

# **THE CATAWBA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **ACADEMIC AND OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

### **The Office of Accountability, Efficiency, and Effectiveness**

As Catawba Valley Community College enters a new era of excellence, a functional and efficacious academic and operational enhancement plan is essential.

Certainly, any academic and operational enhancement plans incorporated into the operations of the colleges within the North Carolina Community College System must meet the expectations of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; however, basing a college's plan on the requirements of an accrediting commission, as opposed to the needs of the specific college, is not conducive for the nurture of an institutional culture that values data for critical decision-making processes. In short, the academic and operational enhancement process must be easily understood and must be perceived by the college populous as being functional and efficacious.

The Catawba Valley Community College Academic and Operational Enhancement Plan is a simple plan that closes the summative/formative loop and can be utilized within all academic and administrative areas. Since evaluation and assessment plans are intended to spur conversation concerning effectiveness, any plan using common processes and reporting to promote such discussion is desirable. Most importantly, the area data collected during the process offers a complete snapshot of the area and assists in clearly identifying the area's strengths and weaknesses.

The Office of Accountability, Efficiency, and Effectiveness is responsible for overseeing and administering the following components of the Catawba Valley Community College Academic and Operational Enhancement Plan:

1. **All academic and administrative areas of the college are required to make annual submissions of a standardized seven-item outcome report form which includes operational objectives (administrative) and student/graduate learning outcomes (academic).** The submission of an annual program report with outcomes indicators acts as the foundation for the academic and operational enhancement process. All operational objectives and student/student learning outcomes should be related to the college's strategic plan strategies. Outcomes and objectives, standards for success, measurements to be used to determine success, results, use of results, and projected budget requirements will be submitted online, using designated templates. Budgeting requests will remain as part of operational and student/student learning outcome objectives; budgeting requests, strategic planning efforts, and enhancement processes will all be related on the outcomes forms.

2. **The college has convened committees to review the annual program/area submissions, annual program reviews, and annual Maximum Efficiency Spreadsheet information. These reviews have been conducted on at least a three-year cycle.** During the review, the committee examines basic solvency data, as well as all other operational data, as provided on the annual outcomes reports and associated annual program reviews. The committee develops reports on its review (reports that will identify program/area strengths and weaknesses) and presents committee commendations and recommendations for programs as necessary. This committee (which began as a subcommittee of the Office of Accountability, Efficiency, and Effectiveness – OAAE – and met during the 2009 and 2010 calendar years) is now comprised of campus administrators and will be directed by the President. The newly formed committee is now known as the "Review and Innovation Team."

The Review and Innovation Team should consider the following basic concerns for each program/area, as well as others concerns that the team deems to be important to assessing operational and academic effectiveness:

- A. total student enrollment (academic programs),
  - B. total generated FTE (academic programs),
  - C. total operating costs,
  - D. operational/student/student learning outcomes and established standards,
  - E. measurement of outcomes,
  - F. outcome measurement results,
  - G. use of results and comparative studies (achievement of objective standards and trends), and
  - H. action plans to address deficiencies.
3. **Programs/Areas submitting outcomes forms and APR's that record the program's/area's excellent outcomes development, measurement, and use may be recommended for a President's Quality Commendation.** The Review and Innovation Team may identify such candidates by first identifying programs/areas that:
- A. submit all required data by the established deadlines,
  - B. include on outcomes forms data that exceeds the minimum summative necessity for base measurements of success,
  - C. analyze data accurately and in a consistent manner,
  - D. implement an action plan for improvement based on the formative information,
  - E. base decision-making processes on data gathered from institutional effectiveness efforts, and
  - F. demonstrate a quality effectiveness cycle which provides appropriate data, accurate analysis, appropriate reaction to the analysis, and closure to the evaluation cycle.

The Review and Innovation Team will then discuss the overall report presentation. Clarity, completeness, ingenuity, and quality will be considered, and any program that the team feels has shown outstanding initiative and effort will be recommended to the President for consideration of a President's Quality Commendation. The Review and Innovation Team will also recommend the level of Commendation and if applicable, other recommended recognitions associated with the commendation (modest release time, part-time funding, implementation funding, funding for professional development activities, etc.); commendations will be identified bronze level, silver level, and gold level (ascending order), depending upon quality standards, as determined by the Review and Innovation Team. The President may accept or reject the recommendation and will determine the final level of commendation to be assigned, as well as other recognitions (if any). Any monetary support is dependent upon the college's annual budget.

No commendations will be made during academic years when the team deems that no candidates for outstanding self-evaluation can be identified.

4. **Programs/Areas that demonstrate exceptional evaluation efforts and develop (through best-practices research) initiatives that the Review and Innovation Team recognizes as outstanding may be recommended for recognition as Presidential "Walk-the-Walk" initiatives.** "Walk-the-Walk" initiatives represent the highest recognition available to a program's/area's evaluation, assessment, and development efforts. Recommendations for this recognition are reserved for programs/areas that not only demonstrate exceptional data gathering, analysis, and use of results, but also undertake extensive research in best practices and discovery within the specific field(s) of operation. Using both research in the field and data collected from internal evaluation and assessment, the program/area must have developed a prospectus for a new initiative (program/area operational maintenance projects will not qualify for Walk-the-Walk recognition), a prospectus that addresses specific topics or concerns evidenced in data presented on outcomes form and APR submissions. Such prospectuses may be submitted with annual outcomes forms and APR's. If the Review and Innovation Team determines unanimously that a prospectus merits consideration for Walk-the-Walk initiative recognition, the team will recommend the prospectus to the President. The President may accept or reject the team's recommendations. Funding for these initiatives, which is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations of the college's annual budget, may cover all costs for the initiative during its first year, or may initiate a funding commitment over a period of time (as might be the case for additional personnel). The initiative will be highly publicized as indication that Catawba Valley Community College does more than "talk the talk" of being the best community college in America; with funding of such initiatives, the college also "walks the walk."

Walk-the-Walk recognitions will not be awarded on a regular basis; such funding is reserved for extraordinary initiatives that merit such recognition.

5. **Reports from the Review and Innovation Team may contain recommendations regarding proprietary program's/area's budget/funding, professional development activities for or by the program's/area's personnel, personnel/staffing needs, or any other program/area component that the team believes will enhance the program's/area's accountability, efficiency, and/or effectiveness.**
6. **Any program or area for which the Review and Innovation Team determines major outcomes or solvency concerns exist will be scheduled for a follow-up review during the subsequent year.** Programs or areas found to demonstrate major concerns will have a one-year probationary period to address such concerns. The Review and Innovation Team will recommend such action to the President, should the team find any major concerns. The team's report will also contain a recommended response for a program's/area's failure to address adequately major concerns within the probationary period. The President and appropriate Vice President will make the final decisions regarding any implementation of the team's recommendation(s).
7. **The annual outcomes forms, APR's, and Review and Innovation Team reports will be used during/for SACS/COC reaffirmation reports. Reports may also be used for other accrediting and/or auditing agencies.**
8. **The Office of Accountability, Efficiency, and Effectiveness will coordinate efforts with various groups and/or areas to offer IE professional development activities for all faculty and staff.** Topics for these professional development opportunities reflect institutional needs for the development of an institutional effectiveness/data-driven culture of excellence. Professional development opportunities are created for all representative campus cross-sections. The Office of Accountability, Efficiency, and Effectiveness assists in the training of program/area representatives in the identification, collection, and analysis of data.

During the 2008-2009 academic year, the revised academic and operational enhancement was initiated (including various training sessions on the revised plan), with program/area graduate learning outcomes and operational objectives forms due before Friday, 15 May 2009. The Outcomes Review Committee conducted its first program/area reviews during the 2009 Summer Semester.

Initiated Fall 2008 (Reviewed and Revised Summer 2014)