Assessing General Education in Early Colleges

Please comment on anything that is omitted or incomplete in the project status, dates and summary field. Enter N/A if not applicable.

N/A

Check for accuracy and completeness against the original Project Declaration. Are the right metrics or measures included for each goal? If not, what revisions to the metrics/measures would you suggest that the institution consider?

The metrics presented in the declaration and update were appropriate, comprehensive, and aligned with the Project goal. The outcomes had measures, the measures had targets, and results are directing action plans. The document, *VU & Early College Critical Thinking & Written Communication Assessment Report* was well written and provided additional evidence of the Project's design, progress, and results.

One comment, you never define "early college" – "*small schools designed so that students can earn both a high school diploma and an Associate's degree or up to two years of credit toward a Bachelor's degree.*" I recommend you include a definition and perhaps some background information in the report (for broader audience appeal and application outside VU) and in the Portfolio.

You have a clearly defined timetable, with clearly identified outcomes, measures and targets. I recommend creating an overarching goal statement for this Projects, e.g., *Develop a systematic process for conducting assessment of critical thinking and written communication skills in early college dual-credit courses by the summer of 2016.*

Has the institution acted in meaningful ways to pursue project success, making progress as anticipated in the original project declaration? If meaningful progress or project success has not been achieved, has the institution made appropriate revisions to the goals or anticipated outcomes for this project? • Are descriptions of resources, organization, concrete results, and reaching milestones included? • Make a statement of global judgment. (i.e. "The institution is making [excellent/good/satisfactory/ acceptable/slow/ casual/no] progress in this action project.").

The institution has made excellent progress on this Project. You set a realistic timeline, with achievable targets and clear expectations. The Project was properly defined, documented and controlled. Including the hyperlink to the Assessment Report was greatly appreciated; it provided concrete evidence (qualitative and quantitative) of the Project.

Are the appropriate people involved sufficiently for the nature and scope of the project?

• Is there sufficient breadth of involvement?

• Are the right people involved? • Emphasize the roles of those who can enhance the impact, success, or effectiveness of the project.

• Tactfully call attention to any people that appear to have been omitted or bypassed.

A number of faculty from a variety of disciplines collaborated to collect and assess student artifacts and participate in professional development. Staff in the Center for Teaching and Learning and Institutional Effectiveness provided project management support. The Dean of Early College Faculty and Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness and other university administration participated in Project discussions. Broad-based faculty, staff and administration involvement encourages better decisions and strengthen individual and group ownership.

An obvious omission is the involvement of students. Need and purpose come from the students and stakeholders. Voice-of-the-customer processes are intended to be proactive and continuously innovative to capture stated, unstated, and anticipated student and stakeholder requirements, expectations and desires. The goal is to achieve customer engagement. Student perspectives on the data reported in the Assessment Report might provide additional insight/opportunities for improvement. Interpreting the report could be a class project for a business class. I encourage you to engage your student senate and student organizations whenever and wherever possible; it's a great learning experience for everyone.

Does the institution show evidence of learning from what it did well?

• Acknowledge any practice that could be replicated internally in future projects.

• Encourage the sharing of best practices with other institutions.

A number of examples of learning/discovery were presented including review of the writing results for individual rubrics and shifting the "acceptable" goal to align with rubric revisions, using electronic systems to engage stakeholders at a distance, and better integration of faculty at multiple locations. Your approach was well deployed with no significant service gaps. You created an effective, systematic, responsive, fact-based approach that could easily be replicated and integrated across disciplines, curriculum and platforms.

If you are willing to share your rubrics etc., I recommend you consider presenting your process and findings at an HLC conference; other institutions face the same challenge with dual-enrollment programs. I also recommend that you consider presenting a session on how to write an effective Action Project; this Project was _well_ done.

Does the institution have a realistic understanding of what it needs to address in order to achieve progress and, ultimately, project success? Does it assess its internal and external environments, recognizing the potential forces that could hinder success? Is anything overlooked?

The declaration, update, and Assessment Report provide concrete evidence that you understand the role of fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement. Refinement and learning, backed by analysis and sharing are evident throughout the documents. You have a clear understanding of where you are and where you are taking the Project. The timeline for each task through December 2016 appears reasonable and aligned to the Project goal.

Does the institution understand the current status of its project and know how it intends to pursue project success?

I think you have a clear grasp of the status of this Project and the challenges you have identified in going forward are not uncommon. Faculty participation in workshops may improve with the visible success of the Project. Moving from pilot to full sustainable implementation will/may encounter resource, replenishment, communication, technology, and other challenges. You have identified what these may be and their impact. That is the first step in developing options and actions to enhance opportunities and reduce threats to project objectives.

Overall, does the institution demonstrate a good faith effort in its pursuit of continuous quality improvement through this action project? Is there anything of concern that should be brought to the attention of AQIP via your mentor?

It's nice to see an Action Project where it is evident that the institution "gets it." It's obvious you get it and you know how to leverage Action Projects for institutional change. Your Project focused on "action". You explored root cause and developed an action plan for outcome attainment and future sustainability, outcome measurement, and execution.

Well done and best wishes.