
Action Project

Title: Faculty Orientation Program that Supports Good Teaching
Version: 2

Institution: Midstate College **Status:** Active
Submitted: 2010-03-15 **Category:** 1-Helping Students Learn

Timeline

Planned project kickoff date: 2008-09-01
Target completion date: 2010-10-09
Actual completion date:

Project Detail

Project Goal

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

The goal of the project is to define good teaching as part of the faculty orientation process in six phases to establish processes for reviewing and revising the following: philosophy of teaching, job descriptions for instructors and program directors, performance evaluation criteria, policies and procedures, and teaching methods.

Reasons For 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

There are multiple reasons for taking on this Action Project now: 1. When faculty are hired, there is a lack of consistency among the departments in the orientation of new instructors. 2. Upon applying to be included in the AQIP process, our faculty and staff completed the Examiner in 2004. One of the two most outstanding needs identified by the faculty and staff in Category One was to "define good teaching." 3. The Feedback Report to the Systems Portfolio, identified opportunities for improvement that were related to this Action Project: define good teaching and to address the learning styles of students.

Organizational Areas Affected

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

1. Academic Departments 2. Instructors/ Program Directors/Dean 3. HR 4. IT/ computing services 5. Assessment 6. Students 7. Student Records

Key Organizational Process(es)

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

The orientation of new faculty is the process this Action Project is expected to change and improve. The key organizational processes would include hiring, personnel evaluation, course preparation, and assessment.

Project Time Frame Rationale

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

Two years should be sufficient to complete this project. The elements of the process are already in effect. The challenge is to provide an electronic mechanism that can be updated as changes occur and to provide consistent information for current, as well as newly hired instructors.

Project Success Monitoring

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

Target dates for each of the phases of the project, along with regular committee meetings. • Reviewing the philosophy of teaching at Midstate College and aligning our goals with the mission and core values of the institution • Revising the job descriptions for instructors and program directors • Revising performance evaluation tools to measure the desired outcomes of “good teaching” • Revising the faculty policies and procedures section of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook • Establishing a process to provide opportunities to discuss effective methods for teaching adults and to understand various learning styles • Developing a multi-media format to provide information and avenues for discussion and feedback of teaching methods and issues E-mail reminders as target dates approach will help participants stay on track.

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

• Feedback/reflections from faculty going through the process • Outcome indicators from course and instructor evaluations

Annual Update

Project Accomplishments and Status

Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project

During the past year the committee has developed, reviewed, and/or revised the following: * Developed a philosophy of teaching and learning that aligns with the College's mission and core values. * Reviewed and revised job descriptions for instructors and program directors involving the faculty and administration. * Reviewed performance evaluation criteria and set up a time-oriented process for completion following administrative direction. * Reviewed and revised the policies and procedures pertaining to faculty for the Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook. Additional accomplishments of the project include the following: * Purchased a guide to teaching for distribution to new faculty. * Set up a course module in ANGEL, Learning Management System, and initiated plans for development of an online orientation/methods course utilizing the guide to teaching as a resource text.

Institution Involvement

Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project

A committee was appointed to plan the scope of the action project, and individual teams were assigned to gather information for the initial plan. The members of the committee included a business administration instructor, the Director of the Allied Health Department, a general education instructor, the Director of eLearning, an admissions representative, and

the Chief Academic Dean with the Director of Assessment, the Business Manager, President and Chief Operating Officer as standing guest members. We contacted Heartland Community College (AQIP member) to review our action project plan and to offer suggestions for improvement prior to submitting the plan. The faculty and program directors have been involved in reviewing and revising the philosophy, reviewing and revising job descriptions, and developing performance evaluation criteria. The HR Director, the IT Department, the Director of eLearning, and the Director of Assessment, as well as the faculty and administration, have all been supportive and involved in the development of the project.

Next Steps

Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project

The committee plans to continue this project through the next year to focus on the following:

- * Continue development of the online course content that will allow interactive participation in orienting new faculty to Midstate College as well as providing opportunities for all faculty to discuss effective teaching methods.
- * Focus on discussing effective teaching methods and adult learning styles with current as well as new faculty.
- * Work with the HR Department to update the College's Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook to include the revised faculty section.
- * Develop and implement an assessment plan utilizing the Nichols Model to identify successes and opportunities for improvement of the process.
- * Engage in an annual, systematic review of the documents and course content that define good teaching and support faculty orientation based on the results of assessment and availability of current materials.

Resulting Effective Practices

Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project

The Allied Health Program is accredited by a program-specific accrediting organization that requires training in teaching techniques. The College provided tuition reimbursement for the Director of the Allied Health program to enroll in a teaching certificate program that focused on medical assisting education. As a member of this Action Project's Committee, the director implemented a pilot program to involve the Allied Health Department's faculty in several sessions of teaching methods and techniques. In addition to the methods training, the faculty read *Bridges out of Poverty* and participated in two sessions to discuss the content of the book and to extract meaningful practices to enhance the education of first-generation college students. Two of the practices resulting from the discussions involve the "word of the day" along with the definition written on the white boards of the department each day and the use of planners required in one of the department's core courses to help the students plan for the future and manage the day/week/month's activities. Understanding our students and the environments from which they come helps faculty communicate effectively to help the students grow in their social, vocational, and academic pursuits. In addition, the Director of Allied Health implemented five new and effective practices in the orientation of Allied Health Faculty that are outlined in the Department's Policies and Procedures Handbook.

Project Challenges

What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project

There are some challenges: first, the College continues to align the eLearning and on campus processes; second, as with any change, a fair amount of resistance is anticipated from our experienced faculty when they are asked to participate in methods training; third, the lack of time is a familiar battle cry.