment and making changes in instruction.

### **Looking Forward**

Columbus State's role as a leadership institution in Central Ohio is expanding rapidly. As other higher education institutions become more selective, the college is becoming the front door to higher education for most students and families in the region. This is especially true for first-generation college students, low-income students, students of color, and adult students. As one of the few institutions that can bring innovations to scale, Columbus State is also being called upon to lead the way in reducing remediation and improving college preparedness.

Columbus State has made important strides toward building a culture of student learning and student success. The college's strategic priorities, focused on success and completion for students from all backgrounds, will be achieved through an ongoing methodical process of innovation, data analysis, and continuous improvement, and through deep partnerships with K-12 districts, other colleges and universities, employers, and community agencies.