Project Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Improving Curriculum and Assessment Through Online Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>1-Helping Students Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Planned Project Kickoff 06-01-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual Completion 10-12-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated</td>
<td>09-14-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td>10-02-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created</td>
<td>11-24-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1: Project Goal

A: This project is the first phase of a multi-year effort. Phase one will involve the purchase of a database system designed to track and store curriculum and assessment data and other important academic information. It will provide a single repository for all curricular change and development, course and program information, and evidence of student learning through assessment. This will allow the college to review all assessment and curricular data as well as draw key information from this system to update academic websites, documents and develop the college's annual catalog. Training of faculty, and key staff in the use and maintenance of this system will be a significant focus of this project. This online database will provide a platform for greater participation in the curriculum development and assessment process as all faculty, chairpersons, deans, provost, president and others will have access and be able to continually monitor stored data. Implementation will allow for a complete review of the college's curriculum and assessment data during year two.

2: Reasons For Project

A: The college is deeply committed to the academic principles contained within quality assessment and curriculum development. The addition of this system coupled with a strong comprehensive training program for faculty and staff will provide a much needed and desired central repository for curriculum and assessment data and the opportunity for greater involvement in these two key processes.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: Instructional Services Division, academic departments, academic advising areas, Provost and President.

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: There will be four: YEAR 1: Storage and retrieval of academic data: provides a single repository for data acquisition; will provide the continuous improvement opportunities for academic course and program development; providing key data for accreditation purposes. YEAR 2 & 3: Curriculum Development Process: allows for greater participation and institutional focus on the development and maintenance of curriculum. Assessment for Student Learning Process: allows for greater participation and institutional focus on the assessment process. College Catalog Development Process: all academic data will be stored and updated in the system in the same format as needed for the college catalog. This will drastically improve this process.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: This project will be done in annual stages. Year 1 will involve the data entry of all curricular and assessment data.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: We will develop a timeline with benchmarks for data entry. There will be four checkpoints (every third month) to ensure that the project is progressing appropriately.
## Project Outcome Measures

**A:** Outcomes: All assessment and curriculum data will be entered into the new system by June 30th 2010.

## Project Update

### 1: Project Accomplishments and Status

**A:** The college purchased a curriculum management tool as part of a project designed to provide an online means to submit curricular proposals, grant approvals, and incorporate approved courses into the master course curriculum file. In addition, the college installed the tool, performed a workflow test, did internal testing along with a workflow review with the Data and IT Support Centers, and finalized an implementation plan. We have also contracted with an outside vendor to make needed updates to the forms and curriculum approval workflow within the tool. Those updates are now being tested. This was the first year of a three year project to improve the curriculum and assessment processes at the college.

### 2: Institution Involvement

**A:** The majority of the work was done by the following sponsor and committee members: Tom Erney (Sponsor), Jennifer Anderson, Candace Spangler, Ellen Brooks, Tara Narcross, Christopher Emswiler and Chris Lockhart. In addition, the college also received help from Data Center and IT Support Center staff.

### 3: Next Steps

**A:** Complete the implementation plan. Provide end user training on the tool. Develop web based reports and publications.

### 4: Resulting Effective Practices

**A:** This project has encouraged us to strengthen our use of project management principles. We have had to manage resource availability across multiple projects this year. We have increased our use of work estimates and prioritization among IT projects and resources to make progress on this project.

### 5: Project Challenges

**A:** The main challenge is managing the project in light of resource availability and other large goals/projects the college has. We have a waiting list for IT projects some of which cannot be implemented until additional resources are available. Additionally, the college is switching to semesters in Autumn 2012 as part of a state-wide mandate. This has meant that many people who work closely in curriculum are involved in the semester planning and have less availability than usual.

## Update Review

### 1: Project Accomplishments and Status

**A:** The institution is making reasonable progress toward completion of the project and development of an institution-wide continuous quality improvement culture in this Action Project which addresses issues principally from Category One: Helping Students Learn and Category Seven: Measuring Effectiveness. In the past year, the College's efforts have centered primarily on the electronic facilitation of submitting and tracking curriculum proposals. Columbus State Community College (CSCC) first installed a tool, performed a workflow test, did internal testing along with a workflow review with the Data and IT Support Centers, and then finalized an implementation plan. The team has also had the foresight to contract with an outside vendor to make needed updates to the forms and curriculum approval workflow within the tool as implementation progresses. The team has built testing into the implementation process so as to monitor the efficacy of the tool's operation. As the Project moves forward, hopefully the team will advance the electronic facilitation of assessment with as systematic a process as they have this first phase of the endeavor.
2: Institution Involvement

A: The update gives the name of seven individuals who have done the “majority of the work” on the Action Project up to this reporting. This small group has made good progress in advancing this first phase. However, the update does not identify whether these individuals are employees of the College nor does it give any indication of what positions they hold at CSCC. Given the fact that a team of seven has done the work, there must have been some degree of collaboration in advancing the Project. Presumably, these individuals have been chosen for some level of expertise which each could bring to the work. It would be helpful to know what their positions are at the College as a way of demonstrating how the College’s leadership has exhibited its recognition and valuing of its people through the formation of an action project work team such as this one. The update notes that the team also received pertinent expert assistance from the Data Center and the IT Support Center staff.

3: Next Steps

A: The update gives the planned next steps in broad categories. Presumably, the project leadership team has created some sort of action plans which articulate much more specifically at least the necessary action steps to be achieved to accomplish each of these goals, the individual(s) responsible for those action steps and a time line for their accomplishment. If such planning has not been done, its creation could greatly enhance the college’s ability to achieve the goals of the Action Project.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: A perhaps unexpected benefit to the institution has been an increased use and mastery of project management skills. This learning should enhance the College’s ability to advance other action projects and improvement initiatives with greater effectiveness. It is good to see an Action Project intended to address a fairly specific set of institutional needs become a broader benefit to the institution’s larger quality improvement efforts.

5: Project Challenges

A: The major challenge facing this Action Project is the apparently competitive situation in which various IT projects must vie for limited resources. Hopefully, the needs of this Project will be seen as a priority in CSCC’s overall IT plan. The other challenge noted involves a state mandated move to a semester system. Undoubtedly, this is time consuming and a distraction from the work on the Project. However, since the Project is intended to bring easier facilitation to curriculum processes, perhaps the achievement of the Project’s goals could be seen as an aid rather than a hindrance in making necessary curriculum modifications necessitated by the state mandated change.

Project Outcome

1: Reason for completion

A: Improving Curriculum and Assessment Through Online Tools has accomplished the primary goals of Phase One as outlined in the Action Project description. Phase One involved the purchase of a database system designed to track and store curriculum and assessment data and other important academic information. The online database will provide a platform for greater participation in the curriculum development and assessment process as all faculty, chairpersons, deans, provosts, president and other will have access and be able to monitor stored data. The overall program design, implementation, assessment plans and feedback solutions were completed this past year.

After a lengthy comparative analysis of vendors and software solutions, an RFP was devised and released. “The Curriculum Assessment Tool” software was purchased from Sinclair Community College and installed. The data entry process is underway on campus.

2: Success Factors

A: This Action Project was successful in many ways. First, the project team members arrived at a unanimous solution with wide input from many campus constituencies. Secondly, the new tool greatly improves curriculum development methodology and therefore the effectiveness of our entire academic program. The software solution opens the door to results driven data to all relevant
administrators and staff.

3: Unsuccessful Factors

A: Two things. First there was the challenge of adapting new software to our school’s enterprise database system. IT proved extremely helpful in walking the team through myriad network compatibility issues. Two, due to our Switch to Semesters effort, a statewide realignment program, the roll out of the new Assessment Tool continues with the data capture phase, but may face some minor delays going forward.