

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Red Rocks Community College

Project Details		
<b>Title</b>	Development of Common Student Learning Outcomes	<b>Status</b> ACTIVE
<b>Category</b>	1-Helping Students Learn	<b>Updated</b>
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 11-19-2013	<b>Created</b> 12-12-2013
	<b>Target Completion</b> 05-21-2016	<b>Version</b> 1

### 1: PROJECT GOAL

**A:** The goal of this action project is two-fold: (1) to develop and sustain common student learning outcomes for Red Rocks Community College and (2) to develop assessment procedures and data capture related to common student learning outcomes.

### 2: REASON FOR UNDERTAKING THIS PROJECT

**A:** In the latest review of the RRCC Systems Portfolio, the reviewers noted that while RRCC has focused on student achievement objectives such as developmental education, the college has yet to develop Common Student Learning Objectives. RRCC has an outstanding opportunity to develop general learning objectives and corresponding measures for attainment across the RRCC learning environment. Likewise, the development of core learning outcomes shared across the institution, and measurement of these learning outcomes, will bring together all parts of the college and external stakeholders in a focus on how we can better serve students and increase student success. This includes co-curricular learning objectives and assessment. Assessment of learning outcomes will bring transfer, career and technical, developmental, and workforce development divisions together to discuss what we, as a college, want our students to be able to know and do. Perhaps most importantly, in an age of increasing specialization, it would allow us to grapple with how we provide our students with both breadth of learning, employability, and a path to continuous learning throughout their lives.

### 3: ORGANIZATIONAL AREAS AFFECTED

**A:** The key organizational area involved in this action project will be the Division of Instructional Services. The project is under faculty leadership and involves academic administration. The project team includes the faculty senate president who will regularly inform faculty of the project actions. The final version of the common learning outcomes will be put to a vote of the faculty. The project will also involve the Division of Student Success. In addition, the Executive Leadership Team and the College Collaboration Council, the planning and AQIP coordinating body made up of cross-functional representatives from college constituencies, will be regularly apprised of progress. The development of Common Student Learning Outcomes is seen as a strategic priority and, as such, will be placed as a strategic initiative in the RRCC 2013-2018 strategic plan, currently under development.

### 4: KEY ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES

**A:** The key AQIP categories that this project will address are (1) Category One - Helping Students Learn, (2) Category Seven - Measuring Effectiveness, and (3) Category Eight - Planning Continuous Improvement.

The AQIP Processes under Category One will be the immediate focus of change and improvement. These processes include 1P1 (Determining common or shared objectives for learning), 1P2 (Determining program learning objectives), 1P4 (Designing responsive academic programming), 1P5 (Determining the preparation required of students), 1P6 (Communicating required preparation to students), 1P16 (Aligning co-curricular with curricular learning objectives), 1P17 (Determining that students awarded degrees and certificates meet learning and development expectations) and 1P18 (Designing processes for assessing student learning).

In addition, the project will improve 7P1 (Select, manage, and distribute performance information to support instructional and non-instructional programs and services), 7P2 (Select, manage, and distribute performance information to support planning and improvement efforts), 7P4 (Analyze at the organizational level, data and information regarding overall performance) and 7P6 (Ensure alignment of department and unit analysis of data and information with organizational goals for instructional and non-instructional

programs and services).

Finally, the project will improve 8P4 (Coordinate and align planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans across the college's various levels) and 8P5 (Define objectives, select measures, and performance targets for college strategies and action plans).

## **5: PROJECT TIMEFRAME RATIONALE**

**A:** The project is a major, broad-based effort and as such will require three years. The first year will involve the development of the Common Learning Outcomes by faculty and student support staff. The summer following the first year will be devoted to a pilot training of key full-time faculty and staff in developing assessment measures and methods. The second year will involve piloting the Common Learning Outcomes in selected departments and courses and bringing all full-time faculty on-board. The third year will focus on implementing assessment and analysis of results with part-time faculty and student support.

## **6: PROJECT SUCCESS MONITORING**

**A:** The project team will give regular reports to the Executive Team and the College Collaboration Council. Certain areas regarded as critical success factors and risks. These will be closely examined. Involvement of faculty and staff at RRCC is a critical success factor and also a potential pitfall. Assessment measures must be meaningful across programs and translatable/embedded within program assessment. There must also be sufficient time for faculty and staff to work on the outcomes and measures across their usual areas of operation.

## **7: PROJECT OUTCOME MEASURES**

**A:** The basic outcome measures (and benchmarks) are:

- (1) The successful development of the Common Learning Outcomes;
- (2) The successful pilot development of outcomes assessment measures for the Common Student Learning Outcomes;
- (3) The successful implementation of the pilot project with assessment results that can be applied to improvements in student learning and development;
- (4) The successful incorporation of the Common Student Learning Outcomes into teaching, learning, and assessment at the program level by all faculty;
- (5) The use of Common Learning Outcomes assessment data in the on-going planning, budgeting, and improvement cycles of Red Rocks Community College.

In general, we anticipate that this project will lead to increased student success, data-informed decisions, and a culture that measures effectiveness.