



**Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (OIER)
Operational Manual**

The **Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research** supports the college through continuous improvement processes. The purpose of this manual is to outline the policies and procedures that support the “ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes” which take place at Columbus Technical College.

The OIER policies and procedures outlined in this manual focus on quality – quality of the institution, quality of the mission, quality of programs and services, quality of student learning. The mission of Columbus Technical College is to offer programs and services that support student and community success through the attainment of associate degrees, diplomas, technical certificates of credit, customized training, continuing, and adult education.

We look forward to working collectively with all departments as we strive to *be the educational gateway to community prosperity*.

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Mission and Goals of the College

Mission Statement

Columbus Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, is a two-year public college which offers programs and services that support student and community success through the attainment of associate degrees, diplomas, technical certificates of credit, customized training, continuing, and adult education. The College supports the economic empowerment of its six-county region by focusing on teaching and learning and developing a globally competitive workforce. We provide traditional, distance learning, and training experiences for career development and transfer.

(TCSG SB 3-18)

Vision Statement

Columbus Technical College will be the educational gateway to community prosperity.

Values

Integrity: We will maintain integrity through professionalism, confidentiality, ethical behavior, and being accountable and honest.

Respect: We have mutual respect for each other's time, resources and different perspectives. We listen with empathy, work as a team, don't take things personally, and adhere to policy and rules. Everyone can contribute and give and receive feedback.

Philanthropy / Stewardship: We have a culture of philanthropy, stewardship, and volunteerism where people give of their time, talents, and resources for student success and support community service. Resources are utilized in an efficient and effective manner and are shared for the good of the college and community.

Teamwork: We have an environment of collaboration, unity, and investment dedicated to the greater good of the college and the communities we serve.

Passion for Learning: We are dedicated to intellectual curiosity, a commitment to scholarship, personal and professional growth, and critical thinking that leads to lifelong learning.

Quality: We adhere to the highest standards of teaching and learning to facilitate success for all students in achieving their academic and occupational goals.

Purpose

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research is to support the mission of Columbus Technical College through planning, assessment, evaluation, budgeting, research, and continuous improvement processes.

The Office of Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research at Columbus Technical College shall operate according to the following.

1. IE/IR processes will be driven by the CTC mission.
2. IE/IR processes will include all units of the College.
3. IE/IR processes will include Institutional Research and Data Analysis in decision-making processes.
4. IE/IR processes will be inclusive of all CTC stakeholders, including but not limited to, faculty, staff, students, advisory members, the Local Board of Directors, and other constituent groups within the college's service area.
5. IE/IR processes will comply with the Technical College System of Georgia policies and procedures.
6. IE/IR processes will result in the continuous improvement in the quality of the college's graduates and in increased satisfaction of students, employees, and customers.

Procedures

To support the Mission and Vision of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, and, in turn support the Mission and Vision of Columbus Technical College through:

- Supporting the college's ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes.
- Ensuring that the college is engaged in continuous improvement processes.
- Providing accurate and quality data to support and inform decision making.
- Collecting institutional and community data in support of the Institution.
- Identifying informational needs and methods of satisfying such needs.
- Administrating surveys for the purpose of data collection in support of the Institution's planning and evaluation processes.
- Providing data analysis for a broad range of institutional needs.
- Reporting data through Governmental and Private surveys, whether voluntary or necessary for compliance.

Responsibility

The President of Columbus Technical College and the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Institutional Effectiveness (with the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and the Director of Institutional Research) are responsible for ensuring that policy and procedures for planning, assessment, evaluation, and research are followed.

Institutional Effectiveness Processes

Institutional Effectiveness Processes at Columbus Technical College include assessment, planning, evaluation and grants management. These processes include:

College Mission Review

- To ensure the relevance of the mission statement, Columbus Technical College involves the faculty, staff, administration, occupational advisory committees, and the Local Board of Directors in a biannual review of its mission statement.

Strategic Planning

The Society for College and University Planning defines strategic planning as “a deliberate, disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an institution is, what it does, and why it does it.

Strategic planning is long-term and provides an opportunity for the college to ensure that the mission is being carried out, institutional goals and objectives are clear, the college is engaged in continuous improvement processes, and resources are appropriately allocated and planned (in the present and in the future). As a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), Columbus Technical College adheres to [TCSG Policy: 2.3.3](#) – TCSG College Strategic Planning.

Strategic planning at CTC will align with [TCSG Procedure: 2.3.3p](#) – TCSG College Strategic Planning and include the following elements.

1. Colleges are encouraged to use a variety of activities and analytical tools in their planning process that will result in a comprehensive, integrated, data driven plan that can be understood and implemented by all college employees and stakeholders. (e.g. a statement of core values or the supporting goals and objectives for major work units.).
2. Representatives from all areas of college operations should be involved in the strategic planning process.
3. To ensure a quality process, all colleges will incorporate the following activities into their strategic planning process:
 - a. An environmental scan that will provide context and background to challenge existing assumptions and facilitate the strategic thinking needed to develop a quality plan. Techniques may include, but not be limited to SWOT analysis or PEST Framework.
 - b. Analysis of trends, demographic data, and college workforce data.
 - c. Input from stakeholders.
 - d. The review and revision of the Mission Statement as needed.
 - e. Development or review of a Vision statement for the future of the college as needed.

- f. Communication of the plan goals and performance expectations to all employees.

Annual Educational and Operational Assessment

- Annually, each academic (including General Education) and operational unit reviews their purpose statements relevant to the College's Mission and assesses performance on outcomes. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are assessed to measure student learning. For each expected outcome, assessment results, analysis and the use of assessment results for improvement are recorded and evaluated year over year.

Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)

- Perkins V provides the college with an opportunity to fund Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs. Perkins V grants management includes budget allocation, evaluation of Student Performance Indicators (P1 Placement, P2 Graduation, P3 Non- Traditional Concentration), providing support to the Perkins Leadership Team, maintaining the PLANAR (with input from Stakeholders), and completion of the Perkins V Local Application.

Institutional Effectiveness Committee

The Committee provides leadership, oversight, and coordination for assessment activities across the College. It is responsible for evaluating progress toward the achievement of the goals within the strategic plan, reviewing the planning and assessment processes for all administrative and academic units across the College, reviewing the assessment of student learning outcomes in all College programs that involve student learning, and communicating results both internally and externally. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) facilitates processes for documenting evidence of institutional effectiveness to promote continuous improvement and to ensure compliance with federal, state, and accreditation requirements.

Responsibilities include:

- Advise on all assessment activities of the institution
- Evaluate alignment of assessment processes with strategic plans
- Review assessment documentation to ensure compliance with external accreditation bodies and College goals for institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes
- Ensure that assessment results are used for continuous program improvement
- Ensure appropriate feedback is provided to College departments and programs participating in assessment activities, either by the IEC or other designated parties
- Act as a resource for those conducting assessment
- Review communication of results of assessment activities to the campus community
- Evaluate and recommend assessment instruments and software systems
- A listing of persons within each department who is responsible for coordinating assessment

Members will also serve on any one of the following subgroups:

1. Working Group 1 (Retention)
2. Working Group 2 (Assessment)
3. Working Group 3 (Data Governance and Transparency)

4. Working Group 4 (Accreditation)

This Committee meets once each semester and as needed.

Institutional Research Processes

- A. **Accreditation:** Will provide support for institution-wide and programmatic accreditation. This includes:
 - a) Maintaining the programmatic submission form and database;
 - b) Maintaining the licensure/certification/credentialing form and database.
- B. **Advisement:** Advise and assist other institutional personnel with institutional research matters.
- C. **Compliance:** IR will serve as a clearinghouse for governmental compliance reporting, including, but not limited to, IPEDS.
- D. **Data Assessment:** IR provides the institution with an opportunity to assess the relevant data and determine appropriate actions to be taken as a result of the data analysis.
- E. **Planning Reports:** IR provides reports to the institution with relevant data to be used in decision-making.
- F. **Research Projects:** IR will provide technical assistance with special request research projects as directed by the President, Vice Presidents, or the Executive Director of institutional Effectiveness and Research.

Appendix A: Planning and Assessment Calendar

- **August – September** – Faculty and Staff who are responsible for educational (including General Education) and operational units submit unity purpose statements, three (3) outcomes, and the method that will be used to assess those outcomes that will be evaluated during the FY to the OEIR for review and feedback.
- **September – May**- The OEIR will facilitate professional development sessions regarding annual planning and work with Program Chairs and Staff to evaluate progress, discuss evaluation methods that align with the outcomes, discuss improvement of results, and provide ongoing support for the completion of annual assessment plans.
- **December** – Faculty submit mid-year student learning outcomes from fall semester to the program chair to review and record the semester progress.
- **April – May** – Faculty and Staff submit end of the year assessment plans to the OEIR. Final Plans are due for all units by the last business day of May.
- **June – August** – The OEIR and the IE Committee review all plans, provide feedback to the Program Chair and Operational Directors. The final assessment results will be shared with the President’s Leadership Team to determine the focus for upcoming planning days.
- **August** – Program Chairs submit summer semester SLO results to the OIER to add to complete the program’s assessment cycle.
- **July 1 – June 30** – Throughout the fiscal year, programs and services operate according to their purpose statements and the College’s Mission. Plans are implemented and progress is monitored. Research is conducted and required evaluations are completed. The planning cycle begins using the results of the previous years’ results of assessment, evaluation, and research.

Appendix B: Educational (including General Education) and Operational Planning

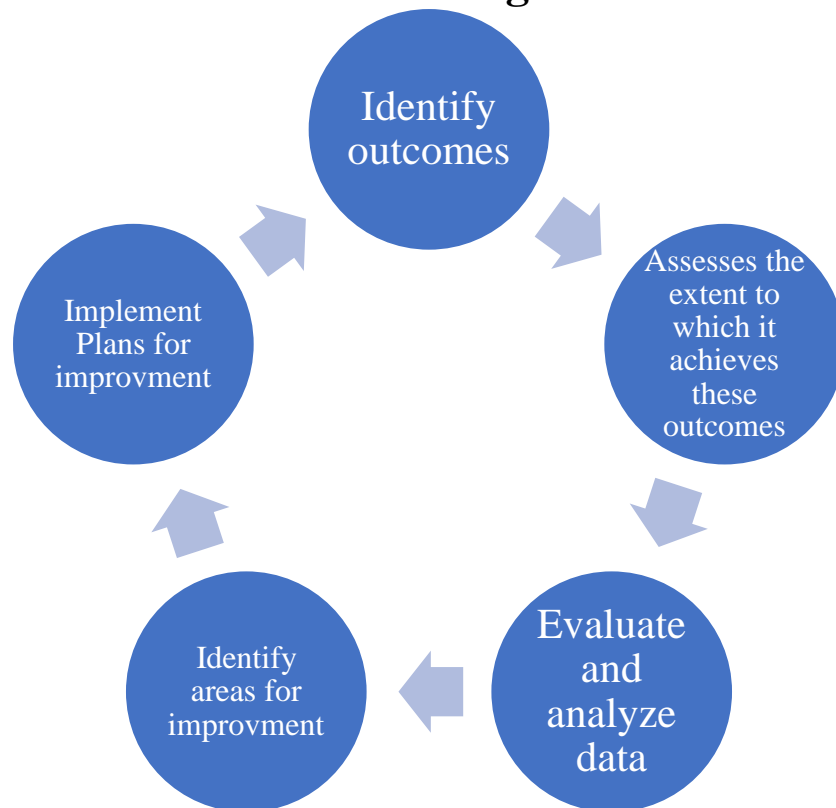
The Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in Standards 7.3 and 8.2.a, 8.2.b, and 8.2.c expects all units at Columbus Technical College to “identify expected outcomes, assess the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provide evidence of seeking improvement.” The college fulfills these expectations through IE Processes that include annual planning.

7.3 The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved. (*Administrative effectiveness*)

8.2 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

- a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (*Student outcomes: educational programs*)
- b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs. (*Student outcomes: general education*)
- c. Academic and student services that support student success. (*Student outcomes: academic and student services*)

Annual Planning Model



Appendix C: General Education Competencies

The college has three (3) general education competencies that are measured in General Education courses and all degree programs at the College.

1. **G.E.O.1: Interpersonal Skills** Apply critical and creative reasoning, including diverse perspectives to address complex problems.
2. **G.E.O.2: Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills** Demonstrate statistical knowledge through solving problems/equations, interpreting graphs, and being able to work with other forms of numeric data.
3. **G.E.O.3: Communication Skills** Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in both written and oral formats utilizing information from a variety of sources.

Competency	Courses Assessed
Interpersonal Skills	PSYC 1101, EMPL 1000
Communication Skills	ENGL 1101, SPCH 1101
Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills	MATH 111

General Education Rubric (to be developed and implemented beginning Fall Semester 2021)

**This will assist in the uniform evaluation of student learning as assessed in the General Education courses listed above and in all associate degree-level courses.*

Appendix D: Guide to Developing an Operational Assessment Plan

Columbus Technical College uses the five (5) column assessment plan to record annual operational assessment plans.

Departmental Purpose Statement: This statement must include the purpose of the unit and reflect the CTC Mission Statement.

Outcomes: Each unit must identify three (3) outcomes that are operational in nature (based on improving a specific component of the unit).

Assessment Methods: The assessment method(s) should identify the ways in which the department will assess to what extent the outcome was achieved.

- **Internal Data:** Departmental surveys, evaluation of processes and procedures (time to completion), customer evaluation,
- **External Data:** Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, Data from KMS, College-wide data, Qualtrics data (submit a data request)

Results of Assessment Method: Did the department meet the benchmark? What were the actual results of the assessment?

Analysis of Assessment Results: What happened? How did the unit achieve or not achieve the desired results? Please be specific. The analysis should include a breakdown of the results of the assessment method.

◦

Use of Assessment Results: In consultation with all staff, how will the department make changes (based on the results and analysis) to improve the department?

- Does this align with the department's budget from the previous year? Improvement drives budgetary needs.

Appendix E: Guide to Developing an SLO Assessment Plan

Columbus Technical College uses the five (5) column assessment plan to record annual SLO assessment plans.

Departmental Purpose Statement: This statement must include the purpose of the educational unit and reflect the CTC Mission Statement.

Student Learning Outcomes: SLOs provide what students should be able to “know and do” upon completion of the degree. These are located in KMS.

Assessment Methods: The assessment method(s) should identify the ways in which faculty identify that students learn what they intended for them to learn.

- **Direct Assessment Method:** This method of assessment provides faculty with an opportunity to measure student performance to determine to what extent students have achieved the desired learning results.
 - **Examples:** Pre and Post Tests, Exams (locally developed or standardized), Quizzes, Papers, Portfolios, Rubrics, Embedded Questions, Presentations
- **Indirect Assessment Methods:** This method of assessment provides faculty with an opportunity to measure student learning through “perceived extent or valuate of learning experiences.”
 - **Examples:** Exit surveys, Graduate Surveys, Focus Groups, Employer Surveys

Results of Assessment Method: Did the program meet the benchmark? What were the actual results of the assessment?

Analysis of Assessment Results: This narrative response should address strengths and weaknesses in student learning?

- Focus on the relationship between teaching and learning.
- *Were students aware of and did they understand the curriculum and intent and structure?*¹

Use of Assessment Results: In consultation with all faculty, how will the department make changes (based on the results and analysis) to improve the program or the department?

Examples may include:

- IFCC Recommendations for curriculum changes and updates.
- Feedback from the Program’s Advisory Committee.
- Recruitment materials used to promote the program.
- An evaluation of the program’s budget and expenditures (from previous years and plans for the upcoming year).

¹ Assessment Refresh: The Reboot by Dr. Natasha Jankowski (SACSCOC Summer Institute, 2021)

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Appendix F: IR Request Process

Requests for data, reports, surveys, and other forms of IR services shall follow a defined IR Process. Items which are a part of the existing IE Calendar are not subject to this request submission process.

1. Request Submission: Internal requests shall be submitted via the Institutional Research Form. The Institutional Research Form can be found [online](#).
 - The nature of the request will define the specific information required. These will be governed by one of the following:
 - Survey Procedure
 - Data Request Procedure
 - Report Procedure
 - If a request does not fall into one of these categories, the person making the request should complete the form, making sure to provide notification of availability for further discussion.
 - The person making the request shall receive emailed confirmation.
 - The Director of Institutional Research will receive the request, to assess the nature and scope of the request.
2. Clarification or Follow-up
3. Notification of Approval and Timeline of Response
 - Once the request has been appropriately submitted, approval of the task and an anticipated timeline shall be conveyed to the person making the request.
 - Possible reasons a request may not be approved:
 - Duplicating existing efforts
 - Data is not available
 - Does not fall under the purview of the OIER.
4. Completed Response
 - The outcome of the request shall be transmitted, and the task closed.
 - Outcomes may include:
 - Completed Survey
 - Analysis of the research in a report.
 - Workbook with requested data.

All requests will be processed in the order they are received. At a minimum, IR will allow five (5) days for the request to move from submission to completed response.

Appendix G: Surveying Procedure

I. PROCEDURE

Only surveys that are for the purpose of administrative or institutional improvement will be approved for electronic mass distribution to the college community. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research acts as a clearinghouse to approve surveys that are being administered electronically to:

- All faculty, staff, and students

This procedure does not apply to an administrative or academic unit administering a survey to individuals directly under one's purview (e.g. faculty distributing mid-term course evaluations to students in their courses or a supervisor asking employees who report directly to him/her their preferences for a change in the workplace).

II. PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE

The purposes of this procedure is to:

- Establish a consistent procedure for managing surveys on campus
- Improve survey quality
- Coordinate college-wide survey scheduling
- Reduce survey fatigue
- Avoid duplication in data collection

III. CRITERIA FOR SURVEY APPROVAL

All surveys that fall under this procedure will be reviewed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Research (OIER). Approval for surveys will be based on the following:

- Importance:** Does the survey provide useful information for assessment and planning purposes?
- Dissemination and Use of Information:** Who will have access to the information, and will it help them make better decisions as a result?
- Duplication of Efforts:** Can the proposed survey be combined with other planned surveys? Are there existing data sources that contain the same information?
- Content and Design of Survey:** Is the survey well-designed? Is it of reasonable and appropriate length? Are the questions easily understood and interpreted?
- Timing:** When will the survey be conducted? Does it overlap with other surveys of the same population?
- Targeted Sample:** Who is being surveyed?
- Overall Impact:** What will be the impact of the survey? Will the survey be considered controversial? Does the survey overburden respondents?

IV. SURVEY REQUEST

All requests for surveys are to be submitted via the Institutional Research Form, which can be found [online](#). This form will collect the following:

1. General description of the survey, including:
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Use of the results.
2. Draft survey instrument or copy of existing survey.
3. Distribution details
 - a. Audience
 - b. Distribution email text and subject line
4. Proposed survey administration dates
5. Additional details
 - a. Potential Incentives
 - b. Other details

Survey requests will be submitted at least five (5) business days from the desired date of survey administration.

Once survey requests have been reviewed and approved, requesters will be notified via email as soon as possible and given specific survey information to appear on the survey and provide the survey access link.

***Please note:** Survey authors are required to obtain Institutional Review Board approval, if necessary, separately. This procedure does not cover IRB approval.*

V. DATA SECURITY

To ensure the security and privacy of collected data, all surveys must be administered through the College's official survey account.