



230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500 | Chicago, IL 60604-1413
800.621.7440 | Fax: 312.263.7462 | info@hlcommission.org | ncahlc.org

Serving the common good by assuring and enhancing the quality of higher learning

September 8, 2011

Steven Lee Johnson
President
Sinclair Community College
444 W. Third St.
Dayton, OH 45402-1460

Dear President Johnson:

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

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution. The enclosed *After Your Appraisal* details what lies ahead and how to use your Feedback Report most effectively, and explains when and how to register for your next Strategy Forum.

To comply with federal requirements, we need the CEO of the institution formally to acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and to provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Please read the enclosed *After Your Appraisal* suggestions *before* you decide how to respond. Limit your acknowledgement and comments to a maximum of two typewritten pages, and understand that your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file, to be shared with future peer reviewers who review your institution (including the next Systems Appraisal team, the next Quality Checkup visit team, and the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation panel). Email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org; call me or Mary Green (at 800-621-7440 x130) if you have any questions about it.

We know you will gain real value from the Systems Appraisal Feedback and the activities it will stimulate within your institution, and we are proud to be working with you as you continue along the never-ending path to improvement.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Spangehl
Vice President

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

SINCLAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

September 8, 2011



**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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR SINCLAIR

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

- Category 1: Sinclair in moving nicely into the integrated stage of continuous improvement in which operations are characterized by processes that are repeatable and regularly evaluated for change and improvement in collaboration with other affected units. Efficiencies across units are sought and achieved through analysis and sharing. The college has
 - used Action Projects successfully to produce innovation and positive change. Continued work needs to be done to extend the systematic attention it is has demonstrated to the academic content areas.
- Category 2: Sinclair focuses on three distinctive objectives in its portfolio: physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement through data analysis that provides continued opportunities for improvements in effectiveness and efficiencies. The narrative demonstrates that the College places considerable emphasis on these objectives. It is commendable that Sinclair has developed a mature set of data-informed systems and processes related to these objectives. It is noteworthy, however, that the three items included in the distinctive objectives category are closely related to core academic or support systems. Sinclair is encouraged, in the future, to consider focusing on institutional objectives in this category that are, to quote from the AQIP portfolio guidelines for Category 2, "separate from your instructional programs and internal support services."
- Category 3: Sinclair has developed and supports a systematic-and-comprehensive approach to understanding the needs of its students and key stakeholders. The consistent-tax support through local levies is a powerful testimony to the success of the institution. Sinclair might consider better articulating and defining its internal benchmarks and integrating them into analysis and reporting.
- Category 4: A solid continuous improvement foundation is in place with respect to the institution's commitment to valuing its people. Sinclair employs systematic processes to attract, retain, and develop a skilled-and-effective workforce. The reported low turnover

rate and PACE data suggest that employees find working at Sinclair a positive experience. Greater sophistication is needed related to the measurement of the efforts that are taking place and the analysis of the data that is gathered. Sinclair may find it helpful to be more deliberate in how it identifies the goals in this area, the processes it uses to monitor the achievement of these goals, and the results it tracks.

- Category 5: Sinclair has a leadership culture in place that reflects the principles of high-performing organizations, including the principles of focus, involvement, collaboration, agility, foresight, and information. There is evidence that leadership and communicating systems are allowing the institution to manage this significant growth successfully. Sinclair may want to develop a more-comprehensive summary of the comparative items it collects and report the results in a more-comprehensive manner. While Sinclair's culture promotes informal-communication approaches, it is valuable that the organization is pursuing more standardized, iterative process steps (e.g., PACE) to regularly gather, analyze, document, and apply stakeholder feedback.
- Category 6: Sinclair has developed several processes for addressing safety and security issues that pose a significant challenge to an urban campus. The development of the Behavioral Intervention Team helps assure that appropriate College personnel respond swiftly and effectively to threats to safety. It also has a clear understanding of the units involved in supporting the institution's operations. What is not clear is how well developed the linkages between the objectives of the units are, the processes used to achieve the objectives, how the results are related to the processes, and what improvements have been made as a result of the data. While processes, results, and improvements related to Public Safety and Energy/Sustainability are noteworthy, the portfolio does not fully articulate and align accomplishments into other organizational support areas (e.g., student access, educational and employment goals).
- Category 7: Sinclair has a strong continuous improvement culture and understands the importance of data. Systems for measuring effectiveness are in place, which allows the institution to spot areas that need attention. However, the institution would benefit from more clearly aligning data collected to its strategic goals and evaluating the appropriateness of the benchmarks. The institution should consider developing processes that allow a careful examination of the Measuring Effectiveness system as a whole in order to discover ways to improve its system of assessment. A more complete

summary of the measures it collects as well as who is involved in analyzing the data would help determine whether the KPIs are comprehensive, systematic, appropriate and useful to the institution.

- Category 8: Sinclair has a long-standing commitment to integrated planning, budgeting and continuous quality improvement. Sinclair's planning processes are repeatable and are evaluated annually for change and improvement. Efficiencies across units are sought and annual bonuses are tied to performance. Although its processes and systems appear to be working well, the institution does not seem to have metrics in place to directly evaluate its planning processes. And, the portfolio is less clear about how those processes are focused on several of the challenges identified in the overview for this category: funding concerns, the Chancellor's seven-point plan, ongoing cap on tuition increases, etc.
- Category 9: Sinclair's continuing commitment to its founder's credo, "Find the need and endeavor to meet it," has guided its efforts to establish local and regional partners. The college ensures that its collaborative relationships advance its mission and contribute to its strategic priorities. Its processes and systems for managing its strategic partnerships are well-integrated into the culture of the institution and are systematic as well as dynamic, allowing for flexibility as new opportunities are uncovered. The volume and variety of data gathered relative to its collaborative partnerships provides a challenge to the institution. The institution may want to develop a way to manage and make sense of the data as a way to improve the relationships it has with key collaborators.

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

ELEMENTS OF Sinclair's FEEDBACK REPORT

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

Analysis, Critical Characteristics Analysis, and Category Feedback. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

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

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

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

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

along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

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

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

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

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

Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*. An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your

institution's systems and processes under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

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

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

- **Data** - Sinclair collects a significant amount of data. To realize the greatest benefit of these data, there is a need for increased sophistication in the approaches and systems used for measuring effectiveness. This includes being more intentional about what information the institution collects, developing more complex analyses, being more comprehensive in its reporting mechanisms, and expanding the use of benchmarks. This will position the institution to move toward more predictive use of data in its planning processes.
- **Planning** – Sinclair is facing many challenges both externally from the state and federal government and internally as it moves toward being a regional institution. Navigating the challenges will require further development of the entire strategic plan as well as the direct evaluation of the planning system.

- **Expanding Effective Systems** – Sinclair has demonstrated through its presentation of selected examples in the portfolio that it understands what it takes to be a continuous improvement institution in these areas. It is evident that some areas are reaching an aligned and integrated state of continuous improvement. Other areas in the institution, however, appear to be less well developed. The challenge for the institution is to apply what the College has learned from the processes of developing these more integrated system to other areas in the institution.
- **Distinctive Objectives** – The three areas that Sinclair provided information about in the Other Distinctive Objectives category are closely aligned with Helping Students Learn, Supporting Institutional Operations, and Building Collaborative Relationships. To make sure the entire institution is functioning at the optimal level, Sinclair may want to identify distinctive non-learning activities that are taking place at the institution and bring them into the continuous improvement systems that are in place.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration and integrity.

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

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

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 Sinclair, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Sinclair distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

Item Critical Characteristic

OVa Sinclair is a public, non-profit, open-access, comprehensive, non-residential community college serving Montgomery and Warren Counties and the Miami Valley region of Southwest Ohio. It has one main campus and four other campuses in addition to online programs and courses.

- OVb Sinclair has had the same credo since its founding in 1887 which guides its mission: “Find the need and endeavor to meet it.” The mission of Sinclair is to offer transfer and technical associate degree programs, certificate programs, and continuing education opportunities through a system of diverse resources and delivery alternatives accessible to the service area. Sinclair has had the same vision statement since 1994 and the same mission statement since 1997.
- OVc Sinclair is governed by an 11-person board of trustees that meets bi-monthly. Six members are appointed by the Montgomery County Commissioners, one is appointed by Warren County Commissioners, and four are appointed by the Governor. Members of the Board serve overlapping five-year terms and may be reappointed. The membership reflects a cross-section of the county constituencies, with backgrounds in industry, public service, and education.
- OVd Sinclair has the lowest in-county tuition in Ohio (in Montgomery County) which is 40% lower than the community college average in Ohio and 20% lower than the national average. Sinclair also has no debt and no deferred maintenance issues.
- OV1a In the fall of 2010, Sinclair served an all-time high of 26,000 credit students enrolled in 202 different degree and certificate programs. 6116 of its student are enrolled in online courses. It also offers continuing education (non-credit) programs.
- OV1b Since the early 1990s, the faculty has been engaged in moving from traditional delivery to providing more interactive, authentic, technology-supported options that enhance and improve learning. Sinclair is transitioning from a quarter-hour format to a semester-hour format as required by state mandates.
- OV2 Three distinctive non-instructional objectives that support strategic priorities include physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement. Sinclair has four strategic priorities: quality and innovation in student learning and support, effective and sustainable organization, access and affordability, and community alignment.
- OV3 Increasing competition, highly-visible advertising, and promotional campaigns, most notably from proprietary colleges, continue to permeate the region. Since the last

- portfolio publication four years ago, the area has 14 more private institutions in operation. In total, there are 46 other institutions within 50 miles of Sinclair.
- OV4 In Fall of 2010, Sinclair employed 2,800 people across all employment classifications, including 982 full-time faculty and staff and 585 part-time regular employees. It has 405 full-time faculty, 330 of whom are tenure eligible, and 918 adjunct faculty. The average age of full-time employees is 50 years, and 80% of tenure-eligible-faculty have tenure. Approximately 18% of the institution's full-time regular employees are also serving as adjunct faculty.
- OV5 Key leadership groups include the President's Cabinet, Leadership Council, Instructional Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Department Chairs Council, and the Strategic Communication Council. The Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, and the Cabinet meet together annually to discuss and determine key institutional strategies.
- OV6 The key administrative support service areas at Sinclair include accounting, research, analytics and reporting, budgeting and analysis, human resources, purchasing, payroll, facilities planning and construction, facilities maintenance, grants development, and public safety. These operations identify strategic objectives (major projects) for each fiscal year based on comprehensive needs analyses and prioritization to support Sinclair's mission, values and key performance indicators.
- OV7 Sinclair uses Colleague as its ERP system (student information system and financial information) and DAWN as a data warehouse to provide access to institutional data. The institution has also developed custom technology solutions for many of its business and academic practices. The institution has the dedicated Office of Research, Analytics and Reporting to manage and use data.
- OV8 Sinclair must make plans to respond to decreased federal funded grants. It must also align with the Chancellor of Higher Education's seven-point plan that includes charter universities, reduced remediation, three-year baccalaureate degrees, increased teaching loads, reduced program redundancy, construction reform, and research commercialization. Furthermore, Sinclair must reduce energy consumption as mandated by House Bill 251. These challenges are having a major effect on both short-term and

long-term planning at Sinclair including applying for and receiving an unprecedented waiver to increase selected fees.

- OV9 Sinclair has over 250 collaborative relationships with regional high schools, other higher education institutions, business and industry workforce development organizations, community support organizations, national foundations, and governance organizations.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these “strengths and opportunities” sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Sinclair that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

Item Critical Characteristic

- OVa Sinclair is a public, non-profit, open-access, comprehensive, non-residential community college serving Montgomery and Warren Counties and the Miami Valley region of Southwest Ohio. It has one main campus and four other campuses in addition to online programs and courses.
- OVb Sinclair has had the same credo since its founding in 1887 which guides its mission: “Find the need and endeavor to meet it.” The mission of Sinclair is to offer transfer and technical associate degree programs, certificate programs, and continuing education opportunities through a system of diverse resources and delivery alternatives accessible to the service area. Sinclair has had the same vision statement since 1994 and the same mission statement since 1997.
- OV1a In the fall of 2010, Sinclair served an all-time high of 26,000 credit students enrolled in 202 different degree and certificate programs. 6116 of its student are enrolled in online courses. It also offers continuing education (non-credit) programs.
- OV1b Since the early 1990s, the faculty has been engaged in moving from traditional delivery to providing more interactive, authentic, technology-supported options that enhance and improve learning. Sinclair is transitioning from a quarter-hour format to a semester-hour format as required by state mandates.
- O7 Sinclair uses Colleague as its ERP system (student information system and financial information) and DAWN as a data warehouse to provide access to institutional data. The institution has also developed custom technology solutions for many of its business and academic practices. The institution has the dedicated Office of Research, Analytics and Reporting to manage and use data.

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

Item	S/O	Comment
1P1, 1P2	O	Sinclair involves many stakeholder groups in determining shared objectives at course, program, and general-education levels. Improved articulation of the processes used to engage stakeholders would bolster Sinclair's approach of apparent wide-ranging involvement. For instance, although input is obtained from faculty, details about the processes used are not provided.
1P3	S	In designing new programs, Sinclair uses feedback from faculty, advisors, transfer institutions, industry-advisory boards, and other internal and external constituencies, as well as data from environmental scans and other resources. Sinclair uses internal processes (e.g., SCC curriculum committees, BOT review) and external checks (e.g., the Ohio Board of Regents' guidelines for program development, advisory boards, Ohio Transfer Module) to ensure that new programs have curricular, financial, industrial validity, and avoid duplication within 30 miles of its service area.
1P4	SS	Sinclair balances educational market issues with student needs in the design of academic programming. The institution follows the state's Board of Regents (OBOR) guidelines, gains preliminary approval to establish demand and avoid duplication, uses Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) and Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGs) in describing programs and courses, and conducts a full financial analysis. In addition, program advisory boards, populated by business-and-industry experts, ensure program outcomes meet new and emerging standards. Finally, if available, the institution evaluates comparable programs to seek out best practices.
1P5	SS	Sinclair has multiple processes in place to carry out its mission as an open-access institution with a basic assumption that every incoming student must be assessed. It also has a cross-divisional advisory committee which meets annually to study results and recalibrate Accuplacer cut scores to improve student success in core courses.

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| 1P6 | S | Sinclair has completed an AQIP advising project, with advising centralized under the director of academic advising. The goal of the project was to provide students with more consistent and accessible information. The project also resulted in development of My Academic Plan (MAP), which provides an agreed-upon course of study for each student. |
| 1P7 | S | Sinclair helps students select programs through well-designed admissions and enrollment processes, centralized academic advising, specialized and targeted programs, and career services. The advising process is supported by WebAdvisor. Career Services provides assistance with career decisions. |
| 1P8 | SS | Sinclair used Title III grant funds to significantly improve its process for dealing with students who are under prepared. Particularly noteworthy is the creation of a Student Success Plan (SSP). This program includes development of individual learning plan for all students (MAP) plus counseling and intervention systems to help underprepared students. Counseling Action Plans (CAPs) are developed for students who need additional assistance and/or who have been identified through Sinclair's developmental studies early alert system. |
| 1P9 | S | Learning styles' assessments occur in the SCC 101, Student Success course, a common course for degree-seeking students. The course includes several assessments and other activities that assist students who are new to college. Online students are encouraged to complete a free, online-learning course prior to enrollment in an online program. |
| IP10 | S | Sinclair's College for Lifelong Learning, which serves adult students and offers seminars and workshops at senior centers, online, and on campus, has a coordinator, and an advisory board. |
| 1P11 | SS | Through a series of successful AQIP projects, Sinclair has developed in impressive system related to effective teaching and learning in which assessment has been moved from being an add-on to being an integral part of the institution. The degree of commitment is evident through the |

resources committed to this area including the four divisions' Learning Leaders and the Office of Research Analytics and Reporting.

- 1P12a S To create and administer its course offerings at its main campus, regional learning centers, and online, Sinclair has an iterative, data informed process to construct an effective and efficient course delivery system by incorporating input from key stakeholders.
- 1P12b S In anticipation of the Fall 2012 conversion to semesters, Sinclair has developed a set of software advising tools called My Academic Plan (MAP). The software charts a student's academic plan (transitioning from quarters to semesters) to graduation. It links course selection to registration and alerts the student and advisors if an "off-plan" course is selected.
- 1P13 S Sinclair uses many resources to support curricular efforts. It leverages technology via the Curriculum Management Tool (CMT) to track, design, and warehouse course, program, and other curriculum information. The College consults the Ohio State Board of Education curriculum models and data on transfer and occupational trends. Faculty, advisory boards, and other internal and external constituencies also offer feedback and ideas on the relevancy of current and future models and delivery systems.
- 1P14 S Decisions to update change or discontinue programs and courses are based on information from the program review process and from advisory boards, transfer institutions and employers. As part of the transition to semesters, the curriculum has been thoroughly re-examined to ensure viability of courses and programs.
- 1P15 S Sinclair has a wide variety of services available to address students' learning support needs. The richness of the system is evident in Figure 1.1: Key Learning Support Services.
- 1P16 S Student Services have "collaboration with instruction" as an explicit priority. Leaders from Student Services are regular guests of Provost Council, which provides an opportunity for alignment and collaboration.

- Several key processes reflect this priority, including faculty engagement in student clubs and other collaborations with academic departments.
- 1P17 S Sinclair collects evidence from multiple sources: such as capstone courses, meeting with service-learning employers/supervisors, employer surveys, advisory committee feedback, and graduate follow up surveys to determine whether graduates are meeting learning and development expectations. The institution also uses outcomes' data as part of its annual academic program/department review process.
- 1P18 S Process-design improvements are a specific and on-going action item in the institution's Integrated Assessment and General Education Strategic plan. It is noteworthy that systematic and documented assessment of student learning has been in place since 2004.
- 1R1 O Sinclair has identified specific performance measure it uses in some areas such as grade distribution, retention rates, success rates in developmental (DEV), and first college-level courses following completion; although the measures it uses for academic content is less clear. This is particularly true of non-general education courses. Sinclair may want to give additional attention to what content measures the academic programs use to evaluate student learning. Consideration should be given to reporting benchmarks and performance data for degree programs.
- 1R2 O Sinclair uses longitudinal self-perception measures regarding the six General Education Competencies. External validation of student learning may be needed to evaluate the academic program objectives as they compare to benchmark institutions.
- 1R3 O Sinclair has the opportunity to establish benchmarks and improve success rates in key developmental courses. Results in these two areas suggest that the majority of students are not actually meeting stated objectives. Less than 50% of students in developmental mathematics, developmental and college-level English, and top-enrolled classes are

successful while only 53.6% of students in college level Mathematics are successful. Sinclair may want to identify and review factors contributing to these scores.

- 1R4 O Evidence was presented at various levels indicating that students have acquired the knowledge and skills required by the institution and its stakeholders. Student opinions of their experiences and preparation for transfer are suggestive of successful acquisition of knowledge and skills. There is an opportunity for Sinclair to use more direct measures in this area.
- 1R5a S Sinclair's commitment to developing a culture of assessment is evident in the breadth of areas in which it presented data, much of it longitudinal. This provides an excellent foundation for continuous improvement. Sinclair has been recognized by many external bodies for its innovative, outstanding work in many learning-support process areas (e.g., NASPA Grand Gold for the Early-Alert).
- 1R5b O Sinclair's data shows greater use of academic labs by students, improved retention of students with ILPs, and increasing graduation rates from 2002 to 2006. Sinclair has an opportunity to better articulate that these actions are a result of its continuous-improvement efforts and not primarily a consequence of overall student enrollment increases. With greater numbers of college-ready students, Sinclair might consider devoting resources to this growing population and to the College's overall graduation rates reported at less than nine percent.
- 1R6a S Sinclair has numerous assessments in place to compare to other higher-education organizations including the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP), AtD benchmarking with other large Ohio community colleges. Sinclair's pass rate on credentializing examinations exceeds the national and state pass rates and Sinclair students in six programs had 100% pass rates. There is evidence these data are used to confirm the learning systems or to improve them.

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| 1R6b | O | Sinclair's performance in Developmental Math and Algebra reveals retention and enrollee success below the NCCBP benchmark. These data suggest Sinclair has an opportunity to improve this developmental sequence. |
| 111a | S | Sinclair indicates that it has recently improved its over-arching assessment systems, its faculty-professional development system, and its new-student processes. The College has identified areas of growth for faculty-professional development and growth as a result of feedback from the CCSSE and SENSE surveys. As part of continuous improvements, it has launched a new AQIP project, "Improving the First Year Student Experience." |
| 111b | O | Feedback from the latest SENSE document revealed the need to increase opportunities for part-time learners to access computer labs, tutoring, and study-skills/developmental course work. Ongoing usage of the AtD process and performance tracking may also assist in strengthening systematic and comprehensive data collection and analysis of these efforts at Sinclair. |
| 112a | SS | Sinclair demonstrates a substantial culture of evidence and infrastructure devoted to process-improvement and data-informed decision making. Ongoing technological improvements for collection, analysis, and warehousing of data for continuous-quality improvement efforts are increasing every year. Budget and planning processes are also linked to institutional goals of effectiveness, strategic planning, vision, and mission. |

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives,

alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OVd Sinclair has the lowest in-county tuition in Ohio (in Montgomery County) which is 40% lower than the community college average in Ohio and 20% lower than the national average. Sinclair also has no debt and no deferred maintenance issues.
- OV2 Three distinctive non-instructional objectives that support strategic priorities include physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement. Sinclair has four strategic priorities: quality and innovation in student learning and support, effective and sustainable organization, access and affordability, and community alignment.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2P1a	O	While Sinclair is to be commended for the manner it has used a data-informed strategic planning for regionalization, keeping education affordable, and engaging the community, the institution may want to give attention to areas that are even further removed from core instructional and support aspects of the institution such as athletics, participation in economic development activities for the benefit of the community, community lecture series, etc., if it has them.
2P1b	S	Sinclair designs and operates its key non-instructional processes by aligning with its mission, vision, and with a strong understanding of student and stakeholders needs, based on a detailed analysis of existing and new data. Sinclair conducts surveys and analysis of area

- demographics to determine expansion of learning centers. Engagement with the community is built into position descriptions of faculty, chairpersons, and other college leaders.
- 2P1c S Sinclair has aligned its other distinct objectives with the University System of Ohio Strategic Plan for Higher Education (2008 – 2018) and the state’s threefold goal to (1) graduate more students, (2) keep more graduates in Ohio, and (3) attract more degree holders from out of state.
- 2P2 O Sinclair lists regional engagement as one of its major non-instructional objectives. This appears to be defined primarily as Sinclair offering courses at various sites. The institution may want to consider looking for other regional needs and assessing the role it can play in meeting these needs.
- 2P3a S Sinclair shares management, budget, and expansion decisions with both its internal and its external constituents through media, campus meetings, town hall meetings, community leader briefings, internal and external print pieces, and the college website.
- 2P3b O While the institution has processes in place for communicating expectations to internal stakeholders, the institution has an opportunity to develop processes to communicate expectations with its external community.
- 2P4a S The College’s regionalization efforts are reviewed and assessed by senior leadership through regular reviews of learning center enrollments, student-learning outcomes, and financial outcomes. Student learning outcomes at the centers are compared to those of SCC students overall as well as to state benchmark data.
- 2P4b O Sinclair has an opportunity to involve other internal and external stakeholders in the assessment of the College’s regionalization efforts.
- 2P5a S Sinclair approaches its assessment of needs systematically including the use of cross-functional teams for the start-up of a Center. It also has developed a five-year plan which it reviews annually.
- 2P5b O While the institution has processes in place for determining faculty and staff needs in regards to regionalization and affordability, there is an

- opportunity to develop processes for determining employees' needs with regards to engaging the community.
- 2P6a S Guided by College-wide KPI's which include distinctive objectives, employees contribute to the College's decision making through the annual budget process and through feedback provided to leadership through town hall meetings, etc. The institution has also presented a workshop for faculty and staff leaders on "The Economics of Sinclair."
- 2P6b O The institution collects and uses information on faculty and staff needs in regards to regionalization and affordability. Sinclair would do well to develop similar processes with regard to engaging the community.
- 2R1 S On a quarterly basis, Sinclair analyzes data relative to its regionalization initiatives to ensure that programming and site-specific services are achieving established goals. Data analysis includes student enrollments, student demographics, student- satisfaction feedback, course-success measures, completion data, community-perception data, and tuition / fee comparisons.
- 2R2 S Sinclair has gathered sufficient data to assess how well it is accomplishing defined, distinctive objectives. The regional centers account for 15.6% of overall enrollment at Sinclair (up from 4% in Fall 2006). Data indicate that the centers attract new students and reclaim former students at a rate higher than the College overall.
- 2R3a S Sinclair awards more degrees and certificates than any other community college in the state, tuition rates have been lower than any other Ohio institution for the last nine years, and Sinclair received a perfect financial health ratio score on Senate Bill Six statement comparisons. The institution is monitoring these results and has a sense of where it stands relative to the other institutions.
- 2R3b O The institution shows student-success rates at the learning centers and the Dayton campus. It is unclear how this demonstrates performance of regionalization compared to other community colleges. Enrollment growth of learning centers from the other two-year institutions in OH may be a more appropriate comparison. In addition, comparative data on

		financial health ratio for other institutions are mentioned, but the data sets are not provided.
2R4	S	Sinclair has successfully embedded processes and performance results into its planning and evaluation processes. These processes enhance the institution's relationships with the communities and regions it serves as demonstrated in the 98% affirmation of importance the institution received in its latest survey of Montgomery-County citizens.
2I1	S	Recent improvements include the following: availability of disaggregated performance data for centers; approval from the state for a special-fee exception; high-and-improved ratings on the state's fiscal soundness indicators; and establishment of the Advancement Division. These improvements have been a key factor in the institution's effectiveness related to its other distinct objectives.
2I2	S	Sinclair has embraced continuous-process improvement since the 1990's, including adoption of strategic priorities with clear targets on student success and the use of KPIs tied to employee compensation.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Sinclair that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV1a In the fall of 2010, Sinclair served an all time high of 26,000 credit students enrolled in 202 different degree and certificate programs. 6116 of its student are enrolled in online courses. It also offers continuing education (non-credit) programs.
- OV3 Increasing competition, highly-visible advertising, and promotional campaigns, most notably from proprietary colleges, continue to permeate the region. Since the last portfolio publication four years ago, the area has 14 more private institutions in operation. There are 46 other institutions within 50 miles of Sinclair.
- OV9 Sinclair has over 250 collaborative relationships with regional high schools, other higher education institutions, business and industry workforce development organizations, community support organizations, national foundations, and governance organizations.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3P1	S	Sinclair uses a multi-dimensional system of research findings from surveys, data-mining, special projects, and other comparative sources to help identify changing needs of students. This information is presented to Sinclair employees, leadership, and the Board of Trustees. Areas of concern are assigned to existing committees and to project teams for discussion and action. Areas of concern and proposed resolutions are prioritized relative to the institution's strategic priorities and the concerns that impact on student learning.
3P2	S	Sinclair has extensive programs in place to build and maintain relationships with its students beginning from high school, through attendance in classes including the use of social media, an electronic program plan (MAP) to provide an on-going schedule plan for students, and Strategic-Enrollment Management and School-Linkages' departments.

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| 3P3 | S | Sinclair uses a variety of methods (e.g., surveys, advisory committees, financial reports) to identify the changing needs of key stakeholder groups. Responses to changing concerns are prioritized relative to the institution's strategic initiatives and the concerns that impact on student learning. Areas of strategic concern are assigned as action items to existing committees and/or project teams. |
| 3P4a | S | Sinclair has a history of collaboration and 250 strategic partnerships with key stakeholders. The President and others work hand-in-hand with government agencies via service on committees and by presenting issues to legislators and other elected officials. Sinclair leverages the contacts that College personnel maintain through their personal and professional connections to be visible and active in the community and in local, regional, state, and national organizations. It also uses formal communications' methods (e.g., newsletters, briefings, reports, surveys, focus groups) to stay connected to its key stakeholder groups and to identify unmet needs and opportunities. |
| 3P4b | O | It is evident that building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders is a high priority for the institution and that it has been effective in doing so in global terms. The college may find it helpful to catalog the specific ways this is happening and then assess in more direct ways which strategies are successful and which could be improved. |
| 3P5 | S | Sinclair's senior leadership has primary responsibility to determine new students and stakeholder targets and unmet needs and opportunities. The leadership relies on a three-pronged approach: (1) analysis of populations within the region; (2) identification of opportunities or unmet needs gathered through stakeholder outreach; and (3) monitoring changes in the local economy as well as changes in state or federal regulations or accreditation requirements. |
| 3P6 | S | Sinclair maintains efficient processes to collect and respond to complaints. The Ombudsman's Office is an example of the institution's commitment to this area. Formal processes for both academic and non- |

academic grievances are outlined in the student handbook and in the faculty-and-staff handbooks. In addition, internal and external stakeholders have frequent opportunities to provide feedback to the institution.

- 3R1 O Sinclair has a clear-and-concise conceptualization of the types of measures it collects: access, quality, and transferability. The College may find it helpful to develop a comprehensive table that lists who collects what, when, how it gets distributed, and how results are accounted for.
- 3R2 O Sinclair indicates that access, quality education leading to a degree or transfer, and a supportive environment are the core requirements for students. The portfolio provides longitudinal data relative to each of these three core requirements. However, the portfolio does not indicate how those three core requirements were determined. And, although the narrative indicates that the institution has data for many student subgroups (e.g., Pell recipients and minority students), disaggregated data are not provided.
- 3R3a S Growing enrollment by students and results from student surveys, market- share penetration, Transfer Student Survey, and CCSSE indicate that Sinclair has built strong, effective relationships with its students.
- 3R1b O While students often show satisfaction with items such as quality of education and the level of preparing them positively for employment and transfer, an opportunity to establish benchmarks to monitor degree completion exists.
- 3R4 S Sinclair has presented evidence in surveys, advisory-board feedback, and financial audits that it is performing well in key areas related to stakeholder satisfaction. The trend line suggests this has been an area of improvement over the years. For example, over the past nine years, area employers have indicated an increasingly high level of satisfaction with Sinclair's preparation of its graduates.
- 3R5a S Sinclair provides data that indicate it enjoys a healthy, positive relationship with its community constituents. The narrative includes

- examples of community support, legislative / governmental support, business-and-industry support, and employee support.
- 3R5b O Evaluation of performance could be bolstered by increasing the alignment of what appears to be disparate-data sets and sources. Articulating internal thresholds that specify the level of performance expected might be one approach for Sinclair to consider.
- 3R6 O Benchmark data have been provided in several different tables. The College may find it useful to develop a summary of measures for which it has benchmark or comparative data. This will allow the institution to evaluate where additional measures should be developed.
- 3I1 S Sinclair has made several improvements in collecting data concerning student and stakeholder needs, which can be benchmarked and compared to peer institutions. The institution has also expanded its commitment to data-driven decision making through its participation in the Achieve the Dream Initiative and the availability of data through DAWN.
- 3I2 S A data-driven culture of improvement at Sinclair is exemplified in the employment of a comprehensive-data warehouse and a constituency that uses data from several sources to inform process improvements. The culture assists in selection of targets to understand and respond to the needs of students and other stakeholders. Sinclair has aligned planning with resource allocation.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all of your faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation

factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV4 In Fall of 2010, Sinclair employed 2,800 people across all employment classifications, including 982 full-time faculty and staff, 585 part-time regular employees. It has 405 full-time faculty, 330 of whom are tenure eligible, and 918 adjunct faculty. The average age of full-time employees is 50 years and 80% of tenure-eligible faculty have tenure. Approximately 18% of the institution's full-time regular employees are also serving as adjunct faculty.
- OV8 Sinclair must make plans to respond to decreased federal funded grants. It must also align with the Chancellor of Higher Education's seven-point plan that includes charter universities, reduced remediation, three-year baccalaureate degrees, increased teaching loads, reduced program redundancy, construction reform, and research commercialization. Furthermore, Sinclair must reduce energy consumption as mandated by House Bill 251. These challenges are having a major effect on both short-term and long-term planning at Sinclair including applying for and receiving an unprecedented waiver to increase selected fees.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4P1	S	Sinclair aligns skills, values, and credentialing requirements with stated departmental and/or institutional objectives in addition to using Hay-Group criteria for non-faculty positions and a common template for faculty positions which can be adapted to fit standards in the field as well as requirements of regulatory and accrediting bodies .

4P2	S	Sinclair uses an online system that auto-scans applications for alignment to minimum position requirements. Cross-functional, diverse teams are trained by Human Resources to apply proper hiring practices to selection and interview of finalists. Before hiring is complete, new employees must be satisfactorily cleared via reference and criminal-background checks.
4P3	S	HR and the hiring manager/search committee determine the appropriate advertising venues, timelines, and any legal issues associated with hiring. Advertising is done through multiple venues, and Sinclair's online job posting site streamlines prescreening processes.
4P4a	S	Sinclair uses orientations for new full and/or part-time faculty and staff to familiarize them with the history, mission, and values of the institution. Additionally, adjunct faculty will participate in a newly-designed certification course and may access mentoring opportunities as needed.
4P4b	S	Multiple processes highlight Sinclair's approach to orienting all employees to the organization. Noteworthy are the certification course adjunct faculty complete as part of their orientation, faculty mentoring programs, and handbooks which describe policies, practices and procedures.
4P5a	S	Sinclair enjoys a relatively-low turnover rate (currently 8%), which the institution attributes to its comprehensive benefits' package, competitive salary, culture of appreciation and mutual respect, opportunities for advancement, orientation programs, and a safe / appealing work environment. The institution uses retention patterns and anticipated retirements to forecast changes in personnel by job categories. Vacant positions are examined to determine whether or not they should be refilled, broadened, repurposed, or eliminated.
4P5b	O	It is unclear if there is a formalized process for succession planning for anticipated retirement options coming in the Ohio system in the next three years. Processes that anticipate and can quickly address changes are especially important at both the administrative and faculty leadership levels where changes have the potential to have a significant impact on the institution.

- 4P6 S By offering employees opportunities to serve on cross-functional teams and be cross-trained, Sinclair fosters a spirit of cooperation, empowerment, and learning among work groups. Performance-review processes require and recognize skill development and continuous learning.
- 4P7 S Scheduled audits of many processes and procedures across the campus provide a system of checks and balances and ensure ethical practices and employee behaviors. In addition, processes are in place to provide training in and communication of federal and state regulations.
- 4P8 S Divisions / departments develop continuous-improvement plans that also identify training needs. Individual continuous improvement and training targets complement these departmental plans. Student feedback on faculty / courses informs the annual faculty review process, and these discussions may also focus on skills' improvement. Sinclair recently conducted an HR assessment, which identified six areas for improvement, including supervisory "soft skill" training.
- 4P9 S Sinclair's merit-pay system is one vehicle available to employees to accomplish improved job performance. CITs are set by the supervisor, in collaboration with the employee. The Staff Development and Innovation Committee, which meets monthly, leads the institution's professional staff development efforts.
- 4P10 S Sinclair has established processes for evaluating staff and faculty, based upon input from senior leadership, supervisors, faculty and staff, as well as best practices at other institutions. Based upon results from the PACE survey, the institution developed an AQIP-action project to redesign the evaluation process.
- 4P11 S Committees comprised of representatives from each of the employee categories designed the employee reward-and-recognition systems. Faculty are eligible for merit bonuses; non-faculty employees receive incentive pay when the institution meets or exceeds its key performance

		indicators (KPIs). Approximately 30% of an employee's total compensation package is the benefit package provided by the institution.
4P12, 4P13	S	Sinclair uses survey results (e.g., PACE), exit-interview feedback, and communication processes with faculty and staff (e.g., Faculty and Staff Senate Committees) to gauge the morale of its employees on topics of satisfaction and safety/well being. Senior leadership uses ranking tools (e.g., matrix on PACE data) to prioritize feedback. The College uses external benchmarking tools (e.g., McGohan and Brabender compensation study; Ohio college system comparative data) to validate salary-and-benefit levels.
4P13	S	The College supports multiple processes that provide for an evaluation of employment conditions. The Behavioral Intervention Team is a strong feature of Sinclair's systems in this area.
4R1	S	Sinclair annually collects data on employee satisfaction, employee turnover, absenteeism, diversity, faculty workloads, health-insurance costs, salary benchmarks, safety, performance reviews, and staff development needs. Overall these factors, as rated by use of the PACE survey, show that Sinclair employees' satisfaction is higher than national levels on selected criteria (see Figure 4.3).
4R2	S	Sinclair used results of a comprehensive-diversity audit to guide the drafting of its first Strategic Plan for Diversity and the hiring of its first Diversity Officer.
4R2b	S	Sinclair has consistently scored higher than peer groups in four PACE benchmarks each year the survey has been administered. The institution provides a safe environment on campus and experiences low-employee turnover.
4R3	O	While employees' perceptions of productivity and effectiveness can be gleaned from the PACE survey, Sinclair has an opportunity to develop quantitative measures more directly linked to strategic goals. For example, reviewing PACE-response rates and national norms would allow for a fuller analysis and provide more context for evaluating results.

- 4R4a S Sinclair provides ample-comparative evidence that in nine areas its results for valuing people meet or exceeds norms for its peers in the PACE cohort and other Ohio community colleges.
- 4R4b O Although currently-employed processes have led to low rates of turnover, and overall faculty salaries are higher than other comparable community college salaries, Figure 4.14 indicates that Sinclair salaries are higher for associate and full professors but not for lower faculty ranks. Sinclair has an opportunity to conduct a finer-grained analysis of compensation and turnover that will inform its planning for faculty hiring and compensation.
- 4R4c O Results from administration, as noted in Figure 4.12, show that there is an opportunity to give more timely feedback to administration on the quality of its work.
- 4I1 S Sinclair is currently conducting a series of listening sessions to allow employees to provide feedback on items rated lower on the PACE surveys, many of which deal with communications' issues. The institution has a full-time digital media specialist to manage Sinclair's social media presence and has dedicated a full-time position to internal communications.
- 4I2 S The College has an established benchmark to monitor and set targets for improved performance related to the regular administration of the PACE survey. In addition, KPI data are assembled and analyzed for the academic year. Findings are translated into the incentive-pay percentage.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading And Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership

development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OVb Sinclair has had the same credo since its founding in 1887 which guides its mission: “Find the need and endeavor to meet it.” The mission of Sinclair is to offer transfer and technical associate degree programs, certificate programs, and continuing education opportunities through a system of diverse resources and delivery alternatives accessible to the service area. Sinclair has had the same vision statement since 1994 and the same mission statement since 1997.
- OVc Sinclair is governed by an 11-person board of trustees that meets bi-monthly. Six members are appointed by the Montgomery County Commissioners, one is appointed by Warren County Commissioners, and four are appointed by the Governor. Members of the Board serve overlapping five-year terms and may be reappointed. The membership reflects a cross-section of the county constituencies, with backgrounds in industry, public service, and education.
- OV4 In Fall of 2010, Sinclair employed 2,800 people across all employment classifications, including 982 full-time faculty and staff and 585 part-time regular employees. It has 405 full-time faculty, 330 of whom are tenure eligible, and 918 adjunct faculty. The average age of full-time employees is 50 years, and 80% of tenure-eligible faculty have tenure. Approximately 18% of the institution’s full-time regular employees are also serving as adjunct faculty.
- OV5 Key leadership groups include the President’s Cabinet, Leadership Council, Instructional Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Department Chairs Council, and the Strategic Communication Council. The Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, and the Cabinet meet together annually to discuss and determine key institutional strategies.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5P1	S	The institution's mission, vision, and values are periodically reviewed and updated by the College's Board of Trustees, taking into consideration feedback from internal constituents. The current mission and vision were approved by the board in the mid-1990s. A set of strategic initiatives were developed in 2010, following a series of discussions between campus and community leaders.
5P2	SS	Directions in alignment with the institution's mission, vision, and values are set through College-wide planning processes that involve review and input from internal stakeholders and the board of trustees. These directions are actualized on the departmental or divisional level through a process that ensures that individual departments use comparable parameters when making budgeting requests. Departmental planning processes are regularly reviewed. Individuals map their growth goals to priorities of the College and/or the department. Common KPIs ensure all employees work toward common goals.
5P3	S	The College has developed an interrelated system for setting direction that brings together the many processes for understanding the needs of multiple stakeholder groups (e.g., current/potential students, employee groups) and those responsible for planning. This includes the use of student-and-stakeholder feedback, internal-and-external data and performance results, and information about changes in regulatory and government bodies. A cross-functional planning team meets to clarify the new requests, translates them into specific objectives, prioritizes them, and maps them to existing resources.
5P4a	S	Sinclair is forward-thinking in its desire to focus on opportunities that will benefit students and learning. The Board of Trustees, executive leadership, key-department chairs, and other work groups use state and

		national benchmarks and environmental-scan data to identify future targets to benefit this area.
5P4b	S	To develop a vision for the future, Sinclair depends on feedback from its advisory committees and on feedback from top leaders who are active at the state-and-national level. Sinclair has imbedded into its organization the strategic areas of institutional research, grants, advancement, and workforce development to plan proactively for the future.
5P5	S	Strategic-decision making involves senior leadership, key departments, Board of Trustees, and external stakeholders in a comprehensive process that evaluates evidence, asks for stakeholder approvals, and sets up taskforces to develop detailed plans. Operational-decision making depends upon the nature and importance of the decision. Many operational areas have the authority to change policies and procedures as long as they do not impede or negatively affect other areas or the institution as a whole.
5P6	S	Sinclair has systems in place to bring a wealth of data to the decision-making process. The institution's KPIs, which supply a barometer for institutional effectiveness and drive institutional-decision making, are reviewed annually and provide Sinclair's leadership, as well as individual employees, a scorecard by which Sinclair can measure overall performance. Enrollment projections, retention reports, and financial reports also feed Sinclair's performance evaluation. Results are shared with the Board of Trustees and internal leadership groups. Data needed for internal-decision making are available via DAWN.
5P7	S	Sinclair has formal-communication structures in place to disseminate information to students and internal stakeholders, such as standing committees, electronic newsletters, and town hall meetings. Information flow to the senior leadership is designed to be informal to facilitate an innovative-and-inclusive environment.
5P8	S	The College President shares key information (e.g., state of College financial health, celebrations, accomplishments, challenges) at his yearly

fall address to the internal community. Strategic priorities are reinforced across the College by Senior Vice Presidents. Sinclair uses employee, program, and budget-review processes along with its award-and-recognition system to communicate and reinforce the institution's mission, vision and values.

- 5P9 S Sinclair has a long-standing tradition of extending learning to all members of the institution: administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The narrative highlights a variety of leadership training opportunities available to its employees. Those who participate in these leadership-training opportunities are encouraged to communicate what they've learned through a quarterly-professional development workshop series.
- 5P10a S Sinclair imbeds communication of its mission, values, and commitments into its hiring practices. At all levels and particularly at the Presidential level, affirmation and commitment to this alignment of organizational mission is highly fostered.
- 5P10b S Sinclair re-organized its administration to create stronger career paths for its leaders and to address the need to be more aggressive with leadership succession. Sinclair uses informal mentoring to support leadership succession. The President regularly involves senior leadership in experiences that expose them to the challenges and opportunities facing Sinclair.
- 5P10c O While there are some efforts in place to anticipate up-coming needs in the organization, Sinclair may want to develop a more systematic set of processes to deal with the inevitable changes in leadership.
- 5R1a S Sinclair collects and analyzes data from institutional surveys such as the PACE survey to measure employee perceptions relative to the College climate, including administrative leading and communicating.
- 5R1b O Sinclair has an opportunity to more systematically obtain Critical Performance Measures by collecting, analyzing, and reporting expected-leadership performance of its faculty.

5R2	S	Overall results from the 2010 PACE instrument indicate a healthy campus climate (3.80 mean score on a 5.0 scale compared to a national norm of 3.61). Ratings on individual-survey items have increased over time but still indicate opportunities for growth relative to decision-making and advancement.
5R3	S	Results from the PACE survey over multiple years indicate that Sinclair scores higher than the average for all PACE-climate study norms.
5I1	S	Sinclair has improved internal communications through several means. Some examples are the following: including additional staff to manage internal communications, a new communications' guide, new mobile applications, regularly-scheduled town hall meetings, listening sessions, and organizing a student-advisory council.
5I2	S	Sinclair has a strong culture of using evidence to set improvement targets and goals. Improvement targets are set based on both formal data analysis and informal interpersonal communications and feedback. The most recent example of this is the AQIP-action project on improving the first-year student experience which will examine College programs and systems that impact new students.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

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

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV2 Three distinctive non-instructional objectives that support strategic priorities include physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement. Sinclair has four strategic priorities: quality and innovation in student learning and support, effective and sustainable organization, access and affordability, and community alignment.
- OV8 Sinclair must make plans to respond to decreased state funding and decreased federal funded grants, It must also align with the Chancellor of Higher Education’s seven-point plan that includes charter universities, reduced remediation, three-year baccalaureate degrees, increased teaching loads, reduced program redundancy, construction reform, and research commercialization. Furthermore, Sinclair must reduce energy consumption as mandates by House Bill 251. These challenges are having a major effect on both short-term and long-term planning at Sinclair including applying for and receiving an unprecedented waiver to increase selected fees.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6P1	S	Identification of support service needs for students and other key stakeholders is part of an ongoing, iterative process. Feedback garnered through surveys, external compliance reviews, and Sinclair’s Call Center intake and analysis assist in this process.
6P2	S	Administrative support service needs are determined across all College divisions. Planning is aided by using information collected on satisfaction surveys and during annual evaluations/K.P.I. reviews. This feedback is synthesized and submitted to the President’s Cabinet. In consultation with the Budget and Analysis Office, the Cabinet allocates funding with those that align with Sinclair’s highest priorities.
6P3	S	Comprehensive systems and processes are developed and managed by Sinclair’s Public Safety in conjunction with Facilities and Student Services. The College’s Safety Coordinator maintains the Emergency

- Management Plan and serves as lead or liaison for multiple safety and security initiatives.
- 6P4 S The Director of Public Safety, Chief of Police, Director of Facilities Management, and Director of Facilities dialogue with each other, their workers, and the college community on routine and critical incidents daily. College personnel use an intranet-based workflow system to request and approve facility needs.
- 6P5 S Sinclair shares documentation and knowledge about its support processes via meetings, campus signage, email, list-serves, website, and at conferences regionally and nationally. An Energy Strategic Master Plan and Green Report Card forms detail plans and strategies for energy/sustainability.
- 6R1 S Sinclair regularly tracks the Jeanne Clery crime statistics for the College and analyzes the Green Report Card indicators to measure its results in the two focus areas of public safety and energy/sustainability.
- 6R2a S Sinclair's Public Safety area partnered successfully with the Dayton Police Department on Operation Car Safe resulting in a reduction of vehicle break-ins by 69%. Public Safety is also piloting an email and text-message early crime alert system as another means to communicate quickly to stakeholders about emergency situations.
- 6R2b S Sinclair is documenting positive results due to improvements in its planning and tracking processes for organizational operations. Some examples are the following: the new tracking software that interfaces with SCC's electronic-data systems (e.g., Student Judicial Affairs' Office data) that provides input and access to information about student conduct issues and the implementation of the recently completed Energy Master plan that is supporting SCC's progress toward becoming a more sustainable campus.
- 6R3 S Sinclair has made progress in its goal of reducing energy consumption (5.3% compared to 2004). This is a good example of the institution's

- ability to develop clear linkages between a unit goal and measure to assess the outcome of that goal.
- 6R4 No information was given for this section and the question was not addressed.
- 6R5 S Sinclair continues to expand its ability to track the results of its performance processes against other organizations. Some examples are the following: providing a relatively safe campus environment, compared to other community colleges; making progress on meeting the energy conservation benchmark set by the state of Ohio; earning a 4.2 rating compared to peer rating of 3.5 on the Sightlines Nationwide Facilities report.
- 6I1 S Sinclair has formed the cross-functional Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to help improve campus safety. The group has developed a referral checklist so that faculty, staff, and students can report threatening or disruptive behavior to the appropriate response organization. Additionally, Energy/Sustainability studies and planning have generated 29 different potential Energy Conservation Measures (ECM's).
- 6I2 S Sinclair's process of developing Continuous Improvement Targets and using them to meet department and individual goals are further aligned with its KPI's, indicating a strong culture of quality improvement. Evidence of improvements in campus safety and energy conservation demonstrate a systematic and well-integrated approach in these areas.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data;

analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Sinclair that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV2 Three distinctive non-instructional objectives that support strategic priorities include physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement. Sinclair has four strategic priorities: quality and innovation in student learning and support, effective and sustainable organization, access and affordability, and community alignment.
- OV7 Sinclair uses Colleague as its ERP system (student information system and financial information) and DAWN as a data warehouse to provide access to institutional data. The institution has also developed custom- technology solutions for many of its business and academic practices. The institution has the dedicated Office of Research, Analytics, and Reporting to manage and use data.
- OV8 Sinclair must make plans to respond to decreased state funding and decreased federal funded grants, It must also align with the Chancellor of Higher Education’s seven-point plan that includes charter universities, reduced remediation, three-year baccalaureate degrees, increased teaching loads, reduced program redundancy, construction reform, and research commercialization. Furthermore, Sinclair must reduce energy consumption as mandates by House Bill 251. These challenges are having a major effect on both short-term and long-term planning at Sinclair including applying for and receiving an unprecedented waiver to increase selected fees.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
7P1	SS	Sinclair has a framework in place for selecting and managing data. Feedback and data are drawn from internal and external sources, made

accessible to users via the DAWN electronic-warehouse system, and are aligned to Sinclair's K.P.I.'s which are on a three-year review cycle. It has a central data warehouse to store pertinent institutional information and disseminates this information to key internal stakeholders.

- 7P2 S Sinclair uses a relatively stable set of KPIs (in place for the last 3 years) to judge institutional progress. When new KPIs are proposed, the indicator is studied over time to establish a performance benchmark. Data is reviewed at retreats and meetings, during the budget planning process and KPI review, and then benchmarked with external comparisons to plan for future needs. Performance is rated annually on a 4-point scale (below threshold, at threshold, at target, at maximum).
- 7P3 S State performance reports and legislative directives determine some data needs. Sinclair's Senior Vice-President/CIO leads formal, annual planning processes for IS. A balance is maintained between the requirements of internal units and external entities in its data gathering and reporting processes. Annually, the Board of Trustees, President, and senior leadership review institutional goal attainment/alignment with KPI's via a scorecard system and share outcomes through multiple communication channels.
- 7P4 S KPI results are provided to the President, the Board of Trustees and the President's Cabinet. These findings, highlighted in individual letters to employees, are translated into a scorecard that provides employees with a concise statement on institutional progress.
- 7P5 S Sinclair makes uses comparative data from the University System of Ohio and from IPEDS, CCSSE, etc. to evaluate its overall institutional performance. Sinclair also researches best practices through the League of Innovation in Community Colleges, the AtD project and collaborative grants to establish benchmarks for its own processes. The institution also relies heavily on internal trend data as well as comparing departmental performances.

7P6	S	Sinclair has annual unit and institutional-level review and analysis processes (e.g., CIT's, KPI's, Program Review) that align to its strategic priorities. DAWN stores data and completed reports that may be accessed by stakeholders. Other channels such as email, Sinclair website, and electronic newsletters allow for multiple communication options.
7P7	S	Sinclair indicates that its information system is routinely monitored to ensure accessibility, availability, reliability and security. This monitoring helps identify potential issues and/or facilitates communication about existing issues. Sinclair's electronic infrastructure provides stakeholders with readily available data and information and has an extremely low rate of down time.
7R1	S	Sinclair collects, analyzes, and applies results of KPI's to its processes and systems annually. DAWN and the Office of Research, Analytics, and Reporting make possible access to 800 standardized quantitative and qualitative reports as well as customized reports
7R2a	S	Currently, more than 2,000 users have access to 800 standardized quantitative and qualitative reports. The annual review of KPIs and associated metrics allows Sinclair to measure progress toward its mission and strategic goals.
7R2	O	Sinclair may want to put in place a process for evaluating its system for measuring effectiveness beyond what is provided by Information Services.
7R3	SS	Sinclair's Information Services provides an "outstanding level of service", as rated by Gartner Research. In addition, Sinclair recently received two awards for its outstanding online learning programs and its SSP software system has won 10 different national awards. Noteworthy is the fact that other higher education institutions have purchased SSP and CMT software from Sinclair.
7I1a	S	The college's ERP software and hardware systems have been reconfigured to support the transition from quarters to semesters and 7

million course records have been modified to show semester credit values. The MAP (individual academic plans for students) have been developed so students and advisors can more easily make the quarter-to-semester transition. The institution has changed its graduation processes so that the institution notifies students of their eligibility for graduation (rather than waiting for the student to notify the college).

- 711b O While significant improvements within the institution have been identified in this section; it is not clear how these relate to the processes and systems for Measuring Effectiveness. Sinclair may want to evaluate more directly how well the assessment systems are doing and develop specific plans for improving these processes.
- 712a S Sinclair's culture of fostering innovation and use of data for decision making is supporting positive results for institutional KPI measures that are aligned to its Strategic Priorities. The College continues to provide more data on a highly-reliable basis for internal and external stakeholders.
- 712b O Sinclair may want to evaluate more directly how aware the culture and infrastructure are of the Measuring Effectiveness systems and how well they are able to set targets for improving the associated processes.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Sinclair that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:

Item Critical Characteristic

- OVc Sinclair is governed by an 11-person board of trustees that meets bi-monthly. Six members are appointed by the Montgomery County Commissioners, one is appointed by Warren County Commissioners, and four are appointed by the Governor. Members of the Board serve overlapping five-year terms and may be reappointed. The membership reflects a cross-section of the county constituencies, with backgrounds in industry, public service, and education.
- OV5 Key leadership groups include the President's Cabinet, Leadership Council, Instructional Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Department Chairs Council, and the Strategic Communication Council. The Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, and the Cabinet meet together annually to discuss and determine key institutional strategies.
- OV8 Sinclair must make plans to respond to decreased state funding and decreased federal funded grants, It must also align with the Chancellor of Higher Education's seven-point plan that includes charter universities, reduced remediation, three-year baccalaureate degrees, increased teaching loads, reduced program redundancy, construction reform, and research commercialization. Furthermore, Sinclair must reduce energy consumption as mandates by House Bill 251. These challenges are having a major effect on both short-term and long-term planning at Sinclair including applying for and receiving an unprecedented waiver to increase selected fees.

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

Item	S/O	Comment
8P1	SS	Sinclair has used an integrated planning and budgeting process for over 25 years. The institution has developed key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with its strategic priorities. A planning calendar (Figure 8.3) assists units with completion of their planning processes and annual review cycles. Strategic planning, which takes place throughout the year, begins with a review of existing priorities in January and continues through a review of progress on continuous improvement targets (CITs) in

- October. Enhancement of the institution's planning processes over many years demonstrates its commitment to continuous improvement.
- 8P2 S The college's strategic priorities are established by the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the college's senior leadership and with key stakeholder groups. These priorities remain stable for 3-5 years but are reviewed annually and adjusted to respond to changing needs in the region, the external climate and institutional performance. Emerging requirements (e.g., University of Ohio Accounting Measures, declining state funding, etc.) are integrated into planning functions as they arise.
- 8P3 S Sinclair demonstrates many of the principles of high-performing organizations in the development and review of its strategic priorities. Leaders facilitate a variety of retreats and activities with key employee groups throughout the year to review strategic priorities and to discuss progress on those priorities. Action plans are developed at the operational level through an iterative process across departments and divisions; charge documents are issued to action teams and personnel are appointed to these teams to work on specific initiatives.
- 8P4 S Sinclair uses a comprehensive process to align planning, strategies and action plans. Since employees share in an incentive bonus that's linked to performance on the KPIs, all employees have a vested interest in helping the college accomplish its strategic priorities. In addition, the college's budget request process requires managers to tie their budget requests to the college's strategic priorities.
- 8P5 S KPIs, used to measure institutional progress on its strategic priorities (Figure 8.4), are reviewed by the President's Cabinet annually. Many KPIs have been in place for years. They are tied to operational-level metrics, where appropriate and new KPIs are adopted as priorities evolve.
- 8P6 S Requests for budget, staffing, facilities, equipment and other resources are reviewed by the President's Cabinet. This review includes an analysis of the request's alignment with the institution's strategic priorities.

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| 8P7 | S | Sinclair's four strategic priorities -- Access and Affordability, Quality and Innovation in Student learning and Support, Alignment to the Community, and Effective Sustainable Organization -- balance multiple stakeholders' interests and guide risk assessment. Its leadership uses its broad understanding of the community college landscape, an awareness of current issues affecting higher education, internal and external assessments and legal expertise to effectively assess and address risk. |
| 8P8 | S | The institution's commitment to developing and nurturing its human resources was solidified five years ago with the appointment of a Vice President for Organizational Development. The HR strategic plan that Sinclair has developed (Figure 8.5) helps make the institution more effective in responding to changing employment needs. Additionally, the Center for Teaching and Learning, established in 2008, provides support and professional development activities for full and part-time faculty. |
| 8R1 | S | Employee satisfaction data (e.g., PACE) and progress on the college's KPIs are used to evaluate the effectiveness of Sinclair's planning processes and systems. The College also leverages AQIP review processes to enhance institutional effectiveness. |
| 8R2 | O | Sinclair indicates that cross-divisional planning processes have increased accountability, with departments and individuals acknowledging responsibility for accomplishing activities aligned with strategic priorities. However, there are few quantitative results provided in the portfolio relative to these performance results. The College could consider expanding its quantitative measures so that it can more clearly quantify impact. |
| 8R3 | O | Sinclair's KPIs allow the institution to document its annual performance relative to the strategic plan. However, Sinclair may want to extend its use of KPIs to project performance and to guide short-term activities, 1-3 years into the future. |
| 8R4 | O | Figure 8.9 summarizes the comparative data sources used by Sinclair to evaluate annual performance on its strategic plan and KPIs. However, |

Sinclair did not provide data that explains its performance relative to other institutions. Sinclair may find it useful to develop quantitatively based summaries of the data it has collected.

- 8R5a S Performance on KPIs and performance on continuous improvement targets (CITs) for both individuals and units provides indirect evidence of the effectiveness of its continuous improvement processes. Further, PACE survey results indicate that employee perceptions about leadership and vision, mission-aligned actions, and information access are in the “excellent” range.
- 8R5b O Sinclair may want to develop more direct measures of its planning systems to ensure that its processes are effective.
- 8I1 S Recent improvements include an online planning system and an employee tracking system. This process automation has led to greater effectiveness and improved communications and will provide new opportunities for institutional improvement.
- 8I2 S Sinclair has a mature set of processes in place relative to planning and the culture of the institution is oriented toward continuous improvement. Annual targets for improvement are set in response to stakeholder input, institutional performance data, and environmental variables. Sinclair’s culture encourages development of partnerships with regional and state business and industry, community organizations, and higher education institutions and these partnerships support its ability to select improvement targets and implement improvement processes.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution’s relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution’s accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship

creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV2 Three distinctive non-instructional objectives that support strategic priorities include physical access through regionalization, fiscal access through keeping education affordable, and community engagement. Sinclair has four strategic priorities: quality and innovation in student learning and support, effective and sustainable organization, access and affordability, and community alignment.
- OV9 Sinclair has over 250 collaborative relationships with regional high schools, other higher education institutions, business and industry workforce development organizations, community support organizations, national foundations, and governance organizations.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1	S	Sinclair maintains partnerships with educational organizations in the region, aligning its partnership efforts with the mission and priorities of the college. Partnerships are prioritized and approved at the President's Cabinet level but are managed locally, at the departmental level. Employees serve as catalysts for new partnership discussions, leveraging the contacts that they may already have with external groups in the community.
9P2	S	Sinclair actively collaborates with receiving institutions to facilitate the transfer of students and associate-level graduates. Sinclair also builds and maintains relationships with employers by encouraging them to serve on advisory boards and by establishing agreements and standardized

processes for students in internships, coops, clinicals and capstone experiences. Articulation agreements are reviewed every two years.

- 9P3a S Sinclair uses contracts to establish expectations and outcomes with its outside vendors. Contract renewal is contingent on meeting those expectations and the revenue goals established by the college.
- 9P3b O Sinclair provides examples of two student services that are outsourced, but it is not clear what processes are used to make the initial decision to out-source a student service area. Sinclair may find it helpful to develop a clear set of guidelines and processes for deciding which services are provided in-house and which services are out-sourced. In addition, Sinclair also has an opportunity to include student feedback as part of its contract renewal processes.
- 9P4 S Vendor and supplier partnerships are created through contract agreements and managed by Purchasing and Materials Management. Competitive bidding procedures (written RFPs and IUC-PG partnerships) are used when required by law and when they provide a financial advantage to the institution. The institution also maintains a supplier information website, so that suppliers understand the requirements for conducting business with Sinclair. Prioritization of relationships is part of the annual planning cycle.
- 9P5 S Sinclair relies on a culture of relationship-building to create partnerships and collaborations. Partnerships are prioritized relative to the support they can provide to the strategic initiatives, the college's operational and management goals and the degree to which the partnerships align with institutional values.
- 9P6 S Sinclair invests significant human resources in its partnerships. It charges individual liaisons, teams or offices with fulfilling the requirements of the partnership and with ensuring that these relationships accomplish the intended outcomes.
- 9P7a S Sinclair uses cross-functional teams to accomplish much of the institution's work. This culture of sharing, cooperation and collaboration

- extends to the communication tools used by Sinclair (e.g., Town Hall meetings, department/division meetings, email, website, discussion groups). The use of both formal and informal communication tools assists in the integration of the campus community and decreases the development of silos.
- 9P7b O It is not clear if there are any measures in place to assess how well its cross-functional teams are working or how well the relationships are doing. Sinclair may want to put in place a process to more directly assess the integration and communication that is taking place in the institution and in the cross-functional teams.
- 9R1a S Figure 9.1 provides examples of the types of data that are collected relative to the institution's key collaborative relationships. The President's Cabinet and other key leadership groups also conduct internal, informal evaluations of institutional partnerships.
- 9R1b O The College may want to create a comprehensive summary of the measures being used to evaluate its key collaborative relationships, including specifics on when analysis occurs, by whom and to whom the results are distributed.
- 9R2 S Sinclair provides evidence of successes / gains made through some of its collaborative partnerships. Sinclair aligns funding opportunities with its strategic priorities.
- 9R3a S Sinclair uses multiple measures to assess its collaborative partnerships. The examples provided evidence of effective and beneficial partnerships. Sinclair has also developed a KPI to measure the effectiveness of its partnerships.
- 9R3b O While Sinclair has many key partnerships with internal and external stakeholders, the college has an opportunity to expand the use of comparative data to evaluate process performance relative to collaborative relationships.

- 911 S Sinclair has attempted to be systematic and comprehensive in its approach to building collaborative relationships. A number of recent improvements have been made, for example, development of business administration curriculum pathways that allow Sinclair students to declare a 2+2+2+2 pathway from high school through an MBA.
- 912 S One of Sinclair’s strategic priorities is alignment to the community. The KPIs used to measure success in this strategic priority allow for data-guided selection of improvement targets, with annual findings tied directly to incentive pay for employees.