

April 2009

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

## Fall 2008 ACT Student Opinion Survey

The 2008 ACT Student Opinion Survey was administered as part of a concerted multi-year institutional survey effort to collect and assess data from key College stakeholder groups, including current students, alumni, employers, employees, and the Stark County community. The Survey supports continuous improvement efforts at the College, specifically addressing four AQIP Categories: 1 – Helping Students Learn, 3 - Understanding Students' and other Stakeholders' Needs, 6 – Supporting Institutional Operations, 7- Measuring Effectiveness, 8 – Planning Continuous Improvement, and 9 – Building Collaborative Relationships.

The target population for the survey was students enrolled fall term 2008. The survey will be administered again fall term 2011, at which time comparisons will be made to the 2008 results as well as survey norms.

Overall, satisfaction with and opinion of SSCT service operations/programs and the general academic environment were very positive. Measures of satisfaction met or exceeded national user norms on nearly three-quarters of survey items.

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

# Strategically SPEAKING

## Spring 2009 Socio-Economic Impact (SEIM) Study

### What is the SEIM Study?

The SEIM study estimates the impact of SSCT in terms of job and income formation, higher earnings captured by the students, returns to taxpayers, and a broad collection of social benefits and avoided costs. Two analyses are included in the study:

### Regional Economic Growth Analysis

- **College Operations Effects:** The role that SSCT operations spending plays in the region in terms of job growth and income formation.
- **Student Spending Effects:** Impacts associated with students who come from outside the service area to attend SSCT.
- **Past Student Productivity Effects:** The cumulative impacts of past and present students in expanding the regional economy - measured in terms of added regional income.

### Investment Analysis

- **Student Investment Analysis:** The benefits received by students as a result of their SSCT education.
- **Taxpayer Investment Analysis:** The state and local taxpayer's return on investment in terms of a reduced tax burden and an assortment of social benefits such as, improved health, lower crime, and reduced welfare and unemployment.

The results of the SEIM study will show SSCT's impact on Stark County and can be used to:

- **Educate the public** on the positive contributions of the SSCT in the region and state.
- **Present the hard facts** to education stakeholders regarding the role of SSCT in economic growth and community revitalization in Stark County.
- **Garner public support** for the SSCT on the strength of benefits the College and its students generate in return.
- **Market SSCT to students** by showing them the significant positive returns they will receive from a quality education at the college.

STARK STATE COLLEGE

# Quality MATTERS

## Academic Quality Improvement Program

### ACTION PROJECTS:

This semester we completed our fourth Action Project and declared the next three Action Projects. *Improvement of the Academic Advising Process* was identified as an idea for an Action Project by faculty and staff through the AQIP process. It has also been identified as an area of concern by students on student satisfaction surveys. These concerns supported the need for a project to identify the gaps and areas of improvement needed in our current academic advising model. Because academic advising positively impacts student goal attainment and success, it is a priority for our college. The goals of the Action Project are to survey the faculty and staff to determine knowledge of the current process and areas of improvement, identify gaps in the current advising process, refine the advising handbook, provide additional training sessions for advisors, link advising to student orientation and new hire orientation, and integrate the advising processes of Student Services/Enrollment Management and the Academic Divisions.

Because the College does not have a system or process in place to formally evaluate each of our

academic programs and certificates, *Development of a Systematic Process for Academic Program Review* was identified as an Action Project. Development of a systematic process will provide faculty with a better tool to assess their programs/certificates and to implement changes needed to meet the changing needs of our stakeholders. The program review process will allow us to examine the viability of existing programs and areas where new programs, program options, and certificates are needed. The Action Project supports our current program needs and our goal to offer Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. The Project supports our institutional growth, optimum use of resources, and better tracking of our students and programs.

The project, *Student Success: Tracking of Transfer Students (Part A) and Career Goals (Part B)*, will allow us to establish the process needed to track exiting transfer students and their success. It also supports development of a process to follow our students on a longitudinal basis in terms of degree, career, and income gain. For this Project, we are using the definition for transfer students established by the University System of Ohio, which is defined as a student who has completed fifteen or more credits at Stark State College. We will track not only transfer students but also students who completed a Certificate of Competency, one-year Ohio Board of Regents approved certificate, and degree graduates. The goals of the Project are to: (1) develop methods to track transfer students and their success, including the possibility of a pop-up window requesting students to update their information when requesting copies of their transcript, (2) determine if questions regarding specific certifications, degree advancement, or licensure tests could be added to the ACT alumni survey, (3) identify and implement the IT steps required to identify our transfer students and completers of the certificates of competency, (4) pilot a survey(s) to collect data on transfer students and career goals, (5) track transfers using the National Student Clearinghouse Data as an additional source of measurement, and (6) recommend who will be responsible for the ongoing process once the Action Project is complete.

### **SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO:**

The Systems Portfolio is due to the Higher Learning Commission by May 1, 2010. In preparation for submission of the Portfolio, the nine committees began writing the narratives for each of the questions in their respective Category. The committees are following the same process that the HLC peer review team will follow when appraising our Systems Portfolio. In addition to answering the question, the committee self-evaluates where it feels SSCT is on the question. The self-evaluation can be a “SS” (super strength), “S” (strength), “O” (opportunity for improvement), or “OO” (outstanding opportunity for improvement.) When we submit our Systems Portfolio to the Higher Learning Commission, we are also required to submit a self-analysis using the rating scheme above to illustrate our strengths and areas where we could improve.

Throughout our AQIP process, the committees have identified unresolved issues and ideas for future Action Projects. It is through this process that our Action Projects have been identified. Once the peer review team of the Higher Learning Commission conducts the appraisal of our Systems Portfolio, we will also be required to develop a plan to address those areas identified as needing improvement by the peer review team. We will have the academic year 2010-2011 to develop our plan in preparation for our Quality Check-Up Visit (site visit) in 2012-2013.

During the 2010-2011 academic year, we are also required to return to the Strategy Forum training in Chicago to begin preparation for our second submission of the Systems Portfolio. Our re-affirmation of accreditation is scheduled for 2013-2014.

In addition to the typical preparation required for a site visit, we also need to be prepared to address the changes made in the Higher Education Opportunity Act enacted on August 14, 2008. These changes include revision of our transfer policy, posting the revised transfer policy on our website, authenticating the identity of our online students, and providing a report on our enrollment growth.

### **AQIP SOURCES of COMMUNICATION:**

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

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

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