

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Moraine Park Technical College

Project Details		
Title	College Council: Transformation of a Culture	Status REVIEWED
Category	5-Leading and Communicating	Updated 09-04-2014
Timeline		Reviewed 09-17-2014
	Planned Project Kickoff 08-18-2014	Created 06-11-2014
	Target Completion 08-14-2015	Version 1

1: PROJECT GOAL

A: Moraine Park reviewed strategic planning processes with a focus on a five-year plan. The process gathered input from internal and external stakeholders, reflecting effective and open communication. This project provides an opportunity to nurture underlying optimism that makes Moraine Park an employer of choice. While internal uncertainties were heightened by changes in leadership, additional variables included turnover rates and changes to benefits and job duties. External variables (Wisconsin's Act 10, union decertification, etc.) also influenced culture and morale. This project is designed to implement a College Council. The scope of the project includes reviewing existing systems framework and communication processes.

2: REASON FOR UNDERTAKING THIS PROJECT

A: This project emerged from PACE survey review, Systems Appraisal feedback, strategic planning discussions, and Quality Checkup Visit feedback. The purpose of this project is to confront and develop strategies to improve the culture, to strengthen communications, and to empower all employees. With morale being challenged because of changes in leadership and the effects of Act 10 in Wisconsin, this College Council and its communication plan is a high priority to ensure employees feel they have a voice in the direction and decision-making of the college.

3: ORGANIZATIONAL AREAS AFFECTED

A: This College Council is cross-functional and cross-representational. The makeup of the council's membership is to involve a cross-section of all employee groups and campuses: support staff, faculty, students, management, and administration. For 2014-2015, the membership of this council will be those employees who participated in the May 2014 Strategy Forum, and this Ad Hoc team will develop (with suggestions from the greater college community) the framework, recommendations and decision-making power for this College Council. The Council from 2015 forward will continue to have college-wide representation; the membership, however, will be determined by volunteer appointment rather than administrative or supervisory appointment. This council and its mission will affect all MPTC employees.

4: KEY ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES

A: The original Strategy Forum team recommending and supporting the College Council Action Project intend for the council membership to develop and identify positive change processes, unmitigated fear tactics, employee empowerment opportunities and improved communication strategies related to rebuilding and enhancing in a positive manner the present college culture. The expectation over a 3-5 year overall timeline (under additional Action Projects for 2015 and beyond) is for the college to have strengthened communication processes, allayed employee fears and anxieties, and a celebrated college culture to respect and support honest and open dialogue.

5: PROJECT TIMEFRAME RATIONALE

A: This Action Project has the timeline of one year, to include establishing council membership (by position, not personnel) by October 2014, a council purpose and mission written by December 2014, additional Action Project Charters created by March 2015, and implementation and new communication-strategy projects underway by August 2015. With this Action Project creating the College Council, the establishment of this College Council is targeted for completion for August 2015.

6: PROJECT SUCCESS MONITORING

A: The Ad Hoc committee will meet monthly through the 2014-2015 academic year to review goals, timelines, objectives, and other processes related to the implementation of such council. Monthly meetings, agendas, minutes and action steps will allow us to monitor the status of the project in August 2015. Meetings of the Ad Hoc committee are set for June and July, to develop a communication plan for the college community.

7: PROJECT OUTCOME MEASURES

A: The Ad Hoc committee will have established council membership (by position, not personnel) by October 2014, a council purpose and mission by December 2014, additional Action Project Charters created by March 2015, and implementation and new communication-strategy projects underway by August 2015. With this Action Project creating the College Council, the establishment of this College Council is targeted for completion for August 2015. This College Council Action Project will be deemed a success if in fact Moraine Park Technical College moves forward with a College Council in August 2015 that meets the objectives, goals and metrics as noted in this Action Project declaration.

Project Update

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: General Project Status: _____ In-progress
Original Project Start Date: ___6___ / ___27___ / ___14___
Originally Projected End Date: ___8___ / ___14___ / ___15___
Anticipated Completion Date If Not Completed: ___8___ / ___14___ / ___15___

Briefly describe the current status of the project.

The Strategy Forum team has continued to meet since creating this action project initiative at the Forum the sessions in St. Charles in May. This team met three additional times over the summer and has set the monthly meeting times through July 2015. In addition, we have identified goals for each of the fall 2014 meetings, hoping to have mission, purpose, goal, membership and nomination processes in place by December for this College Council, which will begin functioning in August 2015. The team also shared with the college community at the college's convocation in August 2014 the intent and goal of this new council.

Explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's most recent or soon-to-be submitted systems portfolio, if applicable:

The college is implementing Innovation 2020, the college's new mission/vision/strategic plan for 2016-2020. One of the Strategic Priorities is a "supportive culture and climate make us an employer of choice." The comments and feedback related to the Systems Portfolio and the Quality Checkup site review report suggest communication processes, both vertically and horizontally, were unclear and challenged. This project, responding to the former AQIP Category #5 Leading and Communicating. The development of this council will respond to a combination of the new categories three and four: Valuing Employees and Planning and Leading.

2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: Moraine Park reviewed strategic planning processes with a focus on a five-year plan. The process gathered input from internal and external stakeholders, reflecting effective and open communication. This project provides an opportunity to nurture underlying optimism that makes Moraine Park an employer of choice. While internal uncertainties were heightened by changes in leadership, additional variables included turnover rates and changes to benefits and job duties. External variables (Wisconsin's Act 10, union decertification, etc.) also influenced culture and morale. This project is designed to implement a College Council. The scope of the project includes reviewing existing systems framework and communication processes.

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3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: Team meetings have been placed on the committee's calendar's through July 2015. Agendas for the September, October, and November meetings are in place. The current membership announced the goals of this council at the convocation in August, and to date, four people have volunteered to be part of the process.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: The current committee is the coalition who went to the Strategy Forum in St. Charles in May with additional representatives from HR and the College Communications office:

- Melissa Berg, Communication Instructor
- Dr. Caron Daugherty, Dean of General Education and Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Dr. Jim Eden, Vice President, Academic Affairs
- Mike Gradinjan, Electricity Apprentice Instructor
- Bojan Ljubenko, Director, Institutional Effectiveness
- Beth Mendoza, Director, Human Resources
- Bradley Mitchell, Academic Advisor, SSS/TRIO/EDGE
- Dr. Sheila Ruhland, President
- Judy Urben, Public Relations and Advertising Manager
- Shannon Zupke, Administrative Assistant, General Education

This team plans to develop the College Council framework and representation concept map to reflect college-wide involvement, including students, faculty, staff, and administration from all three campuses.

5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A: To date, with this opportunity having been initially conceived and discussed after the college received the site visit review documents in November 2013, we have benefited by way of developing open communication practices and strategies at the cross-functional team and work team levels. We are also focusing more on student feedback, participation and involvement in the direction of the college. We hope to have a student representative on this council; this concept is a refreshing addition to committees compared to existing membership patterns.

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: This college council may require the college to review its existing "Framework for Teams" organizational model as well as the college's "systems" model. Additional challenges have emerged, which suggest the college community considers this effort simply another "flavor of the day" committee.

7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

A: Most of the responses may have addressed this question.

The Ad Hoc committee will have established council membership (by position, not personnel) by October 2014, a council purpose and mission by December 2014, additional Action Project Charters created by March 2015, and implementation and new communication strategy projects underway by August 2015. With this Action Project creating the College Council, the establishment of this College Council is targeted for completion for August 2015. This College Council Action Project will be deemed a success when Moraine Park Technical College moves forward with a College Council in August 2015 that meets the objectives, goals and metrics as noted in this

8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: As I was uncertain if I should include the updates with this cycle or the March cycle, I went ahead and provided these updates for this cycle of reporting to allow us to be on a cycle that aligns with the timeline and goals of this council's implementation. Summer 2015 updates should confirm the implementation for August 2015 of the council. We will subsequently develop 2-3 more Action Projects over this academic year that will support this council and its direction.

Update Review

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: It is noteworthy that Moraine Park Technical College has supported its Strategy Forum team in meeting regularly to review progress on this action project. Since one major goal is for improved communication, it is positive that the team has shared with the college community their progress. The team clearly seems to understand the importance of making sure that their work supports the college's vision and the former AQIP Category 5 Leading and Communicating. It also address AQIP Category 3 Valuing Employees.

2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: The college has set a clear timeline to complete the project by August 2015. This addresses HLC Criterion 5 Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. The goals to establish a College Council, a purpose and mission statement, action project charters, and new communication pathways are all measurable.

3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: While it is commendable that meetings have continued to take place over the summer, it is too early yet to determine measurable accomplishments. The college might consider using meeting minutes to track accomplishments that can be shared with the college community. The college might also consider developing a plan that would identify stakeholders responsible for various pieces of the Action project.

Global Judgment: Acceptable progress is being made

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: The plan to develop a concept map will be a useful tool in communicating the vision of the College Council to both external and internal constituents. It is also important that the Council recognizes the need to involve all stakeholders, including students. It will be important to monitor this group's involvement over time, as it is difficult for institutions to find ways of integrating students into planning processes. MPTC's efforts to include all stakeholders addresses the "promoting collaboration" principle of high performing organizations.

5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A: Open communication practices are important in high performing organizations and organizations that value continuous quality improvement, so it is important that MPTC is focused on this value. However, it's not clear how the college is soliciting student feedback, participation, or involvement. To provide meaningful feedback in this section, a reviewer would need more detail on the practices being employed.

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: The college has identified an important challenge -- that constituents will not take the project seriously. To overcome this obstacle, the college might consider reviewing how other colleges have tackled this problem. The College Council could search for similar action projects in the AQIP Action Project Directory: http://www.hlcommission.org/component/com_apdsearch/Itemid,126/

Other obstacles might include using the documents produced in meaningful ways. The College Council might consider anticipating how to present the deliverables in a way that will promote their success and their being used in the institution's strategic planning processes.

7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIME LINE

A: This reviewer is encouraged by the clear timeline. The College Council might consider developing an action plan of which the timeline will be just one part. The action plan could identify constituents who would be involved, as well as how to solicit feedback from various groups, like students and administrators. It might also make clear persons or offices responsible for the deliverables and their dissemination.

8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: Additional Action Projects that support open communication among constituents would support the current action plan.