

Action Project Declaration

1. *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.*

Our project, "Formalizing Institutional Assessment of Student Learning," scales up existing assessment practices into an integrated system across the college. This project will require commitment and participation from all of Instruction, will be guided by a faculty-led Student Learning Council, and will improve our processes for determining, communicating and ensuring the stated program learning outcomes and common learning outcomes.

2. *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 goal high among your institution's current priorities? Also, explain how this project related to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's recent or soon-to-be submitted Systems Portfolio.*

The Systems Appraisal we received from our 2016 Systems Portfolio identified the following strategic issue in Category One: Helping Students Learn.

Assessment of student learning outcomes and program assessment presents the greatest challenge for Red Rocks Community College. The lack of supporting data in many areas presented challenges for the reviewers to accurately rate the college's level of maturity. Overall, RRCC has been very reactive in its approaches to assessing student and program learning outcomes at the institutional level. There does not appear to be a mature CQI culture: data gathering appears sporadic, data are often anecdotal, and it is often unclear how data are used to inform strategies. There is little indication of targets and benchmarks, few results shared, little analysis provided. Fortunately, processes being finalized such as iLearn have great potential to correct some of these challenges.

The feedback on the Criteria for Accreditation aligned with this category also pointed toward a need to establish processes for assessing student learning at the program level and across the institution for our common learning outcomes. Since we received the Systems Appraisal, ILEARN has engaged more units throughout the college and all instructional areas now have a plan in place to collect data on student learning, with some areas also having one year of data to review and make improvements. With this widespread engagement in place, now we are prepared to take the next step and align those learning outcomes at the program level and look at common learning outcomes as a college both in the curriculum and co-curricular activities.

3. 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.

We anticipate submitting our project for formal review between January and March 2019.

Goal	Deliverable	Due Date	Metric
Assemble Student Learning Council	Committee structure and procedures are documented	Assembled in May 2018; Procedures by Fall 2018	Written procedures and structure for the council exist
Project Acceptance and Promotion	Messaging from President/Executive Team	May 17 th Approval at cabinet meeting; Messaging goes out during June Retreat & Work Week in Fall 2018	Three tiers of messaging are communicated: President, VP, and Deans, as well as from the SL Council after it forms
Draft Forms and Templates Created	Drafts are prepared for the Student Learning Council to review	June 2018	Drafts are delivered to council; notes on edits are collected and incorporated.
Presentation of Action Project to the College	Summary of Action Project is written for dissemination; action project is presented orally	June retreat – presented to directors, deans, etc.; Fall faculty retreat & work week – presented by SL Council	At the close of each retreat, xx% of participants can identify/summarize the new action project

4. 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.

The project will begin with the formation of a faculty-led Student Learning Council. This group will be the primary driver of the project, and will receive support from an instructional dean – specifically the dean who has been a leader in the ILEARN project. The dean will share information with the council about the current process in place and the direction we need to move, and then will become the support for the council and their champion as they develop the institutional processes for assessment of program learning outcomes and the RRCC Common Learning Competencies (CLCs).

Every faculty member in the college will participate in this project, as they will be aligning their course outcomes with the program outcomes and CLCs. A large group of faculty have already been involved in developing student learning assessment strategies for their operational units, and now these assessments will be scaled up and aligned with each program. Faculty will be involved in writing/adopting the program learning outcomes and in collecting assessment data which will be reviewed by the Student Learning Council. Additionally, while slightly outside the scope of this action project, Student Success staff will also be involved through assessment of co-curricular programming.

The role of the college leadership in this project will be to demonstrate their support on the front end and to help to address any challenges or barriers that may arise through the duration of the project.

5. 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.

The team that attended the Strategy Forum will continue to meet and monitor progress on this project over the course of the next year. Progress of the project will be evaluated at the following times:

Meeting Date	Items to Review	Measures Evaluated
August 2018	Project Messaging Student Learning Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has appropriate messaging been delivered to the college through the president, VPs, and deans? • What percentage of participants from the summer retreat could identify/summarize the new action project? (target = xx%) • Does the council have written procedures and structure? • Have draft templates for curricular maps been provided to the council?
November 2018	Project Messaging Student Learning Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has appropriate messaging been delivered to the college through the president, VPs, and deans? • What percentage of participants from the fall (faculty) retreat could identify/summarize the new action project? (target = xx%) • Has the council edited and adopted the curricular maps? • What percentage of programs have curricular maps showing where each outcome is assessed? (target = xx%)
February 2019	TBD Based on November Meeting	
May 2019	TBD Based on February Meeting	

Ultimate project success will be determined by the results from our next Systems Appraisal. We hope to reach the following benchmarks related to this project.

Category One – Helping Students Learn	Current State	Target State
1.P.1. – Assessing Common Learning Outcomes	Reacting	Systematic
1.P.2. – Assessing Program Learning Outcomes	Reacting	Systematic
Criterion Four – Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	Current State	Target State
4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.	Unclear or incomplete	Strong, Clear, and well presented

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

Red Rocks has a very relational culture, and as such, communication in a broad sense can be a challenge for us. Keeping the whole college informed as to the goals of the project, progress, and next steps will need to be communicated clearly and consistently.

Faculty buy-in will be crucial. As this project is focused on assessment of student learning, it must be faculty-led and shaped. For that reason, our strategy forum team has intentionally only mapped initial steps to get the project started, but will rely on the to-be-formed Student Learning Council to articulate additional outcomes in more detail, based on broad faculty input.

We will also need to clearly connect this project to the work that has already taken place. There has been great progress on student learning assessment through the ILEARN process, and as we scale up these efforts, we need to help participants to see the connection so that the value in the previous work is seen and integrated into the institutional processes developed.

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