Gogebic Community College, MI

Project: Overhaul of Student Course Evaluation System

Declaration

Q:	**Briefly describe the project in less than 100 words. Be sure to identify the key organizational areas (departments, programs, divisions, units, etc.) and key organizational processes that this action project will affect, change, and/or improve.**
A:	Over a span of 8 years, there have been conversations between faculty, administration, AQIP Liaison, and Institutional Research resulting in a wish list for GCC's course evaluations: *simple delivery method* – ease of use for all parties involved, especially students, *results accessible to faculty* with options to compare results to past semesters, *increase response rate* with results that are valuable, informative and useful for faculty. After looking at a few products, GCC committed to SmartEvals. The application features charts that are easy to read and interpret, and target feedback given through the graphs and reports that are provided. Faculty results are easily accessible. Our goal is that this new method of administering course evaluations will not only serve to increase student participation, but will also provide meaningful results that faculty, instructional divisions and deans can use to facilitate our commitment to helping students learn.

Q:	**Describe your institution's reasons for initiating this action project now and how long it should take to complete it. Why are this project and its goals high among your institution's current priorities? Also, explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's recent or soon-to-be submitted Systems Portfolio.**
A:	The current method of course evaluation that the college was using had many deficiencies and did not satisfy all of the needs of faculty and administrators. Inherent inferior accessibility issues resulted in a lack of participation and sparse volume of reliable data. In addition, the college struggled to compile comparative data to assist in meaningful course development and improved teaching. Lack of flexibility in the current course evaluation software made for a labor-intensive experience for evaluation coordinators resulting in increase workloads and sub-optimal navigation for students. The clear benefits of this method of course evaluation include the empowerment of our faculty through tailored

questions along with more flexibility in usage and availability of results. This project is also fundamental in our institutional purpose outlined in our current 5-year plan to ensure student educational achievement and growth through appropriate systematic and periodic assessment.

Q: **List the project goals, milestones, and deliverables along with corresponding metrics, due dates, and other measures for assessing the progress toward each goal. Be sure to include when you anticipate submitting the project for formal reviews.**

A: The project goals are to increase the student response rate to from averaging 25% overall for the past four semesters to above 50%, along with increasing the capabilities of internal benchmarks by division, program and by course resulting in comparative data from year to year. Institution wide use of this system will begin during the fall semester 2017. Upon completion of the evaluations and after faculty receive the results, a survey will be sent out to all faculty to evaluate the overall use of the system for the fall semester. During the first all-faculty meeting results of evaluation, including participation levels along with the surveys will be reviewed and adjustments will be made as needed. This project will be submitted for formal reviews following the spring semester.

Q: **Describe how various members of the learning community will participate in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project's duration.**

A: This project will involve student feedback relative to course and education experiences, it will provide a simplified method of delivery in order is increase our student response rate. Faculty will be provided this feed back and be able to have an easy to use method for comparing results between courses and semesters, in addition to having the option to benchmark with other faculty on campus and potentially other institutions. Support staff, including the institutional researcher and the Dean of Instruction's office will be involved administering the evaluations and compiling the results. The administration of evaluations through this system will be taken out of faculty hands and be the responsibility of the institution.

Q: **Describe how the institution will monitor project progress/success during, and at the completion of this project. Be sure to specifically state the measures that will be evaluated and when.**

A: Faculty were involved in the initial stages of this project by reviewing the proposed SmartEval system in the Spring of 2017. Course evaluations were administered through this system for the summer session to preview before rolling it out institution-wide for the

fall 2017 semester. Following the fall semester, faculty will be surveyed and participation results will be reviewed. The Dean of Instruction will work with faculty and the institutional researcher at the beginning of the spring semester to make any needed adjustments for the administering of the evaluations and analyze the faculty response to the results. We are particularly interested in measuring the student participation and will also assess the results to determine where we can individualize the evaluations to courses and/or programs. The general goal of this project is to ensure that our institutional evaluation system is meeting the needs of all courses.

Q: **Describe the challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project's goals.**

A: The largest hurdle to success that we anticipate is student participation. Our main goal is that the simplified method of administering the surveys will greatly increase student participation in the course evaluations. Previous accessibility issues have resulted in a relatively low volume of feedback, with the effect that collected evaluation data may not be representative enough of student experience for reliable use in instructional development. An additional challenge may be the buy in from faculty for yet another new survey method that they have to adapt to. We feel confident that this challenge will be minimal as the process yields significant and useful information to aid in their continued course development and will resolve many of the previous frustrations faculty experienced.

Q: **Provide any additional information that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project.**

A: After repeated conversations across this institution regarding the lack of participation and generation of useful data and bench marking information from our current course evaluation system, we ultimately chose to initiate this action project. The necessity of a system that better serves the needs of our entire institution and one that will simplify the administration process were driving factors in the choice of the SmartEval system. Plateauing institution wide at less that 30% participation with our previous method, our primary goal for this project is to increase student participation to above 50%. Achieving this goal will help us to progress toward the collection of useful data that can be used to improve our overall education experience.