Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

in response to the Systems Portfolio of

Ohio University

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for

The Higher Learning Commission
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Elements Of Ohio University’s Feedback Report

Welcome to the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. This report provides AQIP’s official response to an institution’s Systems Portfolio by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution’s portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: “Strategic Challenges Analysis,” “AQIP Category Feedback,” and “Accreditation Issues Analysis.” These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a “Reflective Introduction” followed closely by an “Executive Summary.” The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution’s Systems Portfolio to guide its analysis of the institution’s strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, the team’s report may omit important strengths, particularly if discussion or documentation of these areas in the Systems Portfolio were presented minimally. Similarly, the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving widespread institutional attention. Indeed, it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution’s ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report can be described as follows:

**Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary:** In this first section of the System’s Appraisal Feedback Report, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team’s overall judgment regarding the institution’s current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: 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 each AQIP
Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

**Strategic Challenges Analysis:** Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution’s ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution’s Systems Portfolio and through the team’s own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

**AQIP Category Feedback:** The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying and coding 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. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution’s Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team’s findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

**Accreditation Issues Analysis:** Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the Criteria. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio, with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the Criteria. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

**Quality of Report & Its Use:** As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the institution by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution’s current state, as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative
that the Portfolio be fully developed, that it adhere to the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

**Reflective Introduction and Executive Summary For Ohio University**

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team’s review of the institution’s Systems Portfolio Overview and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team’s broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

*Holding as its central purpose the intellectual and personal development of its students, Ohio University is a public, state-assisted, non-profit, research institution offering over 500 undergraduate, graduate and professional programs to over 37,000 students of whom 17,000 are located on the Athens campus, 10,500 on the regional campuses and 5,500 in distance learning programs. 4,200 are graduate students and 500 osteopathic medical students. Ohio University seeks to be the nation’s best transformative learning community. Ohio University is a complex organization that is decentralized in its structure and operations. Ohio University’s core values include excellence in people, ideas and programs; communal integrity, civility and diversity; and stewardship to build the public trust. These values are iterated in four fundamentals and four supporting priorities. The University reports that it has been difficult to integrate AQIP into the large, diverse University population.*

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

**Category 1**

The evidence presented in this section of the portfolio demonstrates that Ohio University is committed to helping students learn. Such a commitment functions as a strong foundation upon which the institution may build durable, comprehensive, systems to assess the breadth and depth of student learning across the University. For example, there may be opportunity to disaggregate data by student type to focus on the efficacy of learning within particular student cohorts, or program reviews with standardized, benchmarked data may be extended to all colleges to gather comparative institutional data. Comprehensive analysis of performance results can then inform future strategic planning priorities and processes.
Category 2

Ohio University serves the southeast Ohio region in many ways, including health services, technology transfer, business incubation, sharing faculty and student academic endeavors and providing access to University facilities. The University’s Academic Support Unit Program is charged with ensuring that academic support services remain aligned with institutional mission and values. The performance data it has reported, however, needs to be better aligned with the goals it has set for its non-instructional processes. Moreover, there is little peer institution comparative data by which to measure the effectiveness of the University’s other distinctive objectives.

Category 3

Ohio University identifies students, faculty, staff, alumni, and employers as its stakeholders. Judging by the processes and results included in Category 3, however, it is clear that students are the University’s primary stakeholders. At all institutional levels, formal assessments regularly occur to determine students’ needs, one result of which is the implementation of nineteen process improvement initiatives to increase retention and graduation rates. Absent, however, is any information on the processes employed in understanding the other stakeholders’ needs or the results of any such processes. Moreover, in one important instance (3R4) the results referenced do not correspond with the results listed in the table-like format.

Category 4

Ohio University is committed to valuing people. Comprehensive and systematic data such as that provided by an institution wide climate survey along with the subsequent analysis might allow Ohio University to better build morale as well better make use of resources. Care should be taken to include all employees in all parts of this category. There is an opportunity for Ohio University to collect and analyze comparative data in order to better assess accomplishments and possibilities in this category.

Category 5

The four fundamentals and four strategic priorities of the University’s Strategic Plan are communicated extensively, and this builds a network for strategic vision and decision-making. The shared governance model forms a meaningful part of this network. Leaders communicate through emails and web postings as well as through the University’s unit and department structure. The University might benefit from the development of indicators that directly measure the effectiveness of the University’s processes for leading and communicating, thereby allowing
the University to build on its strengths and identify weaknesses in this area. Ensuring that all stakeholders have a role in these processes may result in more systemic and comprehensive communication and better use of resources.

Category 6

The institution has developed its 4 x 4 strategic plan to include student support services and co-curricular activities. The emergent ASIC builds on the strengths of the ASUPR and supports the use of data-based decision-making to improve student support services. The institution is encouraged to continue developing comprehensive systems that measure all stakeholders’ needs and service providers’ performance.

Category 7

The institution relies on traditionally strong performance of its Office of Institutional Research and its ongoing implementation of industry-standard technology used to collect, store, analyze and make available measures of effectiveness. Performance measures are mostly aligned to strategic priorities and are cascaded to the colleges. The system of measuring effectiveness should also be examined through the identification and use of sound processes and performance indicators.

Category 8

As measured by the indicators included in the University’s and colleges’ dashboards, Ohio University is achieving its objectives. It is unclear, however, how the dashboard serves as a strategically designed set of targets for the objectives of the 4x4 plan, as well as there is a lack of information about processes for setting measures, benchmarks and targets for strategic planning. As reflected in the amount of detail included in the Portfolio on initiatives like academic restructuring and RCM, it appears that Ohio University is achieving satisfactory progress, and yet it remains unclear how short- and long-term strategies for change are planned and how performance targets are selected and measured by Ohio University to operationalize the 4x4 plan.

Category 9

Ohio University’s academic departments and academic support units engage in a myriad of collaborative relationships to enhance student learning and faculty scholarship. Taken globally these relationships contribute to Ohio University’s impact in the region and to its national
reputation. However there does not appear to be a coordinated process that tracks the outcomes of these relationships in order ascertain how the investment of resources in these relationships yields desired benefits. Collecting, reviewing and analyzing measures from collaborative relationships would allow for review at an institutional level to determine their efficacy, impact and alignment with the strategic plan. Ohio University has the opportunity to measure the contribution of its collaborative relationships beyond the areas of admissions, research and grant funding by better measuring the benefits of the relationships.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

Strategic Challenges For Ohio University

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities, as well as strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation. That portion of the team’s work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that Ohio University will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

- A strategic challenge for Ohio University is the greater integration of its remote campuses and distance education into its processes including strategic planning, and the greater representation of its nontraditional student stakeholders in its results through institutional research, reporting and communications. There is an absence of discussion in the Portfolio about the remote campuses as evidenced by the lack of disaggregated data reported and analyzed for students and faculty at the remote campuses or in distance learning programs. Yet Ohio University indicates in its enrollment management plan that anticipated growth in the student body will come through these segments of the student population. By incorporating the remote campuses and distance education into its processes and results, Ohio University has the opportunity to systematically plan for
desired enrollment growth and to demonstrate how it is meeting the needs of these learners. Further there is an opportunity for Ohio University to comprehensively reflect its mission as a land grant institution serving both traditional and nontraditional students in the region and

• Ohio University acknowledges that it has limited access and uses only available comparative data to benchmark itself against peer institutions. Ohio University suggests that when comparative data are available that they will use them, such as data from rankings of Ohio institutions and or scores from national surveys such as NSSE. While trends in data are often reported within the Portfolio showing how Ohio University’s current performance compares to past performance, often absent are targets that are derived from the use of comparative data to determine benchmarks and set targets. The University now has the opportunity to systematically generate strategies for obtaining comparative results in order to better evidence the accomplishments of its strategic objectives and its aspirational goals.

• Ohio University appears to invest significant resources and energy into the creation and management of collaborative relationships. Many relationships are cited to support student, faculty and program needs, and it is acknowledged in Category Nine that these relationships are managed in decentralized ways at the unit level. Ohio University now has the opportunity to develop guidelines for measuring the effectiveness and benefit of its many existing relationships to ensure that they are impactful for the university as well as of mutual benefit to the participating partners. Developing an institutional set of guidelines for external relationships would allow Ohio University to systematically align the investment of its resources in collaborative relationships with its strategic vision.

• Several categories showed a lack of alignment between processes and results, where processes described had no corresponding results or results presented did not reflect processes described. We also found several instances where responses described what processes were implemented, but not how those processes were designed, prioritized, maintained, etc. A connection may exist between these two observations in that without a meaningful understanding and reflection of how processes are designed and maintained, it may be difficult to discern the measures or performance targets that are most important to functions and the university as a whole. For instance, in Category 8 it is unclear how short- and long-term strategies and performance targets were selected to operationalize the 4x4 plan. The strategic dashboard is offered as evidence of the effectiveness of the strategic plan, but it is unclear whether the measures are merely
convenient, since these measures are customarily shared with university boards, or directly tied to the strategically-designed performance targets Ohio University has set for itself.

- There are two opportunities for Ohio University to advance its planning processes that could be of strategic importance to the institution. (1) Ohio University needs to clarify how it will continue its strategic planning processes beyond the 4x4. Discussion of planning in Category Eight is either historical describing the limitation of Vision Ohio or it is present-centered focusing on the strengths of the revised 4x4 plan. What structures and institutional processes will ensure that future strategic planning will be scalable and flexible enough to allow for ongoing dynamic planning as evidenced by the 4x4? (2) The institution has the opportunity to strengthen the role of its AQIP committee in its strategic planning processes so as to advance the culture of continuous quality improvement within the institution. While the institution is re-visioning the role of its AQIP committee in order to increase its impact on campus, Ohio University has the opportunity to more systematically engage AQIP with the leadership of the institution.

AQIP Category Feedback

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are SS for outstanding strength, S for strength, O for opportunity for improvement, and OO for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution’s 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. This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education institutions and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling,
learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 1.

Informed by faculty professional expertise, program reviews, assessments, and institutional mission, Ohio University is seeking to transform its curricular offerings, particularly in general education, to employ best practices to achieve an integrative learning experience for its students. All programs are updating their program learning objectives and assessment plans.

1P1, S. In 2005, Ohio University established a Learning Outcomes pyramid that illustrates the interrelated nature of University-wide outcomes. Because it serves as the foundation for the initiatives undertaken by the General Education Assessment Committee, this schematic has been revised in 2007 and 2010 to incorporate advice from previous HLC reviewers. Along with members of the General Education Review Committee and the General Education Reform Committee, other faculty, including the Faculty Senate, have been involved with these initiatives.

1P2, S. Program learning objectives are based upon input from faculty with subject area expertise, best practices articulated by national associations, accreditation standards, and guidance from advisory committees. The University is in the process of creating a new student learning assessment process which affords the institution the opportunity to realize greater alignment across program objectives.

1P3, S. Ohio University’s curricular development process is led by the University Curriculum Council and the Educational Policy and Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate. Innovation for new curricula stems from external and internal sources including program accreditation requirements, faculty participation in professional organizations, and professional development activities. Faculty have collaborated in the generation of “curricular themes” to facilitate student learning. As it moved toward greater alignment of review and accreditation processes, the University developed a structured process by which new curricula are approved, a process that may build comparative peer institutional data.

1P4, S. Ohio University recognizes its responsibility as a public university to address societal issues and needs through scholarship, research, and creative activity. The institution offers undergraduate programs designed to contribute to the intellectual and personal development and the career goals of students. To ensure that academic
programs are responsive to students’ needs, the Office of Institutional Research collects survey data from alumni, and results are provided to each academic college in addition to inputs from accrediting agencies, external advisory boards and student advisory groups.

1P5, S. The Office of Admissions employs a thorough process to evaluate applications for fit and potential student success, however, admissions criteria across academic programs vary since program faculty establish these criteria. The institution employs both internal application information and external predictive studies to ensure that students are prepared for success. The eLearning program also uses online tools for assessing student readiness for success in an online environment.

1P6, S. The University uses print and electronic media to communicate information to prospective students and their parents concerning required preparation, learning and development objectives through faculty advising, summer programs, and campus visit events. Academic advising is provided by faculty and staff within academic programs, by University College staff for undecided undergraduates, and by regional campus staff for their student populations. Ohio University is mindful of and adheres to federal and state reporting requirements.

1P7, S. Faculty and admissions officers are available to prospective students and work with all enrolled students. The institution assists students in selecting programs of study through the use of one-on-one advising combined with resources provided by the Career and Leadership Development Center and University College to help students determine programs of study that matches their interests and abilities.

1P8, S. Ohio University makes available to at-risk students a comprehensive array of resources, including writing, science, and math centers, study skills courses, and developmental courses. The institution uses predictive examinations, MAPWorks, and the Student Involvement Study to help identify students who may be struggling.

1P9, S. Students have the option of participating in Learning Communities, which provide support for those who have academic needs. Ohio University’s Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) provides individual and group faculty and student consultation on instructional and learning strategies to bring about student engagement. Faculty are provided with resources to help them address diverse learning styles,
including professional development provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning, library instructional staff, and Academic Technologies.

1P10, S. The institution has in place mature processes to address the special needs of student subgroups. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) is responsible for assisting students with ADA-related needs. Other offices, including the Office of Multicultural Access and Retention, the Women’s Center, and International Student and Faculty Services are dedicated to the needs of special populations. The University's commitment to student subgroups is clearly articulated in its "Commitment to Diversity" statement.

1P11, O. The University addresses expectations concerning academic quality in part through participation in AQIP Accreditation and College Program Accreditation at the institutional level and through various forms of formative and summative teaching evaluation at the program level. In addition, the institution documents and communicates its expectations of student learning through the Student Code of Conduct, student handbooks, learning objectives for specific courses, and course syllabi. Although expectations are implicit in these documents, the portfolio does not explain how the University documents and communicates these expectations across the institution. The University has the opportunity to incorporate this element into its revitalization of continuous improvement review and assessment processes. Such processes may allow the institution to systematically the efficacy of teaching across the institution.

1P12, S. The institution employs a variety of delivery methods to meet the needs of diverse student groups. Appropriate delivery methods are determined by faculty, based upon course purpose and level, student needs, student evaluations, course evaluations, and surveys. Peer-led teams and "flipping the classroom" exemplify alternative modes of delivery to promote student success.

1P13, S. Proposals for changes in programs and courses, as well as proposals for new programs and courses, are reviewed by the curriculum committees at the department/program level and then by the University Curriculum Committee. Curricular efficacy is monitored by individual programs culminating in a comprehensive seven-year review process led by the University Program Review Subcommittee. Some colleges and academic programs within the University employ survey data to provide external feedback.
Programs and courses are evaluated on an ongoing basis by colleges, departments, schools, and programs, taking into consideration enrollments and student needs, faculty resources, developments in the field of study, feedback from alumni, advisory boards, and employers, and other directly relevant data. Some changes are initiated based upon accreditation compliance or changes in certification requirements. Recommendations for change or discontinuation of programs proceed to the Programs Committee and, in the case of discontinuation, to the Board of Trustees.

The institution offers extensive centralized resources in support of teaching and learning through the Faculty Commons, Center for Teaching and Learning, Graduate Writing and Research Center, the Center for Academic Technology, and the Academic Advancement Center and Allen Student Help Center, housed in University College. These centers address student needs by providing developmental and early warning programs as well as by assisting with assessment of student learning. Each regional campus has a student learning center and many operate advising centers, which provide tutoring, supplemental materials, and counseling and advising services.

Ohio University hosts a large number of opportunities for student involvement outside the classroom and articulates goals within the Division of Student Affairs. For example, students may engage in undergraduate research within some academic units and over 400 clubs, student organizations, intramural and recreational sports opportunities are available.

As a part of the quarters-to-semesters transition process, all courses were required to have measurable and observable learning objectives as well as summative assessment processes. Course-based requirements are tracked through the computerized Degree Audit Reporting System while the Office of Institutional Research performs follow-up studies of educational outcomes using jobs held, continuing education, satisfaction with the Ohio University education, and needed skills and competencies as markers. Most programs employ some type of culminating experience or assessment.

Faculty members in each academic department at Ohio University are responsible for defining and implementing student assessment measures for their programs. The University has an opportunity to create a systematic, institutional-level program of assessment that will define its vision for student learning across the
university in order to inform institutional strategic decision-making, allocation of resources, and identification of best practices.

1R1, S. Ohio University collects data on student learning objectives using both direct and indirect measures. The Office of Institutional Research tracks student grades, probation, retention, and graduation rates as well as academic involvement and engagement, satisfaction with academic services, and alumni satisfaction. Direct measures of learning utilized by the colleges and departments range from locally designed examinations and capstone evaluations to passing rates on licensure exams. Indirect measures range from course grades and GPAs to feedback from business and industry leaders and alumni surveys.

1R2, S. The General Education Assessment Working Group conducted a comprehensive, tiered assessment of general education spanning the period from 2006-2010 that also served as an AQIP Action Project. This project combined standardized test data from the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), with internal placement test scores, responses gathered through an interview project, and alumni data measuring the reported need and development of general education competencies.

1R3, S. Each academic program at Ohio University is responsible for ensuring the assessment of learning objectives in the constituent departments and schools. The portfolio presents examples from select colleges and programs to describe how these assessments occur across the institution. Some colleges employ benchmarked data while others do not. A review of the presented data indicates that the results, especially in terms of meeting expectations, vary, including data in areas of considerable success and areas in which scores did not meet expectations. This information provides each program with ample information to advance continuous quality improvement processes.

1R4, S. Academic programs at Ohio University use a variety of evidence to ensure that graduates possess the knowledge and skills required by diverse stakeholders. The institution presents multiple examples of evidence to demonstrate that its comparative performance exceeds national scores when such benchmarks are available. Moreover, job placement data tracked by the Office of Institutional Research shows that, on average, 80% of graduates are employed with the percentage of those within this figure who are employed part-time at 13% to 20% during 2004 to 2010.
1R5, S. The University measures effectiveness of its support services (advising, library, technology services) through surveys and other assessment measures, ensuring that these results are shared with the appropriate departments. Students report satisfaction with advising, a key process supporting academic programs. The results of extensive faculty surveys conducted by Academic Technologies indicate that 95% of faculty were satisfied or strongly satisfied with the teaching support AT provides. The most recent comprehensive survey of library stakeholders demonstrates general use satisfaction, pointing up areas for further improvement. In response, the library has included in its five-year plan a goal of improving its LibQual results by 5%.

1R6, S. Limited comparative data are available from two comprehensive University learning assessments: the ACT CAAP and the NSSE. Results indicate that Ohio University scores above the national average on CAAP and in four of five dimensions above the mean for NSSE. The University participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) in which it shares with and compares its scores from the National Survey of Student Engagement and the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency, as well as data on the student experience and student success.

1I1, O. All academic units at Ohio University used the transition from quarters to semesters as a catalyst for updating programs to match industry needs and to evaluate rigor and learning objectives. The institution cites a numbers of examples of substantive improvements in the category of Helping Students Learn. These include "curricular themes" initiative in Arts & Sciences, learning communities for 1st year students, and new technology in the classrooms. The University now has the opportunity to develop systematic, comprehensive assessment processes to assess student achievement across the institution as a means to further define and iterate the institutional vision and strategic priorities to support student success.

1I2, S. In 2012, Ohio University was selected to participate in Learning to Improve: A Study of Evidence-Based Improvement in Higher Education, a NSSE project funded by the Spencer Foundation. A case study site visit by NSSE scholars revealed further evidence of the University’s commitment to undergraduate education and, in particular, recognized the Office of Institutional Research as “collaborators, supporters of institutional change, and being at the table for important educational discussions.” The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost oversees academic quality and improvement by using the four fundamental priorities from the University’s strategic
planning process as a basis for improvement efforts. The selected programs included in the portfolio employ a range of assessments to determine areas that need improvement.

**AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.** This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution’s major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution’s character, it examines the institution’s processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 2.

*Academic Support Program review was recently developed to help each academic support unity to identify and/or refine its goals in relation to the university’s mission. Ohio University defines Academic Support Units as central to realizing its other distinctive objectives. This includes service to the wider southeast community, such as access to its library system, as well as support to academic programs.*

**2P1, S.** Ohio University defines service to the southeast Ohio region as a key element in its institutional mission. Such service is iterated as a distinctive objective through provision of health services, technology transfer and business incubation, as well as sharing faculty and student academic endeavors and access to University facilities.

**2P2, S.** Ohio University has established an Academic Support Unit Program Review process designed to determine objectives for relevant non-instructional processes. External stakeholders are included when non-instructional objectives involve an external funding authority.

**2P3, S.** Expectations for service and academic support are communicated through various methods, such as a university newsletter, committees, and websites; integrated feedback loops through public forums are used frequently.

**2P4, S.** Each institutional area devises its own means to track relevant data and assess program effectiveness, using processes aligned with the University’s mission and vision. The Academic Support Unit Program Review provides a review framework across the institution.
2P5, O. An institutional review model is in place by which faculty and staff make individual and unit needs known and set goals. But it is not apparent how processes are defined for determining faculty and staff needs specific to non-instructional distinctive objectives. Establishing a process for determining and prioritizing those needs could assist the University in allocating resources strategically.

2P6, O. Ohio University’s Academic Support Improvement Committee is charged with ensuring that academic support services remain effectively and efficiently aligned with institutional mission and values. It monitors metrics, conducts internal and external reviews, and directs improvement initiatives. However, it is unclear how information on faculty and staff needs is factored into this process. Such information may help the University better meet faculty and staff needs.

2R1, O. Ohio University collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative performance data in various non-instructional areas. Clearly aligning those data with the University’s priorities may assist Ohio University in accomplishing its other distinct objectives.

2R2, O. Few performance results are presented in this category. The table showing the number of students participating in various activities is not a measure of performance. Additionally, the results presented in 2R2 are not aligned with the objectives discussed in 2P1.

2R 3, O. While Ohio University collects comparative data from ten peer institutions, no comparative data is provided for other distinctive objectives discussed in 2P1. Determining comparative data could assist the University in establishing benchmarks in this area.

2R4, O. While Ohio University states that its other distinctive objectives help students succeed, no evidence is provided showing this positive result. No evidence is provided to show the benefit of external partnerships such as the Diabetes Institute and the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs. Such evidence may help the university better determine if its other distinctive objectives are accomplishing its goals.

2I1, O. While the University is to be commended for the improvements that it lists in 2I1, these improvements are not aligned with the other distinctive objectives listed in the Process questions in this category. As a result, it is difficult to see the continuous improvement process at work in the University’s non-instructional objectives.
The Project Portfolio Management Office, which emerged from the Service Alignment Initiative, combined institutional functions for comprehensive project management. As such it has the capacity to initiate large-scale upgraded projects and to collaborate directly with academic units and the Academic Support Improvement Committee to design continuous improvement initiatives that incorporate stakeholder feedback.

**AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.** This category examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution’s processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification; student and stakeholder requirements; analysis of student and stakeholder needs; relationship building with students and stakeholders; complaint collection, analysis, and resolution; determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 3.

*Ohio University identifies its students as it primary stakeholder group. Understanding student needs is based on information collected and analyzed at all stages of the student experience. Ohio University's retention (averages 80% for freshmen to sophomore) and graduation rates are among the highest for public universities in Ohio.*

3P1, S. In its mission and vision statements, Ohio University identifies students as its primary stakeholders. At all institutional levels, formal assessments regularly occur to determine student needs, one result of which is the implementation of nineteen process improvement initiatives to increase retention and graduation rates.

3P2, S. Ohio University builds relationships with students through many processes including traditional activities within admissions, student affairs, residential life and academic departments. The University has also implemented high impact processes that have demonstrated positive outcomes, an example of which is the use of learning communities for all undecided students enrolled in University College.

3P3, O. Ohio University gathers information on the changing needs of its stakeholders through a variety of methods, including assessments conducted by the Office of Institutional Research, such as the Student Treatment (Satisfaction) Study, Student
Involvement Study and two follow up alumni surveys. The University does not include, however, any reference to the processes by which it addresses the needs of the other stakeholders it has identified throughout its Systems Portfolio, including faculty, staff, alumni, and employers. Doing so may ensure that those needs are better met.

3P4, S. University officials are assigned responsibility for developing relationships with specific groups and, through these relationships, maintain an ongoing understanding of emerging needs. For example, the Career and Leadership Development Center maintains relationships with employers of students, while individual academic colleges/departments/schools maintain relationships with employers of students drawn from their disciplines and/or geographic areas.

3P5, O. In 2010 Ohio University commissioned a comprehensive environmental scan to identify and prioritize strategic future budgeting and resource allocations. While this institution-wide scan initiated a strategic planning process, it is unclear how the scan was employed to determine new student stakeholder groups.

3P6, S. Ohio University has established structures and processes concerning stakeholder complaints. The Office of the Ombudsman receives and responds to complaints from students and other stakeholders. A Whistle-Blowing and Retaliation policy provides employees with internal pathways to resolve complaints. A Student Review and Consultation Committee addresses student behavior that is disruptive or potentially harmful to others. Faculty and staff, including unionized employees, have grievance processes in place.

3R1, O. A range of mechanisms is regularly used to measure the degree of students’ and other stakeholder’s satisfaction. Individual program and standardized assessment instruments ranging from course evaluations to NSSE data are used to track student engagement and satisfaction more directly, while specific surveys and studies of retention and graduation rates provide supportive data on student performance. Alumni surveys assess satisfaction with career preparation received at Ohio University. The processes by which these data are analyzed and used, however, are unclear. Systematic and comprehensive use of these data may be of use in helping the University to better ensure stakeholder satisfaction.

3R2, S. Ohio University gathers useful information concerning student satisfaction.
Performance results for student satisfaction range from 60% to 70% in response to the First Year Satisfaction Survey. The Student Involvement Study, however, reveals mixed results, generally indicating a decline in perceived importance and satisfaction across six areas concerning building relationships from freshmen to senior year.

3R3, S. Ohio University uses the results of its surveys and institutional research to build better relationships with students. Results show high satisfaction with the Bobcat Student Orientation. Surveys of Learning Communities show strong student satisfaction and identify other valuable learning experiences beyond the classroom. Institutional Research shows that students using Supplementary Instruction have a retention rate for freshmen to sophomore of 86% as compared to 78% for those who do not use that service.

3R4, O. Since Ohio University identifies students, faculty, staff, alumni, employers, community members, and external agencies among its stakeholders, an indication of performance results for stakeholder satisfaction would be expected for each of these cohorts. The 2011 Survey of Alumni and the 2012 Career and Further Education Study each indicate a high degree of alumni satisfaction. Including other indicators may help the University to better measure how it is meeting its other stakeholders’ needs.

3R5, O. Clearly Ohio University has identified students as its primary stakeholder, and it has devoted significant attention to understanding their needs. This is especially true in its study of first-year students. It is also true of the follow-up studies as to why students leave. All give the University important data to inform its retention and graduation improvement plan. However, the University does not include results by which it might be able to better measure the success of its relationships with other stakeholders.

3R6, S. Ohio University is a participant in the Voluntary System of Accountability, from which it is able to draw comparative data with other institutions in a number of areas. The Portfolio includes a summary table showing the most recent senior student responses to three NSSE satisfaction questions and retention and graduation rates for these peer institutions. Ohio University’s NSSE satisfaction questions ratings are higher than most of its peer institutions. Its retention and graduation rates are near the middle of the pack.

3I1, S. Ohio University has made significant improvements in this category in regard to
building and maintaining strong connections with its students. Noteworthy improvements include the Bobcat Student Orientation, Career and Leadership Development Center, First-Year Course, and its early warning system.

3I2, S. The ongoing assessment and evaluation of services by those whose roles are to build relationships with students, Ohio University’s primary stakeholders, show a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

AQIP Category 4: Valuing People. This category explores the institution’s commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 4.

Ohio University is the largest employer in southeast Ohio with nearly 5,000 faculty and staff. While employee satisfaction surveys have not been done recently, Ohio University is committed, per the strategic plan, to recruiting and retaining excellent employees through total compensation review.

4P1, S. Ohio University has processes in place for hiring the most qualified faculty and staff. Credentials and skills desired for positions are identified at the departmental level with reference to external standards and benchmarks for comparable positions. There is a Position Description Questionnaire that defines each faculty and administrative support position and there are Job Information Questionnaires that define classified positions.

4P2, S. Ohio University uses PeopleAdmin to screen applicants and has processes in place to ensure qualified hires. Guidance for hiring is provided by University Human Resources as well as by the Office of Institutional Equity for Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity.

4P3, S. Ohio University uses a variety of print and electronic media to advertise job openings at the institution. The institution retains employees through a variety of methods, including flexible hours, professional development, mentoring, and a new
compensation plan.

4P4, S. Through programs such as the New Faculty Orientation and Workshop, the Center for Teaching and Learning orientation of new graduate teaching assistants, and the New Employee Orientation program offered by University Human Resources, all Ohio University employees are provided with opportunities to learn about institutional history, mission and values.

4P5, O. Oversight and the ability to re-organize human resources to meet institutional needs are in place. In addition to these practices, Ohio University is encouraged to consider how succession planning, cross-training, and process documentation may allow changes in personnel to take place more efficiently and systematically.

4P6, S. The University provides employees with the opportunity to participate in many committees, task forces and senators. Organizational productivity and employee satisfaction are enhanced through Academic Support Unit Program Review Processes, a customized RCM implementation (OSAI), HR Liaison program and the various senators.

4P7, S. University Policies and Procedures document the institution’s expectations for employee conduct and ethics. Infractions are investigated by an Ethics Committee. The Vice President for Research and Creative Activity and Office of Research Compliance provide information and support for employees engaged in research. The University also has an active IRB.

4P8, S. Processes are in place to train and develop employees to function efficiently in their work as part of University systems. The University is able to develop new processes or revise existing processes when needed as exemplified by its recent reorganization of the Finance and Administration division to support the move to implement Responsibility Centered Management and Budgeting.

4P9, S. Training and development needs are met by centralized offices, such as Center for Teaching and Learning, Academic Technologies, and Human Resources Leadership and Staff Development, to align with organizational priorities. Employees are able to opt in to many seminars and courses to fit their individual needs.

4P10, S. Ohio University has a defined system for employee evaluation. Faculty reviews
involving peer review evaluate performance for merit in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service on an annual basis and as part of the tenure and promotion process. The Office of Institutional Research tracks faculty productivity which it in turn provides to departments and administration for their planning and decision-making processes. Administrative staffs are evaluated by their direct supervisors this processes will be informed by a new performance management and compensation plan that is currently under development.

4P11, S. The institution will complete implementation of the final phase of the COMPENSATION 2014 plan during the 2013-14 academic year. This initiative is designed to align employee tasks and skills with demonstrated elements of performance, and it offers the institution the ability to align further these tasks with institutional objectives to define and recognize merit more systematically. Currently, a number of programs are in place to recognize and reward employee excellence and longevity.

4P12, S. Shared governance and discussions as well as surveys provide feedback related to motivation. Leadership responds to feedback, taking into consideration university constraints. It is not clear to what extent administrator feedback is obtained.

4P13, O. Ohio University collects and analyzes a variety of information on employee satisfaction, including new task forces convened to examine compensation and diversity. Various units have implemented programs to address employee issues. However, the University has the opportunity to create a comprehensive, institution-wide process of collecting and analyzing this data so that systematic improvements can be implemented.

4R1, O. While Ohio University has a variety of data available, the University acknowledges that a comprehensive employee satisfaction survey has not been administered. Doing so might provide Ohio University with information about the success of past initiatives and inform the direction of future initiatives.

4R2, O. Figures are provided by the Office of Institutional Research evidence that faculty are categorized and tracked in their advancement within the institution and that this information is available in reports and benchmarks. However, an opportunity remains to supplement this data with the use of comprehensive employee satisfaction responses as part of the analyses.

4R3, O. While employee retention and longevity data provide an indirect measure of
satisfaction, a systematic process to gather and analyze data directly relevant to employee productivity, such as benchmarked items in personnel reviews, may provide the institution with necessary data to use in more deeply integrating systematic assurance processes in fulfillment of institutional mission.

4R4, OO. Ohio University focuses its comparative analyses to studies of compensation and salary in support of its strategic goal of recruiting and retaining excellent faculty, administrators and staff. Additional comparisons through trend data internally or benchmarked data gathered through participation in an external survey could provide additional data on items beyond compensation and salary that are important to employee satisfaction.

4I1, O. Ohio University has made some significant improvements in valuing people, including initiatives to revise the employee compensation program and increase workplace flexibility. However, Category 4 does not provide adequate data to clearly show that the initiatives discussed in 1P1 - 1P13 are accomplishing what they were designed to accomplish.

4I2, S. Ohio University seeks to improve the delivery of training across the institution through the implementation of the Ohio Service Alignment Initiative. This initiative evidences an orientation to seek continuous improvement that is a part of other programs and departments for which Wellworks and the library are provided as examples.

AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating. This category addresses how the institution’s leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 5.

Operationalized through sub-plans, the 4 x 4 strategic plan has driven a shared governance approach that has led to a number of major decisions and actions including academic
restructuring among four academic colleges, the change from a quarter to a semester system and RCM implementation. Governance responsibility is shared by five separate

5P1, S. The University’s current mission evolved from its original Vision Ohio plan, which was developed and carried out with extensive participation through 2010. The plan was distilled into four fundamentals and four strategic priorities that now form the basis for strategic vision and decision-making. This strategic planning process has provided a useful foundation for continuous review and improvement process concerning mission and values, a benefit that is already apparent in the revised mission statements of various units.

5P2, S. Institutional leaders within stakeholder groups align institutional direction with the University’s mission using reciprocal communications mechanisms within the shared governance system. The mission, vision, and values as well as topics related to the strategic plan are shared through both electronic and print media.

5P3, S. Ohio University respects the importance of shared governance within institutional culture by creating broad-based advisory groups comprised of leaders from stakeholder groups across campus to engage in institutional planning processes.

5P4, S. The University’s leadership works with a variety of constituents to determine opportunities that align with the 4x4 strategic plan. In addition, the University conducted an overall environmental scan in 2010 as well as scans for each unit. This activity determined which environmental trends should inform the actions of the college.

5P5, S. Ohio University employs a shared governance system to make and operationalize decisions across the University and within each of its schools and departments. This system involves faculty, administrators, and staff.

5P6, S. Data is available to inform decisions. The Office of Institutional Research is utilized widely to provide trend and comparative data. OIR reports data on key institutional measures such as salary data, faculty workload, student admission and retention, student outcomes assessment and student involvement and engagement. OIR also provides data for institutional and college dashboards.

5P7, S. The reciprocal nature of the shared governance model at Ohio University facilitates two-way communication and using the information derived from such
communication systematically to improve institutional systems, processes, and outcomes. Communications and Marketing design effective strategies for communicating with external stakeholders in support of the University’s mission and values.

5P8, O. While the shared mission, vision, and values are communicated to faculty, staff, and employees in a variety of ways, it is unclear how this information is communicated to students. Inclusion of this information in the Bobcat Student Orientation could help students better understand these facets of the institution. Additionally, the University has the opportunity to better integrate the articulation of shared mission, vision and values internally and externally.

5P9, S. Organizational Leadership and Development in University Human Resources offers programs and provides manager and leadership training to university administration and staff. These training programs are typically offered to middle management to encourage the development of managerial and leadership skills. The University has identified a need for training for academic department chairs and school directors, showing that the training process is evolving and improving.

5P10, O. The University does not appear to have plans in place to reaffirm the strategic plan on an ongoing basis and may want to investigate using different approaches to strategic planning in the future. Addressing this as well as implementing succession planning as a part of the culture of Ohio University may further strengthen the strategic plan and the shared governance upon which it relies.

5R1, S. The institution regularly collects performance measures. Executive leaders are evaluated annually by supervisors using defined performance measures, and the president is evaluated by the Board. RCM implementation offers further opportunities for ongoing discussion and evaluation.

5R2, O. The portfolio addresses an indirect range of results concerning Leading and Communicating processes and systems. Ohio University has the opportunity to more specifically address strategic processes and results for Leading and Communicating, including communications with internal and external constituencies, institutional branding, and development of social media reciprocal communication strategies to focus the public perception of the institution and to engage stakeholders more effectively.
5R3. The comparative data presented is not directly related to leading and communicating. More direct comparative measures would enable the institution to review and employ relative performance results in its institutional planning processes.

5I1. Initiatives and actions encourage broad based representation as part of Ohio University discussions. For example, the newly-formed Capital Funding and Priorities Committee has developed and approved a 20-year capital plan that can be transparently shared with internal and external constituencies and used by the Board of Trustees in strategic planning. Additional improvements employing this task force approach include the restructuring of the College of Health and Human Services, institutional transition to a semester system, and implementation of the RCM budgeting system.

5I2. Ohio University leadership has fostered a culture of continuous improvement and data-informed decision-making through its focus on shared governance and transparency. The University relies primarily and on dashboard indicators as well as data from RCM to provide trend and other data for leading and communicating processes and systems.

**AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations.** This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 6.

*The evolution of the Academic Support Review Program into the Academic Support Improvement Committee and the addition of the new Service Alignment Initiative are intended to help the academic support units work more effectively. Ohio University is undergoing a transition to a Responsibility Centered Management financial model. Two of the strategic plan's four fundamentals, “exemplary student support operations” and “integrative co-curricular activities,” are related to supporting academic support programs.*

6P1. Among the strategic priorities collectively known as the Four Fundamentals selected to help the University accomplish its mission/vision, "exemplary student support
services” and “integrative co-curricular activities” are critical to students. The Academic Support Unit Program Review (ASUPR) process was developed to ensure alignment with academic needs. ASUPR’s name has been changed to the Academic Support Improvement Committee (ASIC) and will become one of three university governance committees, and will be responsible for working to ensure that support services support the mission of Ohio University, for collaborating with other units, for monitoring support services and for ensuring transparency of support service costs and planning.

6P2, S. Ohio University identifies administrative support needs of faculty, staff, and administrators in three ways: through the University’s formal organizational structure, through shared governance, and through its Strategic Alignment Initiative (SAI). SAI resulted from the University’s engagement with the Huron Consulting Group in an attempt to better align its services with the needs of its academic units.

6P3, S. Ohio University designs, maintains, and communicates key processes related to safety through a full-service police department, educational programs, and mutual aid agreements with regional safety forces, crime alerts, and a critical response team. The Office of Community Standards and Student Responsibility acts to educate students on campus policies. A new division, Risk Management and Safety, works with several departments to help align their activities and increase efficiency.

6P4, S. A transparent work request system allows stakeholders to view progress of their requests and the Strategic Alignment Initiative is intended to implement day-to-day operations. A notable strength is an emphasis on stakeholder feedback loops built into operational processes and management.

6P5, O. Regular meetings, the Academic Program Review process and ASIC, and an electronic request system help to review process and work on improvements. However, there is no evidence provided of documentation of the operation of day-to-day support processes either at the main campus or at the other campuses. Such documentation might allow the university to better use scarce resources in this area and strengthen knowledge sharing, innovation and empowerment.

6R1, O. Regular analysis of student satisfaction with support services is collected and analyzed, however no evidence is presented that satisfaction measures are collected from other stakeholders. While the recent Strategic Alignment Initiative seems to have
been a step in that direction, regular institutional data collection and analysis may help the University to better use administrative and support resources.

6R2, S. Results from the First-Year Student Satisfaction Survey indicate generally high levels of satisfaction with quality of service and information received. The institution has recognized that these results suggest several areas for further improvement, including how sympathetic staff are to student concerns. The Survey of Alumni results for the current and preceding six years demonstrate consistent results indicating satisfaction with support services.

6R3, O. Ohio University reports on performance results for two administrative service processes: University Mail Services and Finance. The university has the opportunity to systematically and comprehensively review and share performance results more broadly for administrative support services, including areas such as giving and financial support, institutional financial aid, and vendor/purchasing metrics, human resources and information technology.

6R4, S. The ASUPR/ASIC provides opportunities for data-based improvement. The Finance Division and The Career and Leadership Development Center recently made changes as a result of data gathered through this process. The ASUPR/ASIC process is a strong step toward creating a University-wide, integrated culture of continuous improvement.

6R5, OO. No relevant comparative data are provided. As the university noted, an opportunity exists to collect and compare performance results for supporting institutional operations across other colleges, universities, and industries.

6I1, S. Ohio University cites challenges in student support services that were identified through the NSSE survey results, and then successfully addressed by the university. In addition, improvements have been made in a variety of other areas, including tutoring, early alert, and disability/accessibility services.

6I2, S. The University’s 4 x 4 Strategic Plan coupled with the implementation of the RCM approach have begun to create a context in which the institutional commitments to excellence and customer-oriented service may be durably realized. The efficacy of this approach will be demonstrated through future improvements in the services provided by academic support units.
AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness. This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 7.

Ohio University does not have a formal continuous improvement program, which it attributes to its large size and complexity. The primary unit charged with the selecting, managing and distributing data is the Office of Institutional Research. The PeopleSoft student data system has provided for the implementation of the Oracle Business Intelligence Executive Edition. The university is making use of dashboards for better access to operational data.

7P1, S. The central University unit charged with selecting, managing, and distributing data to support programs and services at Ohio University is the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). OIR conducts a variety of studies and mines several different information resources that it makes available to stakeholders in different ways, including its Compendium of Planning Information. OIR partners with Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Registrar’s office to make dashboards available to users in academic and academic support units as needed. Decentralized data are also made available by individual departments through the Oracle Business Intelligence Executive Edition project (OBIEE).

7P2, S. Planning and improvement efforts are supported by the selection, management and distribution of data through the Office of Institutional Research. For example, OIR provides annual updates to the Compendium on Planning Information and the University Fact Book, which provide key institutional indicators and benchmarked measures.

7P3, S. OIR plays an important role in determining performance information as it works closely with academic units and seeks input from university stakeholders. Implementation of the RCM budget model has resulted in academic support units collecting and analyzing performance data. The Office of Information Technology hosts advisory groups and relies on subject matter experts to determine the collection, storage
and accessibility of information as well as guide data requirements. Offices, planning
groups, and individuals charged with planning and management also publish their notes
and reports on University websites.

7P4, O. Ohio University has strong processes by which the 4x4 strategic plan drives the
University Dashboard and the display of its performance results to the university
community. As the university acknowledges, the transition to RCM has resulted in
determining that improvements can be made in how functional units operationalize and
measure performance aligned to the university's strategic plan.

7P5, O. The Strategic Plan drives data needs within the University Dashboard. While the
university participates in national surveys, and some individual units benchmark their
performance against external data, the university could benefit from designing a process
by which benchmarked data and benchmark comparisons are selected and prioritized,
rather than relying on convenient comparisons. The opportunity to use comparative data
more deeply and effectively by integrating its use could result in a more fully integrated
system by which to measure effectiveness.

7P6, S. University and instructional programs’ analysis and use of data are aligned by
the cascading use of the University Dashboard and the Academic Leadership’s
established set of academic quality indicators for all academic units to follow as the
University adopts RCM; these quality indicators are communicated through college-level
dashboards. Reviews and monitoring of the units and departments ensures that this
alignment is in place.

7P7, S. The University has implemented new industry-standard tools to ensure that data
is timely, accurate, reliable and secure. The University appears to have sound security
and privacy standards in place, and the OIR validates changes to data models before
the data is released. The Office of Information Technology provides “near-real time”
reporting of data through the business intelligence function. End-users abide by the

7R1, O. While the University describes several of the data reports created by OIR to
address assessment and support program review, it does not provide any measures that
address the effectiveness of its system for information and knowledge management.
Examples of appropriate performance measures could include measures of security,
data recovery, data integrity, data quality, systems usage, and stakeholder satisfaction with information availability. These might assist the university in more comprehensively analyzing performance and effectiveness in this area.

7R2, O. Beyond the Board of Trustee’s satisfaction with the University Dashboard, no other stakeholder satisfaction or performance measures for the university’s system of measuring effectiveness are described. The university has the opportunity to gather data as the performance measurement system, along with PeopleSoft, OBIEE, and the RCM initiatives, become institutionalized, to determine if they integrate systematically to meet institutional needs in accomplishing the strategic mission and goals.

7R3, O. While anecdotal evidence of reputation is referenced, comparative information would offer Ohio University the opportunity to measure its processes against those in place at other universities. Appropriate benchmarks for this response could be the cost of implementation, performance of support structures for end-users and end-user satisfaction.

7I1, S. The redesign of the ASUPR process to better fit within the RCM environment has led to the establishment of the Academic Support Improvement Committee, which has completed of 13 academic support program reviews. The position of Director of Institutional Research role has been reformulated to reflect the increasing importance of the function of this office. Effectively deploying the expertise of the Office of Institutional Research and the newly designed role of Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Effectiveness will undergird the continued development of OBIEE as a tool to facilitate the OIR, OIT, and PeopleSoft functional units’ abilities to comprehensively and systematically provide useful data.

7I2, O. Ohio University reports that HLC-related events have helped to drive improvements as the culture and infrastructure work to accommodate changes to the criteria and the upcoming visit. However, the institution reports difficulty in focusing on assessing and improving teaching and learning since the operation of the institutional process-results-improvement model in other areas obscured the focus on student learning objectives. Additionally, the university is encouraged to move beyond anecdotal information to build on-going, reliable information on “measuring effectiveness” on which to base decisions for improvement.
AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement. This category examines the institution’s planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution’s mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 8.

The Vision Ohio plan was condensed in order to create a more manageable strategic plan with four fundamentals and four supporting priorities (referred to as 4x4) which now forms the context for all planning efforts. The University has updated the statements of mission, vision and values, performed university-wide and college-specific environmental scans. The University’s AQIP Steering Committee is being reconstituted as the AQIP Task Force charged with increasing awareness of AQIP processes, specifically now as these relate to the Systems Portfolio and Systems Appraisal, and to the HLC criteria for accreditation.

8P1, S. Ohio University’s strategic planning is guided by the 4x4 strategic plan, which forms the context for discussions with Board of Trustees and guides institutional decision-making. Ohio University has well defined processes for operational planning including budget construction, enrollment management, facilities and space planning, and information technology planning. As part of its strategic planning the University has updated its mission and vision, engaged in environmental scanning and created a statement of core values.

8P2, O. The revision of Vision Ohio from 130 distinct objectives to a revised 4x4 with four fundamentals and four strategic priorities allows Ohio University to select its short and long term strategies. It is unclear, however, how this occurs. Ohio University has the opportunity to formalize this process, and then document how strategies are selected. Further the institution has the opportunity to document how the five regional campuses and distance education are aligned with the objectives of the 4x4 model.

8P3, O. University-wide committees are charged with developing action plans to realize the objectives of the 4x4 Strategic Plan. These plans are then vetted within institution by leadership and the Board when appropriate for support and implementation. One university-wide committee that has been revised is the AQIP Task Force which will now assume a more visible and substantial role in managing accreditation activities. There is
not information provided about how the AQIP Task Force will assist in the selection of action projects although this is stated as one of its purposes. The institution has the opportunity to strengthen the role of the AQIP Committee in its planning processes and in so doing further advance its quality culture.

8P4, S. All planning processes are focused on realizing the objectives of the 4x4 model which serves as the nexus through which all organizational strategies and action plans are aligned and coordinated. The strategic plan is actualized by administrative and academic leaders. The president and the EVPP communicate the strategic initiatives and action projects to the wider campus community.

8P5, O. Responsibility for leadership on the 4x4 model rests with the president who reports regularly to the Board of Trustees. The measures selected for strategies and action plans appear to be dashboard items for which data already exist rather than being directly tied to the strategically-designed performance targets Ohio University has set for itself. Since the 4 x 4 Strategic Plan influences the information prioritized by and the University Dashboard accrues comprehensive and comparative data for the institution, the University has the opportunity to contextualize trend analysis, and engage in benchmark setting and strategic targets identification.

8P6, S. The University ensures that assets and resources are being leveraged to meet current and future needs through its Budget Planning Council. New processes are evolving within the RCM structure as academic colleges come to operate as cost centers establishing their own processes for resource allocation to meet their academic missions.

8P7, S. Structures and processes are in place for risk management, defined broadly as a proactive approach to compliance and risk, as well as a conservative approach to budgeting and anticipated enrollment to allow for unanticipated downturns in the economy. Risk management is addressed through the newly created University Risk Management Initiative which seems comprehensive and well-developed. Conservative budgeting has resulted in conserving as surplus of one million dollars which now serves to seed investments in strategic priorities.

8P8, O. Ohio University has processes in place to provide for the development of faculty through the Center for Teaching and Learning and Academic Technologies and for staff
through University Human Resources. However it is not made clear how these opportunities are relevant to the changing environment of Ohio University nor is it clear that there is substantive participation in such opportunities. Better aligning these opportunities and ensuring participation may help Ohio University to address the changing requirements brought about by the 4x4 and other plans.

8R1, O. Progress on Ohio University’s Strategic Plan is tracked through a dashboard created by senior leadership in 2011. Each of the fundamentals and priorities has at least one measure to allow for trending or benchmarking resulting in a total of 19 measures. It is not stated whether the institutional measures or the college level dashboards are encompassing of the main campus and regional campuses. Also there are no results reported disaggregating the performances on the dashboard indicators between the main campus and the regional campuses. Since it appears from the Institutional Overview that Ohio University segments its students into traditional and nontraditional populations served at different locations and through modalities that maximize student success, there is an opportunity for Ohio University to track and report its measures by campuses and student segments, and to communicate these results in relation to its Strategic Plan.

8R2, O. From the results reported Ohio University surpasses its peer group identified as other public Ohio universities and trend lines show increasing strength of performance for each of the dashboard indicators. In addition to this performance data, the University has the opportunity to generate performance results for PeopleSoft, OBIEE, and the RCM initiative as these instruments become institutionalized. Only the topline results from the strategic dashboard presented here are readable. While the results may be favorable, their presentation should be improved.

8R3, O. With the institution of the 4 x 4 Strategic Plan, the University and college dashboards, environmental scans, and the RCM budgeting model within the shared governance context, the institution has assembled the essential elements to project reliable targets and actions plans for short-term performance, yet the portfolio does not explicate such projections, targets or action plans. The University has the opportunity to engage in such specific planning for the short-term in order to achieve the “Smart Growth” articulated by executive leadership. If targets have been established, it might be advantageous to provide this information on the dashboard indicators.
8R4, S. Ohio University surpasses its peers in 10 of 11 indicators when compared to other Ohio public institutions. Also Ohio University has measures favorably in its implementation of RCM with compared to other peer public universities sharing this financial model.

8R5, O. Ohio University offers three major quality improvement initiatives to demonstrate the strength of its planning for continuous improvement and these are the academic restructuring of the College of Health and Human Services, the transition from quarters to semester system, and the adoption and implementation of Responsibility Centered Management. There is an opportunity to share how these initiatives evidence planning for continuous improvement and in so doing share more about how action plans are chosen and actualized as short and long term strategies of the Strategic Plan.

8I1, S. The implementation of RCM has required the implementation of new structures and committees, a changed approach to budgeting and accountability, and a better alignment of processes to support the initiatives of the mission, vision, values and revised strategic planning. The comprehensive nature of this collaborative initiative, coalescing cost units for efficiency, accountability and attention to academic quality using a process-results-improvement protocol, represents one significant institutional continuous planning improvement.

8I2, O. The University does not provide any evidence that its system for planning continuous improvement is effective. The indicators in the dashboards provide evidence that the University is achieving priorities as reflected in the dashboard, but does not provide evidence that the planning system itself is effective and is serving the needs of the institution.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships. This category examines the institution’s relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution accomplishing its mission. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, and building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for Ohio University for Category 9.
Ohio University has its own Board of Trustees at the same time that it is part of the University System of Ohio. A variety of structures and processes are in place to ensure that external relationships are formed consistent with the mission and objectives of the University. The institution maintains 35 external specialty accreditations for its academic programs and is increasingly serving nontraditional and distance learning students through its regional campuses, and for this reason in 2012-13, started eLearning OHIO, a Student Success Center, to provide call center based retention services.

9P1, S. Guided by the 2010 enrollment management plan, Ohio University works through academic support units and academic departments to maintain strong relationships with external educational entities from which it receives students. Over the past three years the University has established partnerships with 15 community colleges.

9P2, S. Ohio University expects academic units to cultivate and develop relationships with other educational entities and employers who depend upon their graduates, and a primary mechanism through which this occurs is advisory groups. Centrally there is an Office of Career Services which serves as a one-stop-shop for career postings and career counseling. The Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine creates partnerships within the institution for multidisciplinary study and outside to increase opportunities to recruit and train students.

9P3, O. Student services at the main campus are provided by Ohio University employees. At regional campuses services are contracted and help to build relationships in surrounding communities. Clearly defined criteria for creating, prioritizing and building relationships are not presented. Having such in place might ensure that relationships with outside organizations are aligned with the Ohio University strategic plan.

9P4, O. While recognizing that Ohio University has centralized procurement processes in the University’s Purchasing Office that prioritize and build relationships with external entities that provide services and materials, the institution has the opportunity to more systematically and comprehensively develop other processes for creating, prioritizing and building relationships with external entities. As with 9P3, having such in place might ensure that relationships with outside organizations are aligned with the Ohio University strategic plan.
9P5, S. Ohio University faculty, administrators, and staff create, prioritize, and build relationships with educational and professional associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and community partners. Academic programs in disciplines such as business, engineering, medicine, education, and health sciences are externally accredited by over 30 different accrediting agencies. The University maintains memberships, partners and collaborates with many local, regional and national organizations.

9P6, O. The decentralized nature of institutional partnership relations prompts the need for continuous review of relational goals and benefits through advisory board conversations, formal review processes, satisfaction surveys, and assessment and evaluation reports. However, it is unclear how the surveys are reviewed and the process used to analyze the data and make related improvements. Similarly, 9P6 states that "feedback" is received from advisory board and regional campus coordinating councils, but no details are included regarding the type of feedback or how the feedback is obtained. The University has the opportunity to establish institution-wide performance measures of the effectiveness of its partnerships. Further consistent and clear expectations of relationships might make it possible for the University to better assess whether or not they are meeting stakeholder needs.

9P7, S. Ohio University ensures that relationships are built between and among departments in the University through shared governance structures, cross-functional processes like faculty development and staff training, and through active communication. Committees, task forces and working groups that are formed to investigate issues important to the University have broad representation that helps build relationships and understanding among stakeholder groups. Standing committee assignments through the Faculty Senate are also formed in a manner to secure constituency membership is broad based, thus encouraging institutional relationships.

9R1, O. While the University collects a variety of data it is not clear that there is comprehensive and systematic measurement across the range of collaborative relationships. For example, the University collects data measuring the effectiveness of specific processes such as its procurement of grants and number of students participating in internships and fellowships; however it is not clear that measures of these processes show how partners are providing mutual benefit and value added. 9R1 does not present information concerning how the University collects measures that can
be used to build deeper systematic relationships with regional employers, community organizations and agencies, and service providers. Collecting and analyzing well defined data may help the university to enter into relationships consistent with its strategic plan.

9R2, O. The data provided, while important, address primarily admissions as well as research and grant funding, and do not directly address the success of the University’s collaborative relationships. Data having to do with all collaborative relationships might better inform the University as to the success of those relationships.

9R3, OO. The portfolio does not present process performance results for building collaborative relationships compared with other higher education institutions or outside organizations. Ohio University’s units may be involved in many collaborative relationships, but the institution appears to have no way of determining how its collaborative activities compare to the other institutions to which it compares itself. Comparing itself to other institutions would allow for benchmarking and ultimately the setting of targets by which collaborative activities could be measured.

9I1, O. The improvements cited do not show the effectiveness of the University’s collaborative relationships. The University could benefit from the creation of comprehensive performance measures to determine how effectively its partnerships serve the needs of the partners.

9I2, O. The enrollment management plan and advisory boards help to guide development and set targets for some collaborative relationships. Ohio University cites the establishment of external advisory boards to inform decisions related to processes targeted for improvement as one example of how the institutional culture and infrastructure support collaborative relationships. Building upon this example and the collaborative ethos that informs internal relationships, the institution has the opportunity to develop systematic assessment processes and specific targets by which collaborative relationships with internal and external stakeholders may be improved. Building on what is done there so as to address all collaborative relationships might result in better decision making and implementation of the strategic plan.
Accreditation Evidence Ohio University

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components, or that it may face difficulty in meeting the Criteria and Core Components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

No evidence issues noted by the team.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio</th>
<th>Core Component</th>
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<td>Adequate but could be improved.</td>
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1P1 & 1P2. HLC Core Component 3.B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

All courses at Ohio University are required to have specific learning outcomes aligned with the Learning Outcomes pyramid, created in 2005 as an instrument to integrate and align
institutional outcomes. The University-wide outcomes recognize depth of knowledge, breadth of understanding, and appreciation of values. The institution has defined common learning objectives for General Education that receive continual review to meet current best practices.

1P2 & 1P18. HLC Core Component 4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

Ohio University is developing a new student learning assessment based upon a student success model in order to institute continuous improvement processes. Learning objectives for each academic program are developed by faculty and posted online. All programs are engaged in updating programmatic learning objectives and assessment plans in order to generate documentation of praxis.

1P4 & 1P10. HLC Core Component 1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

Ohio University addresses its mission as a public institution through its intention to serve the needs of diverse populations within its geographical region. The Academic Advancement Center and the Office of Multicultural Access and Retention provide support for specific cohorts of at-risk students while International Student and Faculty services facilitates the transition to the campus and local communities. Institutional policies also affirm the University’s commitment to equality and the provision of proactive services to meet the diverse needs of students, faculty and staff.

1P4 & 1P12. HLC Core Component 3.A. The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

Ohio University offers undergraduate and graduate programs at its main and regional campuses appropriate for a higher educational institution whose mission is to promote intellectual and personal development while equipping students for specific career goals. In order to maintain the quality of its degree programs, faculty monitor advancements in their fields of expertise and use this expertise to maintain the efficacy of program curricula. Moreover, the institution tracks admissions, retention, attrition and degree completion data and surveys alumni at one- and five-year intervals to assess the relevance and efficacy of academic programs.

1P4 & 1P13. HLC Core Component 4.A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

The institution has an historic commitment to assessment of student learning outcomes. Since curricular design and review is maintained by faculty experts within each program, the efficacy
of program curricula is reviewed by individual program, with a comprehensive seven-year review occurring under the leadership of the University Curriculum Committee’s Program Review subcommittee. In addition, the University provides evidence that programs rate at or above national benchmarked scores when these external benchmarks are available for performance measures.

1P6. HLC Core Component 2.B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Ohio University shares with prospective students and their parents information concerning the content and cost of academic programs through campus visits and online communications. The University also communicates with its other stakeholders as required by federal and state law. Specific information about control and accreditation status is contained in the University’s Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

1P7 & 1P15. HLC Core Component 3.D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

Student learning and effective teaching are supported through the Faculty Commons, Center for Teaching and Learning, Graduate Writing and Research Center, and the Center for Academic Technology. These centers along with the Academic Advancement Center and the Allen Student Help Center provide learning supports, early warning programming and assessments of student learning. Moreover, each college interacts with the support offices across the institution in meeting student needs, and each regional campus supports a student learning center to meet these needs.

1P11. HLC Core Component 2.D The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Current statements in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs affirm that Ohio University is committed to promoting an environment in which understanding and acceptance of academic freedom of inquiry are acknowledged. The institution subscribes to the Statements of Principles of the American Association of University Professors. A central feature of institutional culture at Ohio University is the commitment to a shared governance model the accord to faculty authority for curricular and pedagogical decisions.

1P11. HLC Core Component 2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.
The institution employs processes to define, communicate and document its expectations concerning effective teaching and learning to relevant stakeholders and reviews these expectations using multiple sources of information and multiple assessment methods to generate multiple data points. The revised academic support review process is intended to ensure that staff acquire and apply knowledge responsibly. Expectations regarding the ethical practices of students are articulated in the Student Code of Conduct and are first communicated to students during orientation.

**1P16. HLC Core Component 3.E. The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.**

As a part of its pursuit of a student success model, Ohio University has developed co-curricular goals related to student responsibility and behavioral expectations that are communicated to first-year students through orientation programming, electronic communications, and residence life and learning community activities. The Division of Student Affairs actively participates in the intellectual and personal development of students, offering supports that augment their academic experiences. In addition, the University supports more than 400 clubs and student organizations, intramural and recreational sports, learning communities and service learning opportunities as means for student engagement.

**3P1. HLC Core Component 4.C. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.**

Ohio University demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement in the areas of retention, persistence and completion rates. As part of its strategic planning efforts, the University established a strategic enrollment plan that includes nineteen process improvement initiatives to increase all three measures. The University’s retention rate is already above 80%, but it reports that its retention projections for Fall 2010 were on a “downward trajectory” and needed to be addressed. This, the University recognized, will require a significant level of effort to arrest the downward movement and at least maintain, if not increase, the high rate of retention the University has attained over the past several years. The University is encouraged in its efforts by the Ohio Board of Regents, which has changed the funding of its public universities from student course enrollments to student course enrollments and completion.

**3P3 & 3P5. HLC Core Component 1.D. The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.**
Ohio University demonstrates its commitment to the public good in a number of ways. As a public university, it responds to public education needs as directed by state education policy through the Ohio Board of Regents. Further, the University’s Division of Student Affairs works to impart the public mission of responsible citizenship to its students through the “5 C’s” of Community, Character, Civility, Citizenship, and Commitment, all of which are tied to specific student expectations. For example, Community refers to the expectation that all students embody the values of the Ohio community by acting responsibly and showing appreciation for diversity in all its forms.

**4P2 & 4P10 HLC Core Component 3.C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.**

Ohio University is one of the largest employers in southeast Ohio with nearly 5,000 employees of whom almost 2000 are faculty with 1056 full-time and 900 part-time in the 2012-13 census.

The University has processes to ensure that qualified faculty, administrative support, and classified personnel are hired and these processes are guided by the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Institutional Equity for Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Ohio University has a defined system for employee evaluation.

Ohio University has a defined system for employee evaluation. For example, faculty are reviewed in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service on an annual basis and as part of the tenure and promotion process. All staff and administrators are reviewed by their direct supervisors to ensure effective performance. The University monitors the sufficiency of its staffing through the outcomes of its participation in close to 100 external professional accreditations and from its record of adherence to state and federal regulations. The institution’s hiring departments define job descriptions as well as minimum and preferred skills and credentials.

**4P7 HLC Core Component 2.A The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.**

Ohio University ensures the ethical practices of all employees by providing clear expectations about professional conduct through handbooks, orientations and ongoing monitoring.

There is a Professional Ethics Committee in place for each University College to monitor and investigate professional behavior of employees as needed. The Board of Trustees has adopted a statement of expectations for board members. In order to ensure that new employees are
introduced to the mission and history of Ohio University, new faculty and graduate assistant orientations are offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning and new staff orientations are managed by the Office of Human Resources as well as individual benefits information. A New faculty Mini-Guide is published as a resource on academic processes and policies.

4P7 HLC Core Component 2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Ethics in research is supported and monitored by the Vice President for Research and Creative Activity as well as the Office of Research Compliance. Research involving human participants is reviewed by University’s Institutional Review Board. Research involving animals involves a similar process along with accreditation by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care. In addition to the above, Ohio University’s Office of Research Compliance ensures that all research adheres to federal, state, and university policy. The University maintains accreditation by the Association for the Assessment of Laboratory Animal Care. The University’s Institutional Review Board administers the approval process of research involving human subjects.

5P1 & 5P2. HLC Core Component 1.A The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

Ohio University’s current mission, vision, core values, and guiding principles evolved from the Vision Ohio Strategic Plan, which was distilled into four fundamentals and four strategic priorities. The principles in this 4 x 4 strategic plan form the context for discussions with the Board of Trustees as well as decision-making by academic deans, vice presidents, and department heads. As part of this planning process, the university also performed an environmental scan as well as environmental scans in each planning unit. University initiatives and priorities relating to the 4 x 4 strategic plan are kept up-to-date on the President’s and EVPP’s websites.

5P2 & 5P6. Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component 5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Ohio University has adopted a Responsibility Centered Management approach to systematize and integrate the prioritization and cost analysis of strategic initiatives. Decision-making committees such as the Budget Planning Council analyze costs and set priorities for new initiatives. The university maintains both a six-year and a twenty-year capital plan to provide discussions within the Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees, Constituent groups on campus and the community.
5P2. HLC Core Component 2.C. The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

The Board of Trustees consists of governor-appointed members, national members, public members, alumni, students (non-voting) and faculty (non-voting). The President of the University, the Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) and the EVPP give regular updates to the Board of Trustees on progress in reaching goals associated with the 4 x 4 strategic plan. The Board of Trustees has also adopted a set of bylaws and a statement of expectations for members.

5P3 & 5P8. HLC Core Component 1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

The Office of Communications and Marketing bears prime responsibility for public articulation of institution mission to internal and external stakeholders. The mission, vision, core values, and guiding principles of Ohio University are endorsed by the President and the Ohio University Board of Trustees. They are articulated publicly in official University documents, such as the President’s website and in the University’s undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

5P5 & 5P9. HLC Core Component 5.B. The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

The University’s central commitment to the practice of shared governance works to promote effective leadership and collaborative planning and execution of institutional initiatives. In addition to the codified governance documents such as the Faculty Handbook and the Ohio University Policy and Procedures Manual, the Office of Human Resources conducts leadership training for university administration and management staff members.


Ohio University included measurable goals and objectives when developing Vision Ohio and its 4 x 4 strategic plan, which grew out of Vision Ohio. The University Dashboard was designed to address the Four Fundamental and the Four Supporting Priorities, and each academic college developed its own complementary dashboard. The Office of Institutional Research is charged with maintaining institutional and benchmarked comparative data from ten peer institutions relevant to these priorities along with the comprehensive Compendium of Planning Information containing over 25 performance indicators for use by colleges and other planning units.
The University engaged the Huron Education Consulting Group to advise on a wide range of critical topics, including a revised academic support unit review process that incorporates comparative financial and cost data for each program in order to transition to RCM.

8P6. HLC Core Component 5.A. The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

The institution’s senior leadership and the Board of Trustees will make strategic investments and align decision-making to further the 4x4 fundamentals and priorities which are focused upon academic excellence through transformative education and faculty scholarship. The Ohio Board of Regents distributes about $130M in state operating revenues annually. But the ultimate responsibility for moving the University forward on its strategic plan rests with the president. The Budget Planning Council, which advises the president, is jointly chaired by the EVPP and the Vice President for Finance and Administration. It is charged with ensuring that overall financial policies and budgetary guidelines are consistent with and promote priorities.

The implementation of RCM has required the implementation of new structures and committees, a changed approach to budgeting and accountability, and a better alignment of processes to support the initiatives of the mission, vision, values and revised strategic planning. As Ohio University moves to an RCM environment, the academic colleges (i.e. "cost centers") will be able to establish their own processes for resource allocation to meet their academic missions, within the framework of the University's overall mission and strategic priorities. This process will assume greater importance as the Ohio Board of Regents diminishes allocations to state higher education institutions.

The University is well supported with infrastructure designed to provide tools for budgeting and monitoring expenses. A review of the University Dashboard presented in 8R2 and of the comparative results in key areas include in 8R4 support the proposition that the University has the resource base necessary to support its educational programs, and that gains are being realized that will strengthen its ability to maintain the quality of those programs in the future. Qualifications for newly hired faculty and staff are set by the hiring department.

NOTE: The University may want to directly address how it “supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.”

The University is moving to an RCM environment, in which the colleges will be able to establish their own processes for resource allocation to meet their academic missions within the framework of the University’s overall mission and strategic priorities. As the institution moves
into an RCM environment, the Budget Planning Council, chaired jointly by the EVPP and the Vice President for Finance and Administration, will advise the University president concerning financial strategies to support institutional priorities.

**Quality of Systems Portfolio For Ohio University**

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides Ohio University with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

The Portfolio was substantial (weighty), but not necessarily aware of its role in advancing the quality culture at Ohio University by reflecting on how the processes and results presented could be improved and ensuring that the processes are those to which the results refer. Performance results, either through table, graph or image, could be greatly improved through a common style as well as appropriate labeling to identify the population (N) and the sample (n) that generated the results. Many of the results were difficult to read, especially when presented as images. In the future, screen capture software should be used when placing screenshots, which are very much appreciated by reviewers, into a document. Finally, the Systems Portfolio should be carefully edited to ensure instances of missing punctuation, incomplete sentences, and overall readability issues are resolved.

While it is apparent in the introduction that Ohio University is a complex institution, this complexity was not adequately reflected in the Portfolio. As an example, while shared governance and the strategic plan are clearly of importance to Ohio University, rather than providing repeated references to and information about them, Ohio University might have provided more information having to do with the different delivery methods and the regional campuses. There was a focus to a fault on the main campus.

**Using the Feedback Report**

The AQIP Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, the Commission expects
every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: 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.

The Commission’s goal is to help an institution clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.