

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

University of St. Francis

| Project Details | | | |
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| Title | Implementation of the Strategic Plan | Status | COMPLETED |
| Category | 8-Planning Continuous Improvement | Updated | 08-02-2011 |
| Timeline | | Reviewed | 09-20-2011 |
| | Planned Project Kickoff 02-16-2009 | Created | 11-24-2009 |
| | Actual Completion 09-01-2011 | Version | 3 |

1: Project Goal

A: The goal is to improve communication and streamline the current strategic plan reporting process.

2: Reasons For Project

A: In the past, the strategic plan has been managed by a strategic planning committee, led by the Provost and VP for Admissions and Enrollment. This required a meeting to be called and everyone involved in the strategic plan to attend and give an update on the progress of their strategic initiatives. This allowed the strategic initiatives of the plan to be updated. Rather than continuing this process, the strategic planning committee recommended that this process be handed off to the Vice Presidents and the President so the process will flow from the natural reporting processes in place. The VPs, Presidents and Deans meeting weekly. The reporting process can be incorporated into the meeting on the third week of every month. This new process makes sense for several reasons: it does not create another meeting to review strategic initiatives; it incorporates this process into a current meeting. Secondly, the Vice Presidents will now be responsible to communicate monthly with their immediate reports and will be aware of all strategic planning projects. It will allow for communication of what is working and is not working and will help the brainstorming process to develop alternative projects as needed. This will also inform the VPs and President on the progress of strategic plan. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness will compile the updated information at the VP's meeting.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: The proposed project will affect/involve the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, and program directors.

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: This process should enhance the strategic planning process.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: The target to begin is the February 16th VP Council meeting. Target to complete the project is September 20, 2009. By this time, we should know if this process is working.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: The Director of Institutional Effectiveness attends the meetings and takes notes. It is her responsibility to bring to the attention of this group if the strategic initiatives are not being met. The President has asked that a report be given to the Board of Trustees at the end of the semester highlighting the accomplishments this past semester. The strategic initiatives do include measurable benchmarks to gauge the progress of the initiatives.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: The strategic plan initiatives built in monthly goals to determine if progress is being made toward our goals. This strategic plan takes us

Project Update

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan was closed out using the old methodology to contact all the parties that were responsible for strategic initiatives. We have learned a great deal of what not to do from this experience and used it this year as we developed our new strategic plan. We discussed at great length how we needed to communicate and report back as we developed the plan. As a result, we have developed a new reporting strategy for the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan.

2: Institution Involvement

A: There were two groups involved in working on this project and revised process. The main group was the President, Vice President and Deans, who were responsible for reporting back on the strategic initiatives. We realized that there were too many initiatives in this plan. As the new strategic plan was developed with the strategic planning committee (including faculty, administration and staff) we made the plan smaller to focus on a few important initiatives. With both of these groups we discussed and developed the best process for communication and progress reports to the University community. I believe this in-depth discussion led to a well thought out process.

3: Next Steps

A: At this point, this Action Project will be closed. As we progress through the next strategic plan, we will be mindful of the new process and monitor it to ensure it's effectiveness.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: I believe we have a good process developed. Once we have used it for a period of time, we could inevitably recommend it as an effective practice for others.

5: Project Challenges

A: There are no challenges at this time as the project has been completed. Any examples of how other schools have incorporated the budget process, Strategic Planning and AQIP into one process would be very helpful.

Update Review

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: The implementation of a strategic plan, and the associated process of communicating around that plan, is often times difficult. Congratulations on your ability to recognize this as a potential barrier to successful outcomes for this Action Project, and for implementing strategies to address these barriers. Your quality driven response to these barriers are directly aligned with the guiding processes and questions associated with AQIP Category 5 (Leading and Communicating) and Category 8 (Planning Continuous Improvement). Your approach to analyzing this project by taking a critical look at institutional processes, and the associated measures that are needed to guide these processes is also aligned with AQIP, particularly Category 7 (Measuring Effectiveness).

2: Institution Involvement

A: While several internal people were initially involved in the strategic planning process, an opportunity was presented to streamline the process and to work more efficiently and effectively in moving forward. The actions taken have informed future practice (2011-2016 strategic planning), and is representative of two of the principles of high-performing organizations, specifically, broad based involvement and agility and responsiveness to change. The revised strategy also provides an opportunity for people to garner ownership in the process, without "planning to plan." Good work.

3: Next Steps

A: Congratulations on completion of this Action Project!

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: Often times, organizations wait to produce effective practices once they have either completed a project or they have engaged in a subsequent project that has been informed by the past. An opportunity to provide effective practices while an institution is "inside" of a project may be helpful for many, and can inform others in a way that they can address change and become agile in real-time vs. a reactive response. It might be helpful to consider informing the Action Project Directory with effective practices such as yours while you are engaged in it, and a level of effectiveness has been demonstrated as a learning opportunity for others.

5: Project Challenges

A: Again, kudos on completion of this Action Project. While you have identified no challenges at this time, as the project is completed, you have asked for assistance in one area, that being the incorporation of AQIP in specific internal processes. To assist you in future associated Action Projects or quality driven review of internal processes, one resource that might be helpful is the AQIP Action Project Directory. This is a searchable directory of Action Projects that may yield examples how other institutions have organized their processes of budgeting and strategic planning inside of the AQIP philosophy.

Project Outcome

1: Reason for completion

A: The 2011-2016 Strategic Plan Implementation is completed. I am pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the new strategic plan and commended the university administrators, faculty, and staff for their dedication and hard work.

2: Success Factors

A: Based on what didn't work well previously, we determined that a new process needed to be developed that was comprehensive. The new process was developed to implement with the new strategic plan in the fall.

3: Unsuccessful Factors

A: The implementation was rough. I expected the Vice President's communication with their divisions to be better than it was. Not enough importance was put on reporting at the Executive Committee Meeting and tracking the progress of strategic initiatives was left to me in some cases.