

Community College of Denver

AQIP Annual Update Process September 2008

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Action Project: Development of a Student Communication System

1. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

The current status of developing a student communication system is still in progress. This past year a Student Communication Committee was formed. This committee was made up of eight key staff and faculty who represent a variety of areas of the college. One of the first challenges that the committee identified, was an understanding of how our college currently communicates with students. As a result, an internal Student Communication Survey was created by the committee and distributed to over fifty staff and faculty within the college. This ten question survey assessed various student communication channels that are currently used by the college and measured how consistently these communication channels are used. Some of the communication channels that were evaluated were in-person (appointments, walk-in, presentations, focus groups), electronic (e-mail, web based, text messaging, telephone), and print (mailings, posters, newsletters, press releases).

Review (09-13-08):

What you have accomplished is impressive especially since you have had key AQIP personnel leave your institution and project. It is good that you formed the Student Communication Committee that represents a variety of the college areas. It is also very nice that you were able to get a handle on how your college communicates with students and that you created and used a survey that addressed potential key communication channels. Since you had key AQIP personnel leave during this one year project, it is excellent that you have continued this project for one more year! However, it is not too earlier to also start thinking about how other AQIP Categories dove tail into this current important AQIP project. For example, this current project could be an excellent foundation for the later completion of AQIP Category One (Helping Students Learn) which "identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development." Another potential future AQIP project is AQIP Category Two (Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives) which "addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission." Another potential future AQIP project would be AQIP Category Five (Leading and Communicating) which "addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities , and building and sustaining a learning environment." There is also AQIP Category Seven (Measuring Effectiveness) which "examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and use information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement."

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

As the leader of this particular AQIP Action Project, the Executive Vice-President for Student & Enrollment Services identified key staff and faculty to serve on the Student Communication Committee. These key individuals represented areas such as Student Life, Recruitment and Admissions, Registration, and the four Branch Sites. The Student Communication Survey was distributed to over fifty staff and faculty at the college who played key roles in communicating with students. Unfortunately, the committee has met infrequently over the last six months due to administrative staff and leadership transitions. Therefore, this project will not retire this year but continue throughout the next academic year.

Review (09-13-08):

It is obvious that you understand the importance of involving key institutional people in your primary AQIP committee and that these people represent many areas found in your institution. While it is indeed unfortunate that key personnel left, and that this was a major obstacle for completing this project, it is impressive and very good that you will continue with this project. Things will iron out for you in due time. Progress takes time and as you continue with this project, you make major achievements. Celebrate each step accomplished, because you deserve to for sticking with this project. Keep at it, and you will accomplish significant things for you institution.

3. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

The Project leader for this AQIP Action Project, Felicia Patterson, has left our institution to pursue other endeavors. As a result the Director of Student Life, Jerry Mason, has been charged with re-organizing the Student Communication Committee and serving as the project leader for this AQIP Action Project. The Committee will be meeting in the next month to disaggregate the data collected from last years' survey. The Committee will then begin strategic discussions on how to strengthen CCD's responsiveness to student needs. From these strategic discussions the Committee will define and recommend a checklist of responsiveness strategies designed to address student needs. CCSSE and SENSE data will also be utilized by the Student Communication Committee when developing these strategies. The overall goal with this Action Project is that a formal process for student communication will be established and implemented throughout the college by July 2009.

Review (09-13-08):

You are getting a good handle back on this project. It is great that you extended the end of this project for another year. It is noteworthy that you will be using what you have gathered so far and will be starting with new personnel. Keep up this very important project and you will reap rewards for accomplishing this project.

4. Describe an “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

An effective practice that resulted from our work on this Action Project was the opportunity to review the feedback that we received from our internal student communication survey. The survey itself was designed to serve as an educational tool for individuals, by identifying various potential student communication channels. The survey also forced areas of the college to analyze what specific student communication channels are used and the frequency in which they are used.

Review (09-13-08):

You might want to share your survey, its results, and what you did with the results with your peer institutions at the Annual Higher Learning Commission Conference held each spring in Chicago. It is great that the survey had your faculty and staff focused upon and reporting what student communication channels were being used, and that the frequency of use was identified.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

The most significant challenge we have faced, is turn over of key individuals working directly on this project. The project leader of this AQIP Project has left CCD and several original committee members have also left the institution or serve in different roles. A new project leader for this AQIP Action Project, as well as several new committee members, has been identified. CCD also has recently hired a new college President and Vice-President of Academic and Student Affairs, both have enthusiastically committed their support to this AQIP Action Project.

Review (09-13-08):

It is impressive and noteworthy that you are getting back on track despite major participants leaving the college. The change over of staff could be a very good thing, with new staff bringing new energy, new insights, new motivations, etc. It is also noted as very important that your new president and vice-president enthusiastically support this project.

6. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?

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Action Project: Recommit to Learning College Principles

1. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

The original objective of the project, define learning college and learning college principles, was accomplished by having the language of the learning college be reflected in key institutional documents. The college catalog (page 2) contains learning college language. Human Resources included the following learning college language in all job postings: "CCD is a Learning College where policies, programs and practices support learning as the major priority." CCD's Strategic Planning Council developed the vision, "Transforming Lives Through Learning," and the mission statement, "Providing education and opportunity in a diverse world." CCD instituted learning college principles into our college-wide goals to be accomplished in the next three years. These goals are summarized under the following terms: Learning, Leadership Development, Operating, Engaging, Accountability, and Visibility.

Four articles appeared in Inside CCD during Feb. '08: "What the Heck Is a Learning College?" "Learning College Principles," "Questions Every Learning College Should Ask," and "Learning Doesn't Just Take Place in the Classroom." A Learning College Revitalization Committee was established 2/12/08. A baseline survey was conducted at the college Convocation on 2/15/08. The Committee collated and disseminated the results via Inside CCD and recommended next steps in 3/08. The Teaching/Learning Center set up presentations on the learning college for several centers in 3/08 and 4/08 to increase understanding of learning college principles. The Learning College Revitalization Committee administered a second survey on 5/5/08 to determine the increase of awareness of learning college ideals.

CCD hosted the League for Innovation 2008 conference in Denver as a lever to encourage attention to learning college ideals. Twenty-five CCD faculty and staff presented sessions, roundtables, or poster-sessions at the conference. Presentations on the Learning College by national speakers, Terry O'Bannion and John Roueche, reinforced the relevance of learning college principles.

CCD began looking at how learning college principles translate into student retention and success. A new assessment plan was presented to faculty last year; however, only about 28 faculty utilized the plan. Lessons learned from the plan are currently being reviewed and this information will be utilized in the continued development of the plan and to improve the rate of faculty involvement. A team of faculty and staff attended the Colorado Assessment Conference in 10/07. The assessment sub-committee of the Academic Standards Committee continues to be involved in implementing assessment activities.

Review (09-29-08):

CCD kicked off this ambitious fifteen-month action project in March of 2007 to recommit to the Learning College Principles. CCD appears to have accomplished its goal through a multitude of activities including establishing the Learning College Revitalization Committee, hosting the League for Innovation 2008 conference, and presentations sponsored by the Teaching/Learning

Center. CCD has achieved an exceptional accomplishment through this action project within a very short timeframe. CCD's accomplishments this past year appear to have addressed and positively impacted each of the organizational processes, programs and practices across the institution as listed in F. Key Organizational Processes. For example, all full-time faculty were requested to do an assessment of one learning college principle in at least one class. While only 28 faculty utilized the plan, CCD is prepared to share and incorporate lessons learned for continued development of the plan and to improve the rate of faculty involvement. Human Resources has now incorporated learning college language in all job postings. The language of the learning college is now reflected in key institutional documents including the college catalog. These are valuable achievements, which document CCD's desire and capacity to support a systematic institutional approach to becoming more learning centered, a vital characteristic of high-performing organizations.

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

- a. Formed the Learning College Revitalization Committee
- b. Conducted surveys at Convocation and online
- c. Presentations to college departments
- d. Teaching/Learning Center workshops
- e. Articles in Inside CCD
- f. Encouraged faculty and staff to attend and present at the League for Innovation Conference in Denver 3/08.
- g. Involved HR to get learning college language on the job posting website in all job announcements
- h. Involved marketing department in generating ideas to "get the word out" about Learning College principles and activities
- i. It's been noted that people in the CCD community are using the term learning college when they discuss CCD related topics in meetings and during casual conversation

Review (09-29-08):

CCD has utilized a variety of methods and media to reach faculty and staff to incorporate the language of learning into all facets of the institution. Coordinating cross-campus, all-inclusive efforts can be difficult, but the solid framework and proactive approach taken by CCD should reduce such risk as demonstrated by the use of the term "learning college" in casual conversation among faculty and staff.

3. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

- a. The college-wide goals over the next three years reflect learning college principles so there will be a sustained focus on this work by the entire college
- b. Continue awareness and educational articles in Inside CCD
- c. Continue presentations on learning college philosophy and principles
- d. Make sure that all new full-time and adjunct hires are learning-centered by incorporating learning college language in the hiring process
- e. Focus heavily on assessment of student learning. Make sure the Assessment Plan is adopted and utilized by faculty. Offer workshops and instruction on student learning

- assessment. Send faculty representatives to the Colorado Assessment Conference held in October of every year.
- f. Encourage teams of personnel to attend conferences and workshops that are focused on learning college principles.
 - g. Encourage and train faculty in the use of new technology-based pedagogy in the classroom, such as Pod-casting and Video-casting, to enhance student learning
 - h. All college staff and faculty councils will ensure that their mission and by-laws are aligned with learning college principles.
 - i. We will hold multiple college-wide strategic conversations centered on learning college goals and learning organizational principles. The second conversation is scheduled October, 2008, where we will reaffirm our identity as a learning college, create a unique definition for CCD as a learning college, and each person in the CCD community will integrate one learning college principle in their daily life.

Review (09-29-08):

The college-wide goals over the next three years are as ambitious as the action project. Implementing the listed activities will continue to drive systematic institutional understanding of learning college principles and create an institutional culture of continuous quality improvement. Continuing the campus-wide strategic conversations will reaffirm CCD's identity as a learning college. Perhaps the greatest challenge will be working with faculty to adopt and utilize the Assessment Plan. Adoption of the Assessment Plan is crucial if CCD is to bring students back to the fore front in its thinking and planning.

4. Describe an "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

An effective practice that resulted from this project is that the college now asks itself the following questions before considering any new program, project, initiative or hire: How will this improve student learning? How will we know?

Review (09-29-08):

Including questions such as those posed in decision-making at all levels of the institution will reinforce CCD's efforts to become a learning college (impacts all AQIP Categories). As CCD implements its next steps over the next three years, close attention should be made to outstanding practices such as all college staff and faculty councils ensuring that their mission and by-laws are aligned with learning college principles and college-wide strategic conversations centered on learning organizational principles that could be shared with other higher education institutions.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

A turnover of administrative leadership over the past year has created gaps in the process of implementing the learning college principles. With a new president and vice-president of learning and academic affairs who both strongly support this action project, our efforts will sustain and strengthen the action project goals. Although the second survey showed an increased awareness of learning college principles, the concept of a learning college and how it translates into what people do every day work still seems disconnected because it is one thing to understand the concept of a learning college but an entirely different understanding is

required when we speak of implementing learning college goals. The lessons to be learned from those surveys show us a continued need to focus on the fact that learning occurs inside and out of the classroom, and includes faculty and staff as active learners and not just students.

Review (09-29-08):

Incorporating learning college principles into the fabric of CCD culture is essential to ensure efforts are not a “flash in the pan” or lost with change in administrative leadership. CCD’s second survey, while showing an increase in awareness of learning college principles, demonstrates the ongoing challenge of translating learning college principles into day-to-day operations.

- 6. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?**

N/A

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Action Project: Faculty Voice Implementation Plan

1. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

The Faculty Voice implementation has been delayed due to the recent changes in administration. There have been two Vice Presidents of Learning and Academic Affairs and two new college presidents since the creation of this action project. The initial objective to form a committee that would examine the 36 categories of the current Faculty Voice was not completed. The Faculty Voice document was reviewed and approved by the interim president, and has been supported by the current administration. The momentum has already begun to continue this project forward into this next year.

Review (10-05-08):

Community College of Denver reports to have made a commitment to increasing communication among the various employee groups to become more in line with the Learning College Model. The college had originally proposed to implement the action project "Faculty Voice Implementation plan" on 4/15/07. The faculty voice document was approved in 2006 and is reported to outline faculty voice weight as either advisory, co-determinative, or determinative, in all 36 stated categories of decision making as outlined in the proposed faculty voice document. There was no prior review of this project available probably due to the postponement in the implementation of the project owing to significant changes in the administration that occurred successively during the time period. Subsequently, the college had an approved faculty voice document in 2006. The 2008 update states that the interim president and the current administration have provided approval. The information provided by the college in the action project (due to space limitation perhaps) does not make the need for this project clear other than the intent was for the college to align the learning college model into its current structure. It is difficult to comment on the appropriateness of the progress made by the institution without clearly stated objectives associated with the above goal. However, the college appears to be convinced that the time is right to integrate the faculty voice "more fully" into the structure of the college. Again the term "more fully" is very ambiguous since the college did not include any information on faculty inclusion issues or provide any preliminary data analysis or information regarding why this issue is important at this time. For this project, the college declared the primary category as # 5, namely leading and communicating. The project may also impact category 9 namely building collaborative relationships.

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

The formation of the Faculty Voice document was done through the Faculty Voice Committee comprised of three faculty members, a branch site director, the director of human resources, and a dean. The document was formally reviewed and approved by the administrative leaders of the college. The spirit and intention of the document was to ensure that faculty were included on key processes within the college. The idea of faculty inclusiveness has been responded to

overall. At the bi-annual college-wide convocation copies of the document itself were distributed to the majority of faculty in attendance.

Review (10-05-08):

The college annual update for 2008-2009 indicates that some progress was made despite the delay in the actual implementation of the plan that is now scheduled for fall of 2009. At the time of this report, the faculty voice committee has been formed with members from faculty, staff, and administration groups. Anecdotal notes provided by the college indicate that the idea of faculty inclusiveness has been “responded to overall.” It is still not clear if there is a clear continuous quality improvement process in place with clearly defined goals, objectives as to how the results will be utilized to actual measurement related to its original goal of increasing communication among various employee groups. As the action project is just being implemented it may be appropriate and timely to think about goals, objectives and expected outcomes so one can actually be ahead of the process instead reacting after it. The dots have to be connected to the broad goal, viz., increasing communication among the various groups. The short term goal may be set to integrate the “faculty voice” into the structure of the college community. Subsequently, the long term goals may include other groups including students in order to have as indicated in the action plan the “benefit of more effective outcomes related to learning.”

3. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

We will begin our implementation facilitation and corresponding steps starting in the fall of 2009. This will allow the organizational restructuring of the college to be completed. Subsequently, the Faculty Voice Committee will reconvene this fall and review the 36 categories of faculty voice weights against the new organizational structure. After the categories have been reviewed and finalized and the college public is informed, a committee comprised of representatives from all employee groups will be assembled to create a survey to determine if the Faculty Voice is being honored in the 36 categories. The results of the survey will give direction to the committee to address deficiencies and to recognize the positive effects the implementation is achieving. The committee will be tasked with establishing a new timeline and completion dates.

Review (10-05-08):

The college has proposed to implement the actual project in fall of 2009 after the completion of the organizational restructuring. However, in order to sustain the momentum of faculty involvement, the committee may focus on establishing and maintaining a two way communication with all the stakeholders relating to this project via meetings, information on the website, and inter and intra disciplinary conversations among faculty, support staff and administrative personnel. Even some informal faculty participation can be piloted before the actual implementation

4. Describe an “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

Even though the Faculty Voice was compiled before its implementation was put forth as an Action Project, there is some awareness of the spirit of the Faculty Voice. There is a general awareness that faculty input is necessary and should not be overlooked when decisions are made. Currently CCD is undergoing organizational restructuring. In the current reorganization process, there have been discussions with an emphasis on inclusiveness of all faculties in conversations and planning. Although there is no formal implementation of the Faculty Voice to

date, members of the CCD Faculty Council are cognizant of the need for faculty representation in critical decision processes throughout the college. The Faculty Council will ensure there is a faculty council member at all a reorganization discussion in lieu of the Faculty Voice not being formally implemented to date. The current administration has verbalized and acknowledged that faculty involvement in the decision making process must be ensured and recognized.

Review (10-05-08):

The action project has not been implemented but the spirit of the plan appears to have pervaded among several groups, and has caught the stakeholders' attention. The Zeitgeist or the timing appears to be right and the college should not delay the implementation of the plan any further.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

The new president of CCD is facilitating a college wide re-structuring which may change the voice weights in multiple categories contained in the document. A formal process of implementation of the Faculty Voice is needed. The challenge of accepting the current document without revision is the possibility that the current voice weights listed in the 36 categories may not be harmonious with the new organizational structure. The challenge will be to examine the current document against the new organization structure, and assessing whether voice weight changes are needed.

Review (10-05-08):

The college does report the possibility of the changes in organizational structure that may take place with the new administration that will assume the responsibilities shortly. This again may impact the contents of the project and thereby its implementation. It is important for the Faculty Voice community to keep the new administration informed and insist on being informed. If the college delays the implementation any further, it may damage the morale of all constituencies and thereby endanger the accomplishment of its mission to be a Learning college.

6. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?