Institution: Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC)
Planned project kickoff date: Ongoing (August, 2009)
Target project completion date May, 2010
Actual project completion date

_____

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer.
College-wide assessment of MCTC's general education core competency in social responsibility

B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer.
To improve student mastery of student learning outcomes in social responsibility by responding to data collected both from tasks embedded into courses and from indirect indicators (such as student attitudes and beliefs) as measured by national instruments such as the CCSSE and ACT.

C. Identify the single AQIP Category that this Action Project will most affect or impact:
Category 1: Helping Students Learn

D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now:
Helping students learn is the primary goal of the College. MCTC has indentified four general education competencies, and improving student mastery of each is vital to ensuring that the College is fulfilling its mission to educate students. To improve learning requires that the College put into place mechanisms for collecting and responding to data on mastery. This project allows for such data collection and closing of the assessment loop around one of the four competencies: social responsibility, which is the focus of the next three years. (Communication and Critical Thinking have each already had a three-year focus.)

E. List the organizational areas — institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units — most affected by or involved in this Action Project.
Assessment Coordinator
Office for Planning, Strategy and Accountability
Academic Affairs
Academic Council
Faculty Coordinators
Social Responsibility Caucus
Social Responsibility Embedding Group
Faculty Development

F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve.
Curriculum Procedures
Assessment Procedures
Program Review
Faculty Development Procedures

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

The College is on a twelve-year cycle with its assessment processes, spending three years on each of the four general education competencies. The academic year of 2009-10 (the first of the College's three years on Social Responsibility (SR)) will constitute this Action Project because each year of the three-year focus has specific targets set for the number of activities to take place, as well as for the results of those activities (the metrics). For 2009-10 the goals are as follows: (1) conduct Opening Days activities on engagement, (2) distribute a survey on SR activities and perceptions to faculty and staff, (3) embed SR assessments into 10 courses, (4) identify a nationally-normed instrument to assess students' SR skills, (5) conduct Faculty Development sessions on SR, (6) via Academic Council forms identify courses with an SR component and collect assessment data from instructors teaching those courses, (7) revise the existing SR competency language, (8) increase MCTC's impact regionally and nationally.

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

This Action Project replicates the successful model implemented for assessing Communication and Critical Thinking. The Assessment Coordinator will monitor efforts and will ensure that all involved stakeholders (mostly faculty and academic affairs) will remain focused on goals. Clear structures and timelines exist to permit such monitoring and focus: established committees, regularly scheduled meetings, appropriate forms and processes, proven methods for connecting efforts and promoting communication. Responsibility for completing each aspect of the project has been placed with the appropriate personnel.

I. 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.

As part of a larger plan, the success of this Action Project is linked to the overall success of the three-year focus on SR, which will be measured by an increase in student mastery of social responsibility learning outcomes. As this Project is, however, limited to the first year, the leading indicator for success of this particular Action Project will be the establishment of baseline data as collected from the first round of embedded assessments as well as the initial numbers produced by student responses on the selected national instrument(s). Subsequent years can provide comparative and trend data to allow for the measuring of final success or failure. Additional process measures to be produced this year will include the number of faculty development sessions held, the number of conference sessions delivered, the information collected on surveys and the successful reshaping of the competency language.

J. Other information

Members of the Social Responsibility Caucus plan to present at regional/national conferences: AAC&U's Conference on Personal and Social Responsibility, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' Realizing Student Potential Conference.

K. Project Leader and contact person (First Name, Middle Initial, Last name, Title, Email, Telephone).

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