

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

Since the last update fall, 2007, faculty members have continued to develop assessment goals as part of the annual performance planning. Eighty-seven percent of full time faculty successfully completed the assessment cycle. Student learning assessment has primarily focused in the classroom in the first stages of the Assessment Action Project. Assessment goal planning is completed by each faculty member in consult with his or her dean during the fall semester. Faculty members are encouraged to address each step of the assessment cycle in implanting his or her assessment goal. The phases of defining a learning objective based on the established course competencies, aligning the learning objective with his or her teaching strategies, developing a measurement tool with which to collect data for analysis, which may result in the development of alternative teaching practices to improve student outcomes. Faculty members submit documentation of the assessment process used, data analysis, and action taken as a result of the analysis to his or her division dean as part of the year end evaluation at the conclusion of the spring term. Division deans provide summary reports from each area to the vice president of Instruction, which are then posted to the college's intranet, Share Point.

**Review (09-13-08):**

Congratulations on achieving an 87 percent assessment cycle completion for full time faculty. Submission of the information to deans is an important component. Further sharing of insights across divisions, with part time instructors, and with others outside of instruction might help in maintaining momentum and further expand participation. The college has demonstrated it understands the basics of measuring effectiveness and planning continuous improvement with an emphasis on helping students learn. At this stage of the project the college it is appropriate to broaden participation beyond instruction.

B. 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 staff from outside of instruction. The task force assigned to review the Assessment of Student Learning surveyed 25 faculty members as part of their review to gather representative responses specific to the progress of the Action Project. The responses from the faculty were used to help the task force in the development of their recommendations, which are more fully discussed in the next sections.

**Review (09-13-08):**

The college has made a concerted effort to provide an opportunity to educate others outside of instruction about assessment and involve them in the established process. Including others in the process and using an assessment survey shows a commitment to valuing people and an effort in building collaborative relationships.

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

Findings of the task force charged with conducting an evaluation of the Assessment of Student Learning project made several recommendations for improvement. These include making assessment information and results widely and easily available and taking a larger view of instructional and institutional assessment. The committee felt that in general, course and program assessment was effective in achieving the primary objective of increasing the participation of

faculty members in conducting formative assessment of student learning and using the results to continually improve his or her teaching practices. The vice president of Instruction has offered a full semester release to a faculty member, to begin fall 2008, to conduct assessment research. Currently under discussion among instructional leadership are the goals of the research. Three areas of focus are expected to form the final research design: 1) Conduct an in-depth analysis of the delivery and outcomes of developmental education. 2) Design and populate a web presence to showcase best practices in documenting teaching and student learning excellence. The dissemination of best practice should explore multiple modalities to ensure broad sharing and awareness of teaching and learning strategies occurring throughout the college. 3) Conduct student and staff surveys and focus groups to document the “student experience” in the classroom as well as the multiple processes encountered by students in the admission, advising, registration, placement testing, and enrollment functions. As a result of the data gathering define benchmarking strategies that can be used to prioritize continuous quality improvement throughout the institution. Newly hired faculty will include in their goals and objectives an initial course assessment that measures the alignment of course objectives outlined in the curriculum guide with their assessment strategies. Providing professional development to new faculty in the development of student learning assessment goals will be a function of the faculty-initiated Achieve Classroom Excellence Center (ACE). ACE will expand professional development offerings to include training sessions as well as pairing of new faculty with veteran faculty.

**Review (09-13-08):**

Actions by the vice president to designate faculty release time to study assessment demonstrate leading and communicating as well. It will be important to share the results widely and implement the task force recommendations to move this action project to the next level. The establishment of the ACE center shows a commitment by faculty to educate new hires about the process and truly move toward a culture of assessment on campus. Internal benchmarking shows an understanding of other stakeholder needs that may lead to supporting institutional operations. One consideration may be to utilize established assessment measurement tools such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement or Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory for national benchmarking and gap analysis in instruction as well as in other areas on campus. Use of such an instrument might also provide additional areas beyond student services that can also be included as the college further develops its culture of assessment.

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

Red Rocks Community College conducted a presidential search fall, 2007 resulting in the successful hiring of Dr. Michele Haney as the new president January, 2008. As part of the search, the vice president of Instruction worked with the deans and department chairs to publish “Our Commitment to Instructional Excellence.” Because of the archiving of the assessment strategies occurring across the instructional departments that included specific results of student learning, the document was successfully developed and published in less than 10 days. The document showcased every department of the college with specific evidence of student success. The candidates each commented on the value of the document in telling the story of Red Rocks as an institution committed to continuous quality improvement in teaching and student learning. As part of the plans for dissemination this document will be updated regularly to communicate to all stakeholders the result of the College’s practices in teaching and learning.

**Review (09-13-08):**

The presidential search provided a unique opportunity to highlight the college's commitment to continuous quality improvement. The search candidates provided further validation of the college's work in assessment. The college should strongly consider presenting its progress and best practices at conferences outside of the college. This will continue the momentum as well as provide exposure to other assessment conversations that might inform this action project or future ones the institution may consider.

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

While significant progress has been made toward embedding the iterative cycle of quality improvement in the classroom, ambivalence toward additional assessment requirements continues among some faculty. Addressing this concern is part of the rationale for the faculty release to develop the best practices in student learning dissemination modalities (see # 3). Assessment continues to be viewed primarily as a function of instruction. While other areas of the college certainly engage in evaluation processes and quality improvement efforts there is not a consistent definition of assessment across the other areas of the college. Data analysis has not been used consistently to benchmark the impact of quality improvement efforts relative to improved student outcomes. Non-instructional areas have begun to collect data concerning service delivery. As part of the faculty release, the non-instructional areas will receive assistance in analyzing the data and developing benchmarks for use in prioritizing quality improvement efforts.

***Review (09-13-08):***

The college should be proud of the work it has done thus far in establishing a culture of assessment. Celebrating these successes will be important to maintaining momentum, establishing common language across campus, and encouraging those less enthusiastic members of the institution to learn more about the assessment efforts and how it impacts the work they do on campus. The college may want to consider cross-functional teams to disseminate information once additional data is gathered from non-instructional areas. In addition to service delivery, the institution might also embrace the opportunity to assess the co-curricular learning that occurs on campus to further bridge the in-class instruction and out of class instruction occurring on campus.

**F. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?**

***Review (09-13-08):***

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