The Action Project Commitment Declaration

Institution: Stark State College
Planned project kickoff date: Nov. 2008
Target project completion date: Dec. 2009
Actual project completion date: Dec. 2009

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer: Improvement of the Academic Advising Process

B. Describe this Action Project’s goal in 100 words or fewer: Stark State College’s current academic advising model has served the college for many years but is showing signs of needing improvement due, in part, to enrollment growth and delivery modalities. This project will identify gaps and areas of improvement in the current advising process, including academic career advising. It will result in a revised copy of the advising handbook, training of academic advisors, link advising to the orientation of new hires, and integrate academic advising in student services and academic divisions.

C. Identify the single AQIP Category that this Action Project will most affect or impact: Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs

D. 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.

Academic advising has been identified as an area needing improvement by faculty and staff through the AQIP process. It has been identified as an area of concern by students on student satisfaction surveys. These concerns support the need for a project to identify the gaps and areas of improvement needed in our current academic advising model. Because academic advising positively impacts student goal attainment and success, it is a priority for our college. This project will advance our academic advising process and advising handbook to better meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students. It supports the integration of advising in the student services and academic areas.

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

Students
Faculty Advisors
Student Services/Enrollment Management
Tutoring and Learning
Registration
Career Services
Financial Aid
Marketing
IT/mystarkstate portal
F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve.

Processes most impacted by this project include registration of new and continuing students, student orientation, new hire orientation for advisors, course placement testing, course selection and planning, referral to academic and support services, management of advisee records, training of advisors, articulation and transfer of courses, career planning, financial aid, degree evaluation (audit), U.select (CAS/DARS), and academic policies and procedures.

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

The length of time is needed to complete a comprehensive assessment of our current advising process. We need to map our current advising process, identify gaps and areas for improvement, and review other models that may assist us in our improvement efforts. We need to survey the faculty to determine their knowledge of the current advising process, areas where they feel there are gaps, and areas where improvement is needed. The results for student satisfaction surveys will be provided to the committee members. We will refine the advising handbook based on the information identified in our mapping process and survey. We will also develop additional training sessions to meet the needs of advisors.

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

The team will submit monthly reports to our AQIP Liaison, who in turn will report to the AQIP Steering Committee. The AQIP Liaison will also provide updates to the College community via the Strategically Speaking Newsletter, department/division meetings, College portal, Academic Leadership Council meetings, Academic Deans Council meetings, Executive Council meetings, and President’s Cabinet meetings.

I. 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.

Outcome measures include:
1. Identifying gaps and areas where improvement is needed in the current advising process
2. Refining the advising handbook
3. Providing additional training sessions for advisors
4. Linking advising to student orientation and new hire orientation for advisors
5. Integrating the advising processes of Student Services/Enrollment Management and the Academic Divisions
6. Survey the faculty to determine knowledge of current process and areas of improvement.
Long-term goals include:
  1. Increased use of services to assist students
  2. Increase in student satisfaction measures related to academic advising

**J. Other information** (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, external partners, etc.)

Surveying the faculty will assist us in publicizing the project to advisors. It will allow us to increase communication about the advising handbook. It will also allow us to work systematically on a project that affects more than one administrative division at the College.

**K. Project Leader and contact person** (First Name, Middle Initial, Last name, Title, Email, Telephone)

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