

A brief update on Operational Projects and quality issues at Stark State College of Technology

Strategically SPEAKING

Spring 2008 Five-year Alumni Survey

The 2008 Five-year Alumni Survey was administered as part of a concerted multi-year institutional survey effort to collect and assess data from key College stakeholder groups, including current students, alumni, employers, employees, and the Stark County community. The Survey supports continuous improvement efforts at the College, specifically addressing four AQIP Categories:

- 3 - Understanding Students' and other Stakeholders Needs,
- 7- Measuring Effectiveness,
- 8 – Planning Continuous Improvement, and
- 9 – Building Collaborative Relationships.

The target population for the survey was graduates from the 2002-03 academic year. Given that the ACT survey instrument focuses on transfer outcomes as well as educational experiences and employment outcomes, five-year alumni were chosen to allow for enough time to pass that respondents could reflect back on their experiences at the College in light of employment and education outcomes. The Survey will be administered again spring term 2011, at which time comparisons will be made to 2008 results and to survey norms.

Spring 2008 CCSSE and CCFSSSE

CCSSE Overview

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) utilizes a set of five benchmarks of effective educational practice in community colleges. These benchmarks allow institutions, to gauge and monitor their performance and to make appropriate and useful comparisons between their performance and that of other groups of similar colleges.

The five benchmarks encompass 38 engagement items from the CCSSE survey that reflect many of the most important aspects of the student experience. These institutional practices and student behaviors are some of the most powerful contributors to effective teaching, learning, student retention, and student success.

CCFSSE Overview

The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE) was designed as a companion to the *Community College Student Report*, and elicited information from faculty about their teaching practices, the ways they spent their professional time, both in and out of class, and their perceptions regarding students' educational experiences. The *CCFSSE* report enables the College to view faculty expectations and perceptions of student engagement alongside student responses. Comparisons of student and faculty responses provide a useful prompt for campus discussions, particularly in those areas where students and faculty seem to be reporting divergent perceptions of the same experience.

Spring 2008 Employer Satisfaction Survey

The sample was comprised of employers who hired multiple graduates over the preceding two years and were registered on the College Central Network. The registered companies represent the majority of "key" employers of Stark State graduates. A few trends were apparent in the results. First, employers were satisfied with the quality of SSCT graduates and their technical skills. Second, graduates' skills and abilities (note that these link directly to SSCT General Competencies) were rated above average. Third, graduates' work habits were rated above average. These results support the contention that SSCT produced quality graduates and that these students fulfilled employer needs and expectations. However, there remains room for improvement, as none of the general skills or work habits scales had an "A" rating.

Please see the Employee tab on the mystarkstate portal – R&P Survey Results (lower right hand corner) for the full Survey reports.

Quality MATTERS

Academic Quality Improvement Program

ACTION PROJECTS:

This semester we completed and retired the Action Projects on *Capitalizing on Information/Learning Resources to Foster Learning, Consistency of Policies in Internal and External Publications, and Assessment of Academic and Non-Academic Departments/Programs*. We finalized the template that will be used to collect academic and non-academic assessment information and it was approved by President's Cabinet. We submitted recommendations on ways to assist us in keeping our publications consistent, which were also approved by President's Cabinet. The Action Project on the library concluded with the completion of the Digital Library, located in B123, near the Silk Auditorium. The Digital Library looks great so stop by to see it if you haven't already done so.

Upon retiring the previous Action Projects, new Action Projects needed to be declared. Two Action Projects have been declared with the Higher Learning Commission: *Improvement of the Academic Advising Process* and *Development of a Systematic Process for Academic Program Review*.

Expected outcomes of the Action Project on *Improvement of the Academic Advising Process* include: identifying gaps and areas where improvement is needed in the current advising process, refining the advising handbook, providing additional training sessions for advisors, linking advising to student orientation and new hire orientation, integrating the advising processes of Student Services/Enrollment Management and the Academic Divisions, and surveying the faculty to determine knowledge of current process and areas of improvement. There were 18 volunteers for this committee. The committee members are: Ben Tobias (chair), Kathy Bernstein (coordinator), Amy Baker, Karen Novakovic, Brenda Griffith, Melanie Carr, Pam Janson, Sandra Deel, Kathy Feichter, Linda Morosko, Kathy Bernstein, Renee Lilly, Jonathan Mitchell, Gloria Kline, Sly Huston, Wally Linville, Nicole Oocumma, and Judy Stauder.

The purpose of the Action Project on *Development of a Systematic Process for Academic Program Review* is to develop a systematic process to review and evaluate academic programs for viability or obsolescence in support of the teaching and learning environment, institutional effectiveness, and accountability. Goals of the project include defining the steps involved in the academic program review process, defining the steps involved in discontinuation of programs, and development of the document to be completed in support of academic program viability. The project supports accreditation requirements, brings our programs in better alignment with student and community needs, improves the economic efficiency of our programs, improves curriculum, and assists with transfer to four-year institutions. There were 13 volunteers for the committee: Cindy Close (co-chair), Jim Treacle (co-chair), Marc Hostetler, Wendy Walters, Lisa Kasunic, Helen Mandalinich, Glenda Zink, Doug Peck, Gabriela Rosu, Yojana Sharma, Darlene Horn, Kozy Corsaut, and Bette Oplinger.

The third Action Project for this year will focus on tracking of transfer students. The Project supports the strategic goals of the University System of Ohio, our strategic goal to offer Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, and our accreditation process. More information on this Project will be sent out in the beginning of the spring semester.

SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO:

The nine committees have completed approximately 80 of the questions we are required to answer in our Systems Portfolio. The process that we follow for completion of each question is the committee completes the worksheet, the AQIP Coordinator/Liaison reviews it and then places it on the agenda for the AQIP-Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The Steering Committee makes any changes deemed necessary, at which time it is placed on the agenda for the Extended Executive Council for final review. The committees have been charged with completing their narratives for each question by the beginning of the fall semester. Because the Systems Portfolio is due by May 2010, the 2009-2010 academic year will be spent getting it in final form and completing the other HLC tasks that must be submitted along with the Systems Portfolio.

The nine committees are following the same process that the HLC peer review team will follow when appraising our Systems Portfolio. In addition to answering the question, the committee self-evaluates where it feels SSCT is on the question. The self-evaluation can be a "SS" (super strength), "S" (strength), "O" (opportunity for improvement), or "OO" (outstanding opportunity for improvement.) The committee also identifies any unresolved issues or ideas for future projects that relate to the question. The AQIP Coordinator/Liaison has tracked the unresolved issues and suggestions and discussed them with Executive

Following the same process that the peer review team will follow not only familiarizes the committee members with the process but also allows the College to identify areas where improvements can be made prior to submitting the Systems Portfolio. Thus, we are supporting a culture of quality improvement and also engaging in quality improvement while drafting our Systems Portfolio.

AQIP SOURCES of COMMUNICATION:

The College is using various means to communicate updates on our AQIP accreditation process:

- This newsletter is being produced a few times each year;
- Updates are reported at the monthly President's Cabinet meetings;
- Detailed information on the progress of each of the Action Project committees and Systems Portfolio committees is on the S-Drive in the AQIP folder;
- College-wide updates are being held at the beginning of each semester;
- Information is on the AQIP website at <http://www.starkstate.edu/AQIP/index.html>;
- Monthly updates are also provided at the Extended Executive Council meetings and AQIP-Strategic Planning Steering Committee meetings;
- Periodic updates are provided at the Faculty Association and College Staff Association meetings.

Please contact Dr. Lada Gibson-Shreve @ 330-966-5457 Ext.4326 or LGibson@starkstate.edu if you have questions or want more information about AQIP, including the Action Projects and the Systems Portfolio.