

Action Project

Title: Counseling Services Needs Assessment

Version: 3

Institution: Heartland Community College

Status: Completed

Submitted: 2014-02-27

Category: 6-Supporting Institutional Operations

Timeline

Planned project kickoff date: 2011-12-01

Target completion date: 2012-09-30

Actual completion date:

Project Detail

PROJECT GOAL

Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer

Counseling Services is a key component to fulfilling Heartland Community College's Mission to promote student success. The growing and increasing mental health and wellness needs of the students have outpaced the current services in place for students at Heartland. As Heartland seeks to maintain high institutional expectations of increased retention and student persistence, expanding Counseling Services would be a key foundational support toward these efforts. Following best practices, research and identification regarding training and informational services as well as protocols would be created for faculty and staff who serve as gatekeepers for understanding students' needs. This project will research and identify growing mental health and wellness needs of HCC students and identify appropriate resources, services and tools that would help to provide rationale for the possible establishment of a quality Counseling Services Program.

REASON FOR UNDERTAKING THIS PROJECT

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

According to the 2009-2010 Community College Counselors Survey, the top six presenting problems were: stress, depression, anxiety disorders, academic problems, relational issues, and test anxiety/procrastination.

At Heartland Community College, psychological disabilities were the third highest category of disability for **Heartland's Disability Support Services** in FY09 and FY10 (FY09 ADHD and PSY disabilities were tied). The preceding data attest that there is a definite need on

campus to have resources readily available to students as they experience obstacles to their success.

Furthermore, **Personal Development Services** has seen an increase in students seeking services and the severity of needs between FY09 and FY10: Fall09 (26)- Spring10 (14); Fall10 (33)-Spring11 (30).

Also, from the 2009-2010 Community College Counselors Survey, 14.3% of community colleges had a 1:2000, a 1:2500, and a 1:5000 ratio of personal counselors to students. In desiring to offer the best support to students, it can be argued that the lower ratios would promote greater support and increased success for students.

ORGANIZATIONAL AREAS AFFECTED

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

The organizational areas most impacted by this project are the student body at all HCC locations, as well as, the main gatekeepers of students; Faculty and staff, Academic Advising, Testing and Tutoring, Disability Services, Safety and Emergency Management, Security, Judiciary, and Athletics, and Wellness.

KEY ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES

Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve

The primary processes addressed would be those within AQIP Category 6, "Supporting Institutional Operations." When students experience psychological, emotional, social and developmental barriers they are distracted from learning. These personal obstacles can prevent students from progressing toward their academic goals. Research supports the premise that when resources, referrals and therapeutic services are available on campus for students, many barriers to student success are alleviated.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME RATIONALE

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

A needs assessment for this project can be met by surveying students, faculty/staff and specific organizational units impacted. We would also like to survey local community mental health providers to assess their role in working with college students.

Furthermore, CAS, the Core Survey, the Community College Counselors Survey, information by the American College Counseling Association (ACCA), The National College Health Association (NCHA), The National Institute of Mental Health, NASPA, Student Mental Health Law, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) can be drawn on to implement these activities.

This project will not exceed one year and should be managed to be finished as soon as possible with anticipated completion in September 2012.

PROJECT SUCCESS MONITORING

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

The action project team will report on its progress at regular intervals with the HCC AQIP Coordinating Committee as well as with identified stakeholder groups (Academic Advising, Testing and Tutoring, Safety and Security, Disability Support Services, Student Success and Wellness)

Based on the data gathered by the committee, there may be a second phase of this project to investigate implementation of Counseling Services at Heartland Community College

PROJECT OUTCOME MEASURES

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

Gathered data from peer institutions, researched trends, and survey findings will allow the action project team to determine whether a need exists at Heartland. Data will be collected and tracked for the number of students served, number presenting concerns, and satisfaction with specific areas of services.

Success can also be defined by establishing accessible counseling, intervention and educational services on mental health and wellness concerns according to CAS standards for Counseling Services for students.

Anticipated outcomes would be that the offering of mental health and wellness assistance to students will promote student persistence and academic goal completion, increase student help-seeking behaviors, as well as, facilitate institutional strategies concerning code of conduct issues and safety.

Annual Update

CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

(Please answer the following questions in the text box below)

General Project Status: Completed In-progress Suspended Reopened

Original Project Start Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Originally Projected End Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Anticipated Completion Date If Not Completed: ___ / ___ / ___

Briefly describe the current status of the project.

Explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's most recent or soon-to-be submitted systems portfolio, if applicable

ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

List the project goals as stated in the original project declaration along with the metrics/measures for assessing the progress for each goal.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

Describe what has been accomplished with this project over the past year, specifically referring to quantifiable results that show progress. You may need to include a discussion clarifying how the original goals and anticipated outcomes may have shifted during the year.

INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Describe how various members of the learning community have participated in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and

groups over the project's duration, particularly during the past year.

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Describe the effect that this project has had on the institution, students, and others in the learning community. What has the institution learned that can be identified as a good practice to use in other aspects of its quality work or from which other institutions might benefit?

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

Describe the anticipated challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project's goals.

PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

In light of the project goals, current circumstances, institutional learning from this project, and anticipated barriers to success, list the next steps to be taken over the course of the next 12 - 24 months in order to complete or institutionalize the results of this action project. Provide a timeline for completing each next step.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

Provide any additional information, inquires, or concerns that the institution wishes for reviewers to understand regarding this action project
