
Action Project

Title: Unnamed Project

Version: 2

Institution: Red Rocks Community College

Status: Completed

Submitted: 2009-11-24

Category: 6-Supporting Institutional Operations

Timeline

Planned project kickoff date: 2006-08-01

Target completion date: 2007-01-01

Actual completion date:

Project Detail

Project Goal

Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer

Increase the number of students applying for and receiving associates degrees.

Reasons For Project

Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities

The Strategic Planning Process for the Colorado Community College System has developed three key criteria to measure college performance. Improving graduation rates is one of these criteria.

Organizational Areas Affected

List the organizational areas -- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project

The Student Services division specifically the area under the responsibility of the Registrar is most involved in the current processes of auditing graduation requests and coordinating with instructional administration to determine if a student has met the degree requirements necessary for graduation.

Key Organizational Process(es)

Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve

Project Time Frame Rationale

Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion)

Project Success Monitoring

Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing

Baseline numbers of graduates will be compared to numbers of graduates as a result of the planned interventions.

Project Outcome Measures

Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals

A baseline will be established to determine the number of students with 45+ credits that are actually applying for and receiving degrees. These data will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the mail contact and follow up by the general advisors to degree audit requests.

Annual Update

Project Accomplishments and Status

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

Since the last update report filed fall 2007, the Graduation Culture (GC) Action Project has continued to promote the benefits of applying for a degrees and certificates. Dr. Nancy McCallin, the Colorado

Community College president, reported that the Colorado community colleges' graduation rate increased from 20.1 percent to 25.9 percent, helping Colorado to rank 8th in the nation among two-year colleges in graduation rates. Red Rocks Community College students that have earned more than 45 credits with a GPA of 2.0 are notified by letter that an online degree audit request is available to assist in determining their progress toward a degree. As the deadline approaches each term to apply for graduation, articles in student publications, posters and table tents in the cafeteria and hallways promote the benefits of earning a degree.

Institution Involvement

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

In an effort to gain an objective perspective of the effectiveness of the action projects, task forces were formed fall, 2007 from faculty and staff that had no previous involvement with the development or implementation of the projects. The make up of the task forces were intentionally designed to include instructors as well as staff from outside of instruction. The task force was unanimous in their recommendation that the GC Action Project should become standard operating procedure of the College. The task force recommended several innovative strategies to continue to market the culture of graduation, which are more fully detailed in the following sections.

Next Steps

Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project

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Resulting Effective Practices

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

The development of the online degree audit request has helped to develop a method to track the number of students seeking information about graduation. One of the general advising staff has taken lead responsibility in responding to the audit request.

Project Challenges

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

Initial data concerning the number of students requesting an audit as a result of the notification has been underwhelming. Efforts are underway to "punch" up the methods used to encourage students with 45+ credits to request a graduation audit. Notifying students via mail is an expensive and time intensive effort. Efforts to automate the notification through electronic means such as email or web notices posted in the online classroom management system are continuing to be explored. More time than was ideal elapsed between the work of the GC Action Project Committee and the formation of the GC evaluation task force. The original committee members were concerned that the evaluation fact-finding process did not adequately follow up with the original members resulting in redundancy as well as oversight in the recommendations for next steps coming from the task force. Lessons learned include the importance of the evaluation task force process ensuring full follow up with members involved in the original design and implementation of the action project.
