

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Gogebic Community College

Project Details		
Title	Collection and Use of Data	Status COMPLETED
Category	8-Planning Continuous Improvement	Updated 09-04-2006
Timeline		Reviewed 09-14-2006
	Planned Project Kickoff 05-07-2002	Created 11-23-2009
	Actual Completion	Version 3

1: Project Goal

A: The goal of this Quality Action Project (QAP) is to make better use of data. This will help the college improve communications, decision-making, strategic planning, grant writing, curriculum, and daily operations/activities of staff and students. Making better use of data will enable the college to better serve its stakeholders. This QAP is necessary for supporting continuing change. It will help determine whether or not the college is adequately evaluating and serving stakeholders and their needs. The lack of a comprehensive data use strategy has been a persistent difficulty at the college for sometime.

2: Reasons For Project

A: This action project is necessary for supporting continuing change and the college's ability to make revisions to the other action projects. It is necessary to help assess whether or not the college is achieving specific measures. It will help determine whether or not the college is adequately evaluating and serving stakeholders and their needs--especially what is required by students to succeed and if opportunities for success are being provided. This area has been a persistent difficulty at the college for sometime, being addressed in piecemeal fashion up to this point.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: On and off-campus instruction; student services, in particular, support services such as the Bookstore, Learning Resources Center, and ACES Center (Academic Choices, Enrichment, and Success); Business Services, especially Computer Services; and administration and the Board of Trustees will be affected.

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: Processes most affected will be tracking student outcomes, advising, institutional planning, curriculum development, marketing, placement, recruitment, budgeting, course scheduling and board of trustees policy development.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: Some basic tools to be used would include surveys, staff meeting, e-mail bulletins, and Web-based bulletin board

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: Helpful process measures that the college might track include: the number of advisors accessing student records; the number of requests for information about the college that is received; adjustments in course schedules made in accordance with available data; amount of data identified as useable for marketing, placement and other needs; and, reallocating resources to critical needs based on data.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: The outcomes to be measured might be the percentage of user satisfaction in the revised data system that becomes available; percentage of students obtaining their educational goals; and the percentage of college staff accessing and using the system.

8: Other Information

A: Inventory data that is currently collected and identify source, use, media, and quality. Inventory data needs Develop a strategy for satisfying data needs (to include collection, dissemination, etc.)Complete strategy development and begin implementation. Develop and implement a strategy based formative evaluation method.Continue strategy implementation. Continue strategy based formative evaluation method.

Project Update

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: During the 2005-2006 academic year, the Data Team focused on the nine AQIP categories. Statistical measures were developed for each category. The team gave consideration to the significance and relevance of each data element. The ability to Benchmark the statistics was also taken under consideration. Methods of data collection were identified. In regard to Category I, Helping Students Learn, baseline data was collected as elements of the assessment were beta tested specifically in the area of student goals, needs, and level of satisfaction. Category Four, Valuing People, and Category Five, Leading and Communicating, were evaluated through a Workplace Satisfaction Survey. The survey was developed, administered and results evaluated by the Data Team. The survey results were shared with college administration and the Board of Trustees. Since this was the first time using the survey instrument, historical data was not available for comparison nor could specific actionable conclusions be drawn from the data. The results and the comments from participants led to further questions to be addressed. The Data Team will administer the same survey in the upcoming academic year as a way to begin developing trend data and actionable conclusions. In an effort to begin collecting more benchmarking data and to establish a basis for effective decision making based on comparative data, GCC is participating in the AQIP/Bridger Survey on Comparative Administrative Support Statistics. Currently, existing benchmarking instruments include IPEDS data and ACS data (Michigan Community College Association comparative data). The current status of the Action Project is best described under item C below which itemizes the planned next steps in this Action Project.

2: Institution Involvement

A: The Data Team is composed of representatives from all segments of the College who are either working with data those who analyze and use data, or who have expressed an interest in data management. Student input was obtained in doing the beta testing for Student Learning. Those who would use the data elements identified for each category were asked for their recommendations regarding what data would be useful and in what form would it be most helpful. Input from everyone at the College was requested through the Workplace Satisfaction Survey. The Data Team was very pleased with the 90% participation rate on the survey.

3: Next Steps

A: The Data Team plans to develop a Data Repository and to expand the number of data elements over the 2006-2007 academic year. To this end, the Data Team plans to seek input from decision makers across the College to ask for the data they use in decision making along with information on the methods used for data analysis and dissemination. Data elements currently collected, analyzed and disseminated will be identified and incorporated into the Data Repository. Other data elements needed for decision making will be identified and mechanisms developed for collection, analysis, and dissemination. The Workplace Satisfaction Survey will be conducted in the 2006-2007 academic year. Comparison will be made to the 2005-2006 survey so that better interpretation of the data can be made. Benchmarking will be a focus for 2006-2007. Gogebic utilizes IPEDS and ACS data for benchmarking along with the AQIP /Bridger Survey Data. A concerted effort will be made to identify other institutions to benchmark with in education and outside of it.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: By requesting and respecting input from all members of the College community, the College is more aware of data management and its use in decision making. The phased in implementation of COMPASS for entry and exit assessment of English and Math skills has provided data to focus our awareness of student needs and our success in meeting those needs. An increased awareness in the need to disseminate and analyze data has resulted in the purchase of a new information management system, Jenzabar. The system will afford GCC the ability to establish a centralized structure for Intranet, Extranet, and Internet information distribution. Data can be

analyzed within specific communities and consolidated in one repository to meet data analysis needs across the campus.

5: Project Challenges

A: As data awareness and use is increased, the College will need to face the challenge of meeting the needs of those using it in regard to staffing, processes, systems, and methods. When benchmarking, the challenge is in identifying comparable institutions who exemplify best practices to benchmark against. Another challenge is in finding appropriate mechanisms for data dissemination. Despite the difficulties caused by limited resources, the college continues to explore improved ways to ensure the college personnel and various stakeholders receive timely information.

6: AQIP Involvement

A: Thank you for your offer of assistance but we feel that we are progressing in the right direction with this action project.

Update Review

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: A very broad based report of the accomplishments during the past year related to this action project. It appears that all nine of the AQIP categories were somehow directly or indirectly in play on the campus. This is a solid list of activities and it provides a solid foundation to continue the work of planning for continuous improvement. A variety of methods were used to demonstrate the unfolding of the action project, many of which provide some good benchmarking material for the institution for measuring future success. The task now appears to be to continue the work and develop longitudinal data by which to measure current and future success.

2: Institution Involvement

A: The involvement of a variety of people (individuals and groups) helps to build stakeholder buy-in and it does appear that an interested and knowledgeable group of faculty, staff and administration are working to help the campus toward a continuous improvement model of operation. The environment seems desirous of implementing the intentions of the quality improvement program. Many of the elements (context, processes, results and improvements) from AQIP Categories Three and Four are making their way from theory to practice within this collegiate setting. Keep moving ahead and continue with what you have been doing.

3: Next Steps

A: The planned next steps connect to the college's institutional goals in both direct and indirect ways. This sort of connection allows for consistent and coherent buy-in over time by the institutional community. The campus is grasping what it means to be a quality improvement organization in concept and practice. The motive and practice of continually involving others is allowing AQIP Category Four to guide the institution into the next phase of this project and the next phase of the life of the college. A good plan is in place and is implemented with purpose. Keep using multiple instruments to support your labor in providing information for an increasingly maturing data-based decision making model.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: The annual report provides enough data for the reader to see clearly the connection of the AQIP Categories, the institutional goals and the human resources needed to complete this specific project. Of special note is the focus on student needs. The project is just not for meeting AQIP requirements, the project is for the ever developing awareness of and the meeting of student educational needs. There are sufficient examples of effective practices for this yearly update, so, keep visioning for the campus community of what the ideal model might look like given the specific institution and its needs. Be challenged to figure out the best local ways to grow the culture of assessment which is already begun on the campus.

5: Project Challenges

A: The challenges which are mentioned are exhibited as such at other institutions of higher education. Perhaps you are doing this, but network in additional ways to see what others at similar colleges are doing to solve challenges of the same variety. If this is not being done, contact the Association for Institutional Research and use that organization as a helpful resource. With limited resources, seek creative, low budget ways to carry out the project. Energize the staff/faculty/administration and find a campus champion and the notion of limited resources might take a back seat to campus creativity.

6: AQIP Involvement

A: This is a solid annual report, keep at it. Keep reading, networking, planning and growing the college. Seek increased involvement in the AQIP process and the Higher Learning Commission. The global analysis of this reviewer is that "the institution is making reasonable progress toward completion of the project and development of an institution-wide continuous quality improvement culture" (AQIP Handbook).