

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Gogebic Community College

Project Details		
Title	Student Attendance and retention	Status ACTIVE
Category	1 - Helping Students Learn	Updated
Timeline		Reviewed
Planned Project Kickoff	05-01-2015	Created 05-01-2015
Target Completion	12-16-2016	Version 2

1: PROJECT SUMMARY

A: This project involves efforts by Gogebic Community College to identify causes for excessive student absences. GCC will do this through surveys sent to students, faculty and staff. Once members of this action project's committee review the results of the survey, GCC will eliminate one or several of the identified "roadblocks" for student attendance. The semester during or after the College has eliminated various roadblocks, faculty and staff will be surveyed again on whether student attendance improved in their classes during that particular semester. Students also will be surveyed about their attendance and the changes made by the College.

2: PROJECT RATIONALE

A: GCC understands how good student attendance can play a role in student success and increased retention rates. Through this project, GCC hopes to improve student attendance and thus student success and retention rates. Overall, this project will take a minimum of one year to complete, perhaps longer depending on the information received and the success of the project. As GCC seeks continuous quality improvement, this project ranks high on its priority list as it seeks ways to help students succeed, a major focus of GCC.

3: PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: This project's goal is to improve student attendance at GCC, which relies heavily on surveys to retrieve data. These surveys were developed by the committee spearheading this project during the summer of 2015 and were finalized during the Fall 2015 semester. Phase 1 surveys that sought to identify problems with student attendance were sent out after the first month of classes during the Fall 2015 semester. After the surveys closed, the data were compiled and reviewed by this action project's committee. The committee made changes to improve student attendance during the Fall 2015 semester and the Spring 2016 semester. Phase 2 surveys were sent to students, faculty and staff during the Spring 2016 semester. This survey monitored the changes in student attendance, resulting from the elimination of perceived roadblocks to attendance. The committee will again review the results at the start of the Fall 2016 semester and will continue the project into the next academic year.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: GCC students will be sent the link to the various surveys in hopes that all or least many students take part in the surveys to answer what they see as the roadblocks to student attendance. Faculty and staff will be asked to take part in a survey that also seeks to identify problems with student attendance. Also, faculty will be asked in a survey to identify their attendance policy and to voice their thoughts about an institution-wide attendance policy. All of this information will be reviewed by a committee formed for this project. The committee consists of GCC's Dean of Instruction, Dean of Student Services, and Director of Student Outreach and Engagement. Additionally, two faculty members—GCC's AQIP Coordinator and Curriculum Committee Chair—will serve on the committee.

5: PROJECT CONTROL

A: The College monitored the results of the Phase 1 survey during the Fall 2015 semester. Success will be determined by the Phase 2 surveys. That survey will give GCC a good indication of whether the changes made, which derived from the Phase 1 surveys, helped improve student attendance. The committee will gauge whether the action project has helped improve student attendance from the information received from students, faculty and staff. The results of the Phase 2 surveys will be reviewed and evaluated in the Fall of

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: This project relies heavily upon the participation of students, faculty and staff. Gathering a high percentage of survey results could be challenging, and the College hopes for high survey participation to improve the validity of the information provided. Additionally, depending upon the roadblocks identified, changes to improve student attendance could be challenge. Again, this depends upon what the surveys reveal.

7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A: This project will be broken into two phases. Phase 1 will seek to identify roadblocks to student attendance. Once that information is gathered and the College makes changes to eliminate some of the roadblocks, the Phase 2 surveys will be sent out to determine if the changes helped improve student attendance. Again, this action project ranks high on GCC's priority list because of the correlation between improving student attendance and student retention rates.