

Heartland Community College, IL

Project: Refine Integrated Strategic Planning

Version 1.0- Project

Q: What is the current status of your project?

A: In-progress

Q: Please indicate the original project start date, original project end date, and anticipated completion date if project is not completed. Please list dates on separate lines.

A: Original Project Start Date: November 2015

Original Project End Date: July 2017

Anticipated Completion Date: December 2016

Q: 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.

A: This project remains active and is in-line with the College's stated institutional priority of continuous improvement through development of systemic and systematic processes. This project aligns with Category Four of the AQIP systems portfolio: planning and leading, specifically Process 4P1: Strategic Planning. The project was initiated due to the current strategic planning process being too complicated to fully implement.

This project will also be the focus of HCC at its November 16 Strategy Forum.

Q:

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

A:

1. **Development of simplified College Strategic Plan for 2016-17:** Completed: In November 2015, a subcommittee of the Institutional Effectiveness Council took the current Strategic Plan and condensed eight Foundational Commitments and 17 Enduring Goals into four Institutional Priorities and the 17 goals aligned to each of those four Institutional Priorities. A six-page strategic plan document was condensed into a 1-page strategic map.
2. **Documented KPIs for current Strategic Plan:** In progress: Once the condensed strategic map was developed, the KPI development committee began its work in January 2016. The focus was on creating measures for each of the four Institutional Priorities. Those measures have been identified, data have been collected, and the team is currently working on developing a dashboard presentation of that data to share with stakeholders. This will serve as a systematic process for communicating performance on the KPIs.
3. **Documented revision of process for developing, communicating, and reviewing the College's mission, vision, and values.** Completed: While sub-committees were working on revising the current Strategic Plan, a subcommittee of the AQIP Coordinating Committee, the Strategic Plan Process Development sub-committee was also at work to develop a better process for integrated strategic planning for use in the development of the College's new strategic plan for 2017-2022. That process has been developed, documented, and was shared with the campus community and Board of Trustees in August 2016. See attached. Vision, Mission, and Values review process is currently underway utilizing the new process.
4. **Documented revision of process for developing, communicating, implementing, and reviewing the College's strategic plan.** In progress: See #3. SWOT analysis with internal and external stakeholders and establishment of Institutional Priorities for 2017-2022 is set to take place this semester utilizing the new process. We still need to complete a documented template for operational planning.

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.

A: There were four goals defined in the project scope, and the college has made considerable progress on all four goals. We anticipate completing the project ahead of schedule and have already begun to use the newly developed process as we work toward actual development of our 2017-2022 Strategic Plan.

Specific deliverables to date include:

- A new, condensed Strategic Map for 2016 to guide us through the final year of our current strategic plan.
- KPIs developed for 2016 Strategic Map

- Documented process for integrated strategic planning (visual and narrative)
- Communication of new process to internal stakeholders.
- Implementation of new process to review Vision, Mission, Values

Q: 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.

A: An employee survey was conducted and the results indicated that employees were disengaged from the previous planning process as well as the results of that process (Strategic Plan 2012-2016). One of the goals was to ensure that Heartland employees were aware of and engaged in the strategic planning process, and that the felt ownership of the new Strategic Plan.

By engaging the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the AQIP Coordinating Committees in development of the processes, both of which have broad-based representation from all employee groups and the three main areas of the College, we hoped to create a processes that could become both systemic (utilized across the College) and systematic (repeatable as we now have many people across the College who know and understand these processes). Additionally, the processes have been highlighted and explained at the College's highest attended events: Campus Conversation and Kick-Off. For those who could not attend, a video link was distributed. Furthermore, we have involved all of campus putting those processes into action as we reviewed the College's Vision and Mission statements through a highly-attended Campus Conversation and through campus voting on Vision and Mission statements.

Q: 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?

A: Previously, strategic planning was the job of one administrator on campus. The process was not well understood. Engaging broad-based committees in both the development and implementation of the process has had a very positive impact on our campus. We had our highest attended Campus Conversation in years as people appreciated the opportunity to participate in developing the College's Vision for the future. They trusted a process that was developed by a group of representative employees.

Simplifying the process, putting it into plain language and then sharing that process through the voices of the employees who created it was key. Participation in vision and mission crafting sessions has been high and voting on crafted statements has also been high. As we move into developing our Institutional Priorities and Strategic goals which will drive budget decisions, the process is not being perceived as a "top down" directive; it is now something that employees feel they are creating.

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

A: While placing the responsibility of strategic planning in the hands of a committee has brought engagement and buy-in, it is also a challenge to not have a specific person/position dedicated to strategic planning (position elimination due to budget reductions). This is challenging as the strategic planning work is conducted by Heartland faculty and staff on top of regular responsibilities.

Feedback has been positive to the inclusion of Heartland faculty and staff in the creation of the vision and mission statements, however, the planning process calls for divisions and departments to create their own operational plans in alignment with the College wide strategic plan. Creation and implementation of the plans may be delayed due to employee work-load.

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.

- A:**
1. Finalize reporting mechanism for current Strategic Map KPIs and provide a report to internal and external stakeholders. January 2016
 2. Complete tools and resources for implementation of new integrated strategic planning process, including a template for operational planning. January 2016.
 3. Continue implementation of the new integrated strategic planning process, which is not a part of this project's deliverables, but certainly in our plans. Specifically:
 - Vision Statement Review/Revision – Completed
 - Mission Statement Review/Revision – In progress; target completion mid-September 2016
 - Values Statement Review/Revision – In progress; target completion September 2016
 - SWOT analysis with internal and external stakeholders – In progress; target completion October 2016
 - Institutional Priorities Developed – Target completion February 2016
 - Strategic Goals and KPIs Developed – Target completion July 2017
 - Present College-wide Strategic Plan 2017-2022 to stakeholders – August 2017
 - Develop Academic Plan – Fall 2017
 - Develop Division/Department Operational Plans –Fall 2017/Spring 2018

Now that the integrated plan and strategic planning process are complete and the vision and mission have been reviewed and revised, the next steps are to implement the strategic planning process starting with the college wide plan.

Provide any additional information, inquiries, or concerns that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project. Enter N/A if not applicable.

A: N/A

Version 1.0- Update

Q: I certify that this project is ready for review.

A: I agree.

Version 1.0- Review

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

A: The Action Project "Refine Integrated Strategic Planning" is in-progress. The Project started in November 2015 with an anticipated completion date of July 2017. Due to the successful implementation of the goals of the Project, the College may experience a completion date of December 2016.

The College chartered this Action Project to improve its planning process and support the College's institutional priority of continuous improvement through development of systemic and systematic processes. Additionally, the Action Project will be the focus of the College at its November 16 Strategy Forum.

Q: 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?

A: The Update accurately reflects the four statements included in the Project Declaration. The statements identified in the Declaration used the actions of 'develop' and 'document.' Metrics were not identified in the Declaration that might assist the College in determining its level of performance or success. However, the response in the Update

provided a level of detail that is informative on performance. It may assist the College if targeted or intended outcomes were expressed as measurements along with the deliverables they support.

As a matter of information, #3 "Documented revision of process for developing, communicating, and reviewing the College's mission, vision, and values" mentions an attachment, which was not available for the Review and therefore, not read.

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.").

A: The College is making excellent progress in accomplishing the goal deliverables for this Action Project. It appears that the College has remained focused on achieving the originally declared goals. Five key accomplishments were noted in the Update which, along with the update on each of the goal deliverables in the prior question, indicate results achieved that could have impact on the College. Indicating the impact that was experienced and what changed as a result of the impact might be something worth including in the next Update for this Action Project.

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

• **Is there sufficient breadth of involvement?**

Q: • **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: The Update states that all employees of the College have been invited to be involved with the work of the Action Project to ensure that there is broad-based engagement. Specifically identified as the leading groups are the Institutional Effectiveness Council and the AQIP Coordinating Committees, identified as having broad-based representation from all employee groups and the three main areas of the College. While this level of involvement appears to be good, it would benefit the Review to have those on the Action Project team or those responsible for key deliverables identified by title or department and specific role so that it could be determined if there is sufficient and appropriate breadth of involvement, if there is leadership support, and perhaps opportunities for collaboration.

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

- Q:**
- **Acknowledge any practice that could be replicated internally in future projects.**
 - **Encourage the sharing of best practices with other institutions.**

A: The College identifies an effective process that resulted from the approach and delivery of the goals of the Action Project, and returned the highest attended Campus Conversation experienced in years. Additionally, the College noted that participation in vision and mission crafting sessions and voting on crafted statements was high. These effective practices are reflective of the Principles of Highly Effective Organizations Focus on stakeholders, Respecting People, Promoting Collaboration, and an Agility and Responsiveness to change. The College is commended on its success and is encouraged to apply the same/similar approach to other strategic initiatives as well as sharing the success with other institutions.

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?

A: The College demonstrates a thoughtful reflection on the challenges that may need to be addressed for the successful completion of the Action Project. 1) Strategic Planning is the responsibility of faculty and staff, and not assigned to one position; 2) Creation and implementation of divisional and departmental operational plans may be delayed due to employee work-load.

Often the first step to overcoming challenges is to acknowledge them so that counteraction can be taken. The institution is encouraged to work through the challenges so that it can move forward with this Action Project. The Action Project Directory may provide insight to these challenges through the experiences of other AQIP Institutions. Additionally, the Staff Liaison is available should the institution need to consult with HLC.

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

A: The College views the Action Project as in-progress and has identified three primary deliverables along with several specific action items to be accomplished and has moved into the implementation phase of the Action Project. The Review has one concern for Item 3 "Continue implementation of the new integrated strategic planning process," which is not a part of this project's deliverables. The College is cautioned that this does not overtake the goals of this Action Project. To add support to the implementation of the strategic planning process, the goals of the current Action Project could be amended to include this, or an Action Project dedicated to the implementation could be chartered.

Q: 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?

A: Heartland Community College demonstrates commitment to continuous quality improvement as evidenced by its approach and deployment of the goals and deliverables of the Action Project.

All concerns have been expressed above and serve to encourage the College in its progress towards a successful completion of the Action Project.

Declaration

Q: Briefly describe the project in less than 100 words. Be sure to identify the key organizational areas (departments, programs, divisions, units, etc.) and key organizational processes that this action project will affect, change, and/or improve.

A: This project seeks to revise, simplify, and develop key performance measures for the College's current Strategic Plan, which runs through 2017. This project also seeks to prepare the College to enter into our next strategic planning cycle by documenting a new, more simplified process for developing, communicating, and reviewing the College's mission, vision, and values and for developing, communicating, implementing, and reviewing the College's Strategic Plan as well as operational plans throughout the organization.

Q: Describe your institution's reasons for initiating this action project now and how long it should take to complete it. Why are this project and its goals high among your institution's current priorities? Also, explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's recent or soon-to-be submitted Systems Portfolio.

A: This project is important because our current strategic planning process proved to be too complicated to fully implement. We never fully developed KPIs for our current strategic plan, and the planning process never filtered out to other operational areas of the College. This is a priority project of the College in order to have a fully functioning strategic plan that is providing a shared understanding of the College's priorities and specific goals, as well as specific measures to guide budgetary decisions.

Q: **List the project goals, milestones, and deliverables along with corresponding metrics, due dates, and other measures for assessing the progress toward each goal. Be sure to include when you anticipate submitting the project for formal reviews.**

A:

1. Development of simplified College Strategic Plan for 2016-17 - January 2016
2. Documented KPIs for current Strategic Plan - April 2016
3. Documented revision of process for developing, communicating, and reviewing the College's mission, vision, and values - April 2016
4. Documented revision of process for developing, communicating, implementing, and reviewing the College's strategic plan - April 2016

Q: **Describe how various members of the learning community will participate in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project's duration.**

A: This project will be led by the College's AQIP Coordinating Committee, which is a widely representative body on campus (every employee group and every area of the College is represented) focused on process improvements outlined in the AQIP Systems Portfolio. Sub-teams focused on the development of KPIs for the current strategic plan, and revision of the strategic planning process will include membership from the AQIP Coordinating Committee, the Institutional Effectiveness Council, and Cabinet.

Q: **Describe how the institution will monitor project progress/success during, and at the completion of this project. Be sure to specifically state the measures that will be evaluated and when.**

A: Completion of the documentation for presentation/communication at the College's next scheduled Campus Conversation on April 15 will drive this project. Since this project is focused on development of the processes, and not the implementation of the processes, the time-frame is fairly short. All deliverables should be completed by April 2016.

Assessing how effective those processes are will be another project as we work through the strategic planning process and develop plans at the Division and Department levels.

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

A: Challenges anticipated include sustaining leadership for the project during a time when everyone's plates are very full and no one position at the College is dedicated to strategic planning.

Q: Provide any additional information that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project.

A: N/A