

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Red Rocks Community College

Project Details		
<b>Title</b>	Communication to Remove Silos and Improve Performance	<b>Status</b> ACTIVE
<b>Category</b>	5 - Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship	<b>Updated</b>
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 12-01-2015	<b>Created</b> 11-18-2015
	<b>Target Completion</b> 11-23-2018	<b>Version</b> 1

### 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

**A:** Communication has been singled out as a focal point for improvement effort by several important groups. The Collaboration Council, the cross-functional shared governance body that represents all RRCC constituencies as well as the horizontal operational structure, assessed and re-worked its role around horizontal communication across the college. College leadership bodies have been changed to be more inclusive and to allow more voices in decision making and setting strategic directions. External stakeholders, such as business and industry focus groups, have indicated that we need to do a better job letting them know what we have to offer. In October 2015 a college-wide development day engaged all college faculty and staff in the development of our upcoming AQIP System Portfolio. Responses to the six AQIP Portfolio categories brought up the importance of improving and expanding communication networks throughout the college as a foundational strategy for improvement. The contextual background for such communication includes such areas as better serving student and community needs, removing barriers to employee performance, expanding professional development, making college plans a part of employee job functions, breaking down organizational "silos", expanding information repositories for students, faculty, and for getting information to internal "consumers" more efficiently. This project will explore all these aspects of improving our communications, set directions for improvement, and assess these directions to improve employee performance and institutional effectiveness through shared information.

### 2: PROJECT RATIONALE

**A:** Communication, or the lack of communication, has been singled out as a problem throughout the college and in a number of contexts. The college has undergone major growth over the past several years and is adding a new Health Sciences campus in another part of the service area. This will present new challenges in developing a cohesive college community at all levels. The development of new degrees and programs is one area that is both a strategic initiative and a challenge. Another initiative concerns maintaining a high level of instructional quality while improving the infrastructure for a learning environment that meets the needs of our students and our communities. Our service area is changing demographically and economically and we need to increase our outreach efforts while increasing our support for student learning. All this growth and change means we also face challenges to recruit, develop, and evaluate employees, especially in regard to consistency in performance expectations, in position descriptions versus actual job demands, and in supervision. We need to go to the next level in Knowledge Management by expanding student, faculty and staff access to information that will empower them to become more self-directed and self-assessing learners, and more engaged employees.

### 3: PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

**A:** Project Goals/Deliverables

1. Create a mapping visualization of the college network of staff and faculty with responsibilities to create and distribute information.
2. Set the foundation for a college-wide distributed data system that will give faculty and staff greater access to the information they need to do their jobs.
3. Establish a series of shared centralized information repositories accessible to students, faculty, and staff with linkages to other key processes such as planning, budgeting, assessment, catalog development, and compliance reporting.
4. Develop training and cross training for access to the distributed data system, and formal review and update procedures to the shared repositories, as part of staff and faculty professional development.

Timelines

Year One (2016)

- Assess and flow chart current RRCC communication networks for internal and external consumers of information, including web operations, decision making processes, standing committees, organizational meetings, constituency groups, external governance, and community groups. Identify overlapping network nodes, or the lack thereof, that articulate these networks
- Review (1) current network flow, (2) key individuals and media used to sustain network flow, and (3) formal documentation of information. Assess formal responsibilities, or lack of formal responsibilities, for information flow.
- Set directions for creating a formal internal communication system and regular assessment of its use and benefits.
- Review directions and design of communications network and repositories by Executive Team and Collaboration Council (shared governance).

#### Year Two (2017)

- Create shared a shared repository for students based on student orientation and first-year experience.
- Create a shared repository for faculty and staff that provides access to information on business services and planning and budgeting processes. Link with existing assessment repository.
- Identify "power users" for distributed data system in each college division, pilot power user training, and establish trainees as an ongoing "end users" advisory group to Institutional Research.
- Conduct formative evaluation of repository use and survey user satisfaction.

#### Year Three (2018)

- Develop "training of trainers" for distributed data system "power users" and track technical assistance and guidance provided through this network.
- Review external communications and identify areas where internal networks can provide frequent, up-to-date information to external stakeholders.
- Develop cross-training and professional development opportunities for staff based on the new map of operational organization and work responsibilities.
- Conduct summative evaluation of repository and data system usage. Establish key personnel for ongoing communication network procedures for maintenance and updating.

## 4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

**A:** This project will affect the entire college community. The President of RRCC will direct the overall project. The President will have a steering committee made up of the following individuals.

1. Foundation Director
2. Director of instructional Technology
3. Director of Marketing
4. Director of Planning & Effectiveness
5. Director of Institutional Research
6. Deans
7. Faculty Representatives
8. Student Success representatives from Advising and Inclusion and Diversity
9. Technology and Administrative Computing
10. Division Vice Presidents

All relevant standing committees and operational working groups will have a contact person designated and updated whenever necessary.

## 5: PROJECT CONTROL

**A:** Regular reports to the Collaboration Council and Executive Team.  
 Progress on creating data products and repositories.  
 Numbers of faculty, staff, and students accessing information sources.  
 Survey of "end users" and satisfaction with resources offered.

## 6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

**A:** This is an ambitious, far-reaching, and amorphous project that must, to a considerable extent, design and focus itself as it goes. The

sheer scope of the project, and finding ways to sustain the data products and networks established, will be a challenge. Another hurdle will be individual access to data from current data systems.

## **7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**A:** Based on and inclusive of our prior project - Repository for Assessment Data - this project will increase the number and type of repositories as resources for students, faculty, and staff. We will increase our capacity to store, access, and distribute information in various kinds of media, especially videos. Our effort will be to combine both "high tech" and "high touch" in our communications, along with an emphasis on keeping the relational fabric of our college in focus. The growth in our second Arvada campus means we need to be more intentional in distributing information. We hope this will help us maintain the quality of face-to-face relationships that are harder to maintain with growth.