

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

University of St. Francis

Project Details		
Title	Quantify USF's current partnerships and resources expended to maintain them	Status COMPLETED
Category	9-Building Collaborative Relationships	Updated 07-18-2011
Timeline		Reviewed 09-30-2011
	Planned Project Kickoff 01-29-2010	Created 02-22-2010
	Actual Completion 07-18-2011	Version 2

1: Project Goal

A: The goal is to compile a list of current partnerships in the areas of community partnerships (service, sponsorship, business) and academic partnerships. The quantification will include a listing of partnerships and the direct and/or indirect costs associated with the partnerships. This quantification will create a foundation from which to establish the means to maximize USF resources and our ability to serve the community.

2: Reasons For Project

A: It is imperative for the University to capitalize on its current partnerships in the areas of grant opportunities, revenue streams, recruiting, development and more. In addition, it is important to maximize our resources in the most efficient manner possible.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: Admissions, Solutions, REAL, Career Development, Center for Innovation, Athletics, University Relations (marketing, alumni relations, public relations) and Academic units.

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: This project will be the first step to improve the process of generating new partnerships and enhancing current partnerships. By understanding our current relationships, we will be able to build a plan to maximize resources for new relationships. Partnerships enhance the University's ability to combine resources both internally and externally to create shared perspective with community constituents, to increase USF's image and to provide visibility and connection to the community. In turn, partnerships offer the opportunity for increased recruitment efforts, revenue streams, grant initiatives, student career connections, internal collaboration and public relations exposure. In addition to the benefits for the University, outreach, service and leadership are key components of the University's mission. Through partnering relationships, the University is able to fulfill its mission and purpose to provide community wide connections that benefit children, families, businesses, public, private and nonprofit entities in the local area. These benefits include: joint grant opportunities, shared resources, connectivity of non-profit social services and youth programming and enrichment.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: The timeline will utilize Spring and Summer term schedules to complete the bulk of the data collection.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: After the initial listing of partnerships is accomplished, the list will be updated and reviewed annually. The data will be initiated from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and monitored by the USF Business Solutions office.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: The outcome will be an excel spreadsheet listing of information including the type of partnerships,

partner organizations, USF contactS, USF departmental and/or individual involvement, connectivity to mission AND direct and/or indirect costs to the University.

Project Update

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

- A:
- On September 2, 2010, the final "key" department completed the information required for the partnership survey.
 - On September 13, 2010, the raw data from the survey was reviewed. The raw data indicated several responses requiring clarification from the respondent. For example, one response stated "too many to list" as an answer to the types of partnerships that were involved in the department.
 - From September-January, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness worked diligently to clarify responses, compile and tabulate the raw data into a usable format for purposes of this project. In January 2011, the completed list was presented to the team lead, and in February 2011, the Action team reviewed and analyzed the list.

The data indicated that the University has partnerships and/or collaborations with 467 organizations including, agencies, associations, businesses, government entities, health/medical organizations, parks/park districts, religious groups, schools/libraries, service clubs/councils, and other.

The team compiled available information on the costs associated with these partnerships and categorizing the list by our institutional definitions of academic, service, sponsorship and business partnerships. The team will disseminate the data to the University community via our internal the portal giving the University and the AQIP committee the ability to use the data for future initiatives. The survey process will refresh in 2013.

This project provided an exceptional example of cross-collaboration of departments. In addition, the project provided an opportunity for the institution to review the function of partnerships across campus in an effort to create future opportunities for collaboration and communication. The next step is to link a future AQIP project to the data collected as a continuation of the success.

2: Institution Involvement

- A: A committee of members from various departments involved in partnership development working on this project (USF Solutions, Center for Innovation, University Relations/Advancement, Career Services, Academic Services and Faculty Representative). In addition, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness was instrumental in collecting, organizing and reporting data. All departments were involved in the survey process.

3: Next Steps

- A: This project will be closed as soon as we receive the review of our update. Next steps are to open a related "follow-up" project that will develop a process to identify official University representation in community organizations.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

- A: The effective practice gained from this project was the opportunity to continue the conversation and collaboration of an institutional approach to collaborative relationships rather than a departmental approach. This practice will allow the University to leverage partnerships and coordinate them to avoid duplication of efforts.

5: Project Challenges

- A: As stated, this project will be closed. This process of quantifying partnerships and resources has been institutionalized and will continue into the future.

Update Review

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: Overall USF appears to be making "reasonable progress" toward accomplishment of the project's stated goals. In addition to compiling the list of current partnerships, goals associated with criterion and processes necessary to build and sustain existing partnerships -- identifying potential entities for new collaborative efforts might also prove worthwhile. An understanding and articulation of the needs of all partners, including those from the community, might prove beneficial in achieving the ultimate goal of building and sustaining partnerships. It appears that USF has a good plan in place to disseminate and use data for future initiatives. The breakdown of partnership categories is good and, if used as a selectable list in the 2013 survey, might alleviate the identified problem of respondent clarification. The practice of self reflection through the identification of existing partnerships and using the results of those discussions should be helpful in promoting further collaboration and in refining project goals.

2: Institution Involvement

A: The list of internal partners is comprehensive for the academic support entities. The collaboration of these partners is a clear indication of "broad-based involvement" and in "promoting collaboration." The list could be enhanced by a broader representation of the academic partners and the addition of co-curricular units within the Division of Student Affairs. Involvement by institutional leadership beyond the Dean's level might enhance effectiveness of the goal and demonstrate "leadership support."

3: Next Steps

A: The description of the purpose and benefits of the partnership initiative, as stated in the original project, are impressive and creates a good foundation from which to build on. The focus on understanding current relationships is reflective of the "principles of foresight to plan proactively" and in "promoting collaboration." Key organizational processes associated with the partnership initiative are not readily identified. Processes and procedures related to grant writing, communications and public relations, and access to information etc., will facilitate overall goal achievement.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: Moving from a decentralized to a centralized institutional approach in coordinating partnerships provides some level of control and leverage. Consideration should be given to maintaining "agility and responsiveness to change." Leveraging partnerships, through centralization, may facilitate the institution's goal of mitigating the duplication of efforts but might undermine partnership development through loose coupling. Practices and processes should be developed to facilitate the development of beneficial institutional and departmental partnerships.

5: Project Challenges

A: The use of the spreadsheet to identify and quantify the perceived value of partnerships and their associated levels of involvement is an excellent tool to support this project. The criteria related to partnerships, partner organizations, USF contacts, departmental and/or individual involvement etc., provide a good foundation to establish measurable outcomes, which appear to be lacking. The addition of specific and measurable outcomes such as the projected increase in the number of collaborative relationships or the percentage of increased revenue from contracts or grants generated through these relationships would be beneficial to this and future projects.

Project Outcome

1: Reason for completion

A: The project is complete.

2: Success Factors

A: This project provided an exceptional example of cross-collaboration of departments. In addition, the project provided an opportunity for the institution to review the function of partnerships across campus in an effort to create future opportunities for collaboration and communication. The next step is to link a future AQIP project to the data collected as a continuation of the success.

3: Unsuccessful Factors

A: Time management of the data collection took longer than expected. However, the data obtained by extending the time line was well worth the extra time involved.