

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Columbus State Community College

Project Details			
Title	Institutional Reporting – Phase 2	Status	COMPLETED
Category	7-Measuring Effectiveness	Updated	09-30-2014
Timeline		Reviewed	10-13-2014
	Planned Project Kickoff 11-01-2013	Created	10-02-2013
	Actual Completion 11-25-2014	Version	1

1: Project Goal

A:

The purpose of this project is to capture the requirements and map out a new process for making institutional data available to campus stakeholders in a self-service model, and to deliver the initial round of reports to campus users. As Columbus State shifts further toward making college-wide decisions based on data, this project will take the next step in providing relevant, timely, and easily obtainable data to stakeholders at the college.

Upon successful completion of the project, college faculty and staff will be able to pull specific institutional reports from a common location in order to inform their decision making. They will also have a central place and method for requesting new or ad hoc report development. Some reports will be pre-configured to focus on specific, agreed-upon metrics, and some will be modifiable by users to fit their specific needs and questions. A variety of tools and data sources may be used. Training and support will be available to help users become familiar with reports and data tools.

2: Reasons For Project

A:

The college has been engaged in a multi-year process to improve and expand measuring effectiveness and the use of data for decision making. College stakeholders currently utilize a variety of reports to make decisions about course scheduling, enrollment management, and student success programs. Columbus State also became an Achieving the Dream member in 2012, which further expanded the use of and need for data.

Currently most reports are developed by a small team in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and college users do not have easy access to self-service reports. This is detrimental to speed and responsiveness of reporting, so Institutional Effectiveness and Information Technology staff members have been engaged in a set of projects to develop better infrastructure around reporting. A first step was the purchase and testing of a data warehousing system. Initial testing of that system is now winding down and the next phase will be to make data available to users in a variety of formats.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A:

- Institutional Effectiveness
- Information Technology
- President's Office
- Academic Affairs
- Student Affairs

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: Enrollment management, strategic planning, management and evaluation of student success programs.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: This project is intended to develop critical reports in key areas. The project team will use agile business intelligence methodologies which are designed to produce sets of reports at 60-90 day intervals. The goal is to get reports and tools in front of users in manageable and understandable categories so that users can have the benefits of new reporting tools while providing feedback that informs future iterations.

Detailed planning is currently underway, so the dates listed below are tentative.

November 2013 – Initial Sharepoint site structure developed and current static reports moved; development of new reports prioritized

December 2013 – Report template and documentation developed, training plan developed

January 2014 – Training begins

February 2014 – Basic enrollment reports available

March 2014 – Basic student success reports available

April 2014 – Power user template requirements complete, development begins

Summer 2014 – Training on power user templates begins, templates available to initial pilot group

Autumn 2014 – Rollout complete, project closeout and shift to ongoing improvement and maintenance.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: Columbus State will be using project management methodologies to monitor progress on this project. A planning process is underway to develop detailed tasks and milestones. A communication plan will be developed as part of project planning and will build on techniques used and lessons learned in other projects. Common methods of communication have included use of college email systems, the *Update* newsletter, presentations at college events as well as departmental and division meetings and meetings of college committees.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: Users will have easy access to commonly used data. Users will have a set of reports on key management metrics – examples include enrollment, class schedules, success rates in courses and success metrics for groups of students. Role-based access will ensure that data is secure while college faculty and staff have information they need to make decisions.

By Autumn 2014, 70% of our most heavily requested reports are planned to be available online and 95% of ad hoc requests will be managed through the ticketing process. If this project is successful, information requests made to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness should drop by approximately one-third (from current level of 500 requests per year with 2013 as a baseline).

Information Technology and Institutional Effectiveness staff will be able to monitor levels of use, which will also serve as a metric to gauge uptake and acceptance of the new system.

Project Update

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: This phase of the project will wrap up later this fall. The project team is currently working out a few remaining technical issues and preparing to invite beta testers into the reporting site.

2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A:

- A:**
- Capture the requirements and map out a new process for making institutional data available to campus stakeholders in a self-service model
 - Deliver the initial round of reports to campus users.
 - Allow college faculty and staff to pull specific institutional reports from a common location in order to inform their decision making.
 - Provide training and support to help users become familiar with reports and data tools.

Metrics:

- By Autumn 2014, 70% of our most heavily requested reports are planned to be available online and 95% of ad hoc requests will be managed through the ticketing process.
- Information requests made to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness should drop by approximately one-third (from current level of 500 requests per year with 2013 as a baseline).
- Information Technology and Institutional Effectiveness staff will be able to monitor levels of use, which will also serve as a metric to gauge uptake and acceptance of the new system.

3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: During the past year, the project team has developed a reporting site using Sharepoint, the college's new tool for a variety of document sharing and collaborative purposes. The team learned to use a variety of Microsoft-based reporting tools including PowerPivot and SQL Server Reporting Services. Reports have been developed to track enrollment, to provide data to advisors and academic departments, and to examine student success measures. Additionally, content from the college's current Institutional Reporting Site on the Intranet has been migrated to the new site. Finally, testing has been completed on the data warehouse and initial reports have been developed from the new data warehouse. We have also created a ticketing process and workflow for requesting data.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: During the past year we have involved student success teams on campus in review of reports under development. Our Student Success Council reviewed and discussed the draft college scorecard developed this year. Our course scheduling committee discussed and reviewed a variety of reports intended to support scheduling, and provided feedback on data elements used and report presentation. Cabinet reviewed enrollment reports and metrics. We will be inviting beta testers into the reporting site in the coming weeks and will be involving our student success committees in review and testing of the site.

5: BEST PRACTICES

A: This was one of several projects to shed light on issues related to data governance and maintenance of data in our Colleague system. These issues have informed discussion with the college's Enterprise Systems Steering Committee and a system for data governance will be developed.

Another helpful step we took was to develop new reports based on an analysis of information requests to our office. We've tracked all requests for approximately the last eighteen months, and this allowed us to prioritize development efforts.

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: We anticipate continued challenges in managing the workload of the office while completing roll-out of the project. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has responsibility for state and federal reporting as well as ad hoc reports and analysis and operational reporting to support the business of the college. There have been times when this project has progressed slowly due to other demands on the office.

We also anticipate that there could be challenges for people learning to use new reports. We are developing a training plan and support materials to minimize any difficulties.

We also anticipate ongoing efforts around data governance and understanding and using data fields within our Colleague system.

7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

A: October-November 2014 – Beta testing with a small group of interested users. Incorporate feedback into release to campus.

December 2014-February 2015 – Campus roll-out and training

March 2015 – Shift to operational maintenance and ongoing improvement.

8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: No additional information at this time.

Update Review

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: This important action project has strong connections with AQIP category 7 - Measuring Effectiveness.

Columbus State Community College is commended for initiating this project. Based on the information given; it appears that the project is near completion. However, it is unclear to the reviewer when the project will be complete. Since the targeted completion date is November 1, 2014, it would be helpful to the reviewer to state if the project is anticipated to be completed by that date. In addition, it is unclear what the remaining technical issues are before beta testing begins.

2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: It is clear that Columbus State Community College has a very specific goal for the action project and deliverables. With the ease of obtaining reports, Columbus State Community College stands to benefit with data driven decision making.

It is unclear to the reviewer what the criteria for most heavily requested reports were. Some examples of these reports (i.e. financial, enrollment, etc.) would be helpful.

3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: Columbus State Community College is commended for the work done on this action project. There are many verifiable accomplishments, which points to an institution which was committed to the goal. As the data is collected, Columbus State Community College can implement practices to close the loop and make data-driven decisions.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: Columbus State Community College has shown strong institutional involvement, with support at many levels; including staff, faculty, students, and administration. It is clear with the progress of the action project that the implementation of the new data reporting system has gone well.

5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A: It is clear that Columbus State Community College has begun the process of closing the loop, using the analysis of information requests to develop reports. More clarity is needed however, to determine what efforts have been developed.

Additionally, it is not clear what the issues of data governance are. Sharing this information could help the reviewer give additional insight to the effective practices cited by Columbus State Community College. Additionally, Columbus State College could consider comparing effective data governance and maintenance at similar institutions as benchmarks.

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: Columbus State Community College demonstrates a clear knowledge of the personnel challenges involved with the initiation of a project. The institution realizes that in addition to the personnel challenges, there will be a learning curve for the implementation of the system.

It is unclear to the reviewer what the specifics of the training plan for using new reports, along with how to use and understand the data fields. The institution should consider examining the literature and similar institutions for how the training plans were managed; then offer specific topics for training.

7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIME LINE

A: It is clear that other than a small ambiguity concerning the end of the project as noted above, that the timeline for the next steps is reasonable. Columbus State Community College is making excellent progress in the completion of this action project. The institution is commended for this project and the commitment to improve the institution.

8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: Columbus State Community College is commended for the hard work and institutional commitment to the action project.

Project Outcome

1: REASON FOR COMPLETION

A: The goals of this project phase have been met. Initial reports have been developed and beta users are in the site testing and using the reports and providing feedback. Broader roll-out is planned for winter 2015.

2: SUCCESS FACTORS

A:

- Initial goals have been met.
- The reporting site is running well and the team has learned a variety of new reporting tools and techniques. Through development of this site, the team has created a set of best practices for reporting going forward and continues to develop documentation that will help with future reporting projects.
- Project team members have begun to communicate with campus users about the tools and have received valuable feedback on user understanding of and comfort with reporting tools. This feedback is being used to develop future reports and to inform training for the broader campus community.

3: UNSUCCESSFUL FACTORS

A: There have been times when this project has progressed slowly due to other demands on the office. This phase wrapped up approximately a month behind our scheduled end.

Additionally, the Sharepoint business intelligence suite was a new toolset for the college, so the project team engaged in a good deal of learning by doing. Initial efforts in some areas did not meet all requirements so the team had to change directions on some reporting techniques. We anticipate that we will continue to revise reports and reporting techniques as we become more familiar with the pros and cons of various Sharepoint reporting tools.