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## **Institutional Measures of Effectiveness**

AQIP Action Project #1379

Central Arizona College

2009 Annual Update

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### **A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.**

After establishing a preliminary draft of institutional measures, the Quality Council revisited this Action Project's charter and the previous year's work. The Council determined a need to define terms, such as "institutional effectiveness." Common definitions ensured clarity to Council members and the institution (as a whole) of what was understood by these common terms and the draft of measures, such as "Student Success."

From November 2008 through February 2009, Council members focused on researching and benchmarking with perceived peer institutions and other organizations such as the League for Innovation and the Community College. Members began by developing a list of simply stated, broad and global categories for CAC's institutional measures of effectiveness, using CAC's Strategic Goals as a guide. Members also compiled, evaluated, and determined CAC's existing measurement tools, resources, and data or if these needed to be collected to support the identified institutional measures. Also during this time the Council completed a comparison study between CAC's existing measurements and the draft to identify gaps, duplication and excluded needs.

The Office of Institutional Research & Planning (IRP) also began benchmarking with other institutions about their measures and existing systems, particularly trying to identify other institution's processes and guidelines for selecting measurement tools, such as the National Community College Benchmark Project. In an attempt to gather further information, CAC's Executive Director of IRP and the Director of Accreditation and Quality Initiatives hosted a round table session at the HLC's 2009 Annual Meeting regarding assessment measurements and institutional "tool boxes". In May 2009, the Council conducted an inventory of the drafted institutional measures to include definitions, existing instruments, location of instrument within the institution, existing standards, and when the data was last reported. The Council continued refining the measures and its standards. In July 2009, CAC sent a team to benchmark with San Juan College, a peer institution, to share best practices, process, and strategies for avoiding pitfalls. The executive summary of the San Juan visit will be shared at the next Quality Council meeting. In August 2009, the Quality Council met for a half-day retreat to complete the final draft of CAC's Institutional Measures of Effectiveness. The final draft was shared with the Executive Council and the Quality Council is awaiting their comments and suggestions.

#### ***Review (09-28-09):***

*The action project Institutional Measures of Effectiveness has been instrumental in building measures and creating benchmarks for AQIP Category 8 Measuring Effectiveness as well as other categories in the College's portfolio. Exceptional progress has been made in the past year toward accomplishing the goals of the project. This ambitious project has provided a critical*

*document that will set the College apart from others as a high performing quality institution that is focused and forward looking. The College judiciously located benchmarks through its review of external sources including the League for Innovation and the Community College as well as the team sent to San Juan College. Also, the College wisely aligned key measurements to the strategic plan. Important steps taken by the College were the defining of common terms, the appraisal of existing data, and determining what gaps existed in measures collected. Sharing the process for establishing effective measures at the HLC Conference in the form of tool boxes was of benefit to other institutions and could be further explored for publication.*

### **B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.**

This Action Project is lead and managed by the Central Arizona College (CAC) Quality Council and is chaired by the Director of Accreditation and Quality Initiatives (who is also the AQIP Liaison). The Director/AQIP Liaison position was reassigned to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Advancement. The Quality Council is one of CAC's standing committees and its members are appointed by the President from a variety of areas and levels to provide district representation, as well as representation from each employee constituency group (faculty, support, managerial/technical, and administration), and to enhance ownership of the process. The role of the Quality Council member is to represent the interests of their area/department, campus/site, and their constituent groups. In addition, members are expected to communicate the committee's work and bring forth questions, suggestions, and comments (to the committee) from their respective areas. Progress was reported and is readily available online via the district's shared drive, committee meeting minutes, division reports, and presentations during CAC's fall and spring district in-services, and constituency group's professional development days.

#### **Review (09-28-09):**

*The College describes the collaboration between the IRP Office and the Director of Accreditation and Quality Initiatives along with the composition of the Quality Council as being critical to the advancement of the project. The wide cross section of involvement on the Council will facilitate communication about the final document and process. The use of the website for posting information and demonstrating progress in conjunction with in-services and other presentations is an effective practice in engaging the campus in the action project.*

### **C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.**

The final draft was shared with the Executive Council and the Quality Council is awaiting their comments and suggestions. Upon Executive Council approval, the Institutional Measures of Effectiveness will be placed on a future CAC Governing Board agenda for formal adoption. While awaiting Governing Board adoption, the Quality Council will develop a plan for communicating the measures to the entire institution and external stakeholders. Part of this plan will include ways to transition from measuring effectiveness to refocusing on helping students learn, which will assist in staff ownership and "buy in". An anticipated target completion date for this action project is May 2010.

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning is in the final stages of completing a CAC Fact Book, which is a collection of external and internal summarized data that describes regional/institutional demographics and outcomes, as well as regional measures. CAC's Fact Book was

referenced throughout the Quality Council's process of developing CAC's Institutional Measures of Effectiveness and will be the official source for reporting and institutional measurement.

**Review (09-28-09):**

*Next steps for final months of the project include feedback on the draft document of institutional effectiveness and the completion of the CAC Fact Book. Plans are being formulated to implement the measures and relate them specifically to Category 1 Helping Students Learn for buy-in as a key to success for the project. A carefully thought out communication plan is needed that might showcase examples of how the measures could be used for Category 1. It will also be important to plan time for a celebration and recognition of those who worked on the project.*

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

The Quality Council identified and documented the process steps for establishing measures of institutional effectiveness, which will serve as a model for future revisions. In addition, the Quality Council used multiple modes of communication to ensure all stakeholders received clear, consistent information regarding the Action Project's current status. The Council also benefited from researching peer institutions and benchmarking with San Juan College.

**Review (09-28-09):**

*The College is to be commended for its documentation of the process for measuring institutional effectiveness. Another effective practice identified by the College was the benchmarking process that identified best practices as well as benchmarking data.*

**E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?**

CAC made strides in identifying and documenting the specific steps of this process and will ease the transition of district restructuring, including the future retirement of the Vice President of Academic Programs and Services and the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Advancement. The AQIP Liaison continues in her second year in this position, but has identified the need for mentoring others in this key role. These proactive measures will ensure this process is embedded and becomes part of the institution's systems of processes.

**Review (09-28-09):**

*Although the College describes the challenge of turnover in key leadership positions, it has been pro-active in documenting processes and creating institutional resources such as the CAC Fact Book. The College has made an excellent move to create a lasting set of resources for the institution.*

**F. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?**

None at this time