

Action Project

Institution:	Seward County Community College	Contact:	Cynthia Rapp
Submitted:	2007-11-30	Telephone:	620-417-1012
Email:	cynthia.rapp@sccc.edu		

Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 11-01-2007

Target completion date: 05-31-2008

Actual completion date: --

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:

Developing a Student Retention Plan for SCCC

B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

Successfully implementing enrollment management requires collecting and analyzing data. The goal of this action project is to identify, review and analyze data on SCCC students to determine why SCCC has a low retention rate and to create a plan to address the needs of the students who are not retained. The plan will include student retention initiatives that will be monitored and reviewed by the SCCC Enrollment Management Team.

C. Identify the single AQIP Category which the Action Project will most affect or impact:

Primary Category: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

The fall to fall retention rate for first-time, full-time, first-generation students at SCCC is only at 47.4%, far below the national average for community colleges of 51.6% (ACT Retention Report, 2005). It is our desire to not only recruit students to campus, but to see that they achieve their educational/career goals and complete their degree(s) at SCCC. At the onset of the Project, the Enrollment Management Committee identified the key areas of the college where procedures and practices currently exist that might have an effect on retention. The Retention Project is still in its infancy; student retention was introduced, but was not the major point of emphasis during the 2006-2007 year. However, the EMC realizes that developing an Institutional Student Retention Plan is a priority and will be approached as such. Accomplishments last year included: naming the EMC as the team to develop the Retention Project, establishing a definition for retention at SCCC, identifying current initiatives and processes at SCCC that have an impact on retention, and identifying a cohort group. While the topic of retention was discussed last year, the EMC committee's focus was on recruitment. This year the committee will move forward in addressing the retention issues at SCCC and develop a plan to address the issues.

E. List the organizational areas - institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

Admissions Department Counseling Academic Advisors Financial Aid Department Registrar's Office Student Support Services Academic Achievement Center Assessment and Institutional Research Faculty Student Success Center Teaching and Learning Center Employee Development Committee

F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to

change or improve:

1. Data Collection 2. Data Analysis and Interpretation 3. Current Retention strategies

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

1. A Seward County Community College "team" has been selected to participate in a data collection and interpretation workshop in Austin, TX in December 2007. The purpose of the workshop is to learn about the collection of valuable data, as it relates to student retention and the story the data tells us. It will cover the fundamentals of data driven decision making, including developing an enrollment management/retention research plan, setting benchmarks', identifying inexpensive and readily available data resources, using comparative data, and building an information system. It will also assist in identify the populations that are "at risk", and gaps in information collected. This workshop will assist the college in making good decisions in developing a plan to address the greatest needs. Through the workshop the "team" will look at current and past data such as, "The Student Satisfaction Survey", "Withdrawing Student Survey", IPED reports, and 1st generation/low income student information. A retention plan will be based on the results of the data. 2. Upon returning from the workshop, the team's project will be shared with the Enrollment Management Committee to assist in further development of a student retention plan. The committee will use the data results from the team's project to identify student retention initiatives and data collection processes necessary to accomplish the AQIP Project. 3. The information retrieved from the workshop will also be shared with the greater college community at Spring Staff/Faculty In-service in Spring 2008 and monthly all staff meetings, so that all constituents at the college understand the new initiatives in the Retention efforts.

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

1. The recommendations brought back from the Data Collection workshop will be shared with, implemented, and maintained by the Enrollment Management Committee. 2. The Enrollment Management Committee will review the retention initiatives during their monthly meetings. 3. Retention data needs will be scheduled and collected. 4. The project will be monitored by the Dean of Students and reported to the Dean's Council and the AQIP Steering Committee.

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:

Comprehensive plans to collect, analyze, and communicate the important student data that are indicators and predictors of student retention. A comprehensive enrollment plan established, with specific initiatives identified. Improve the communication of the overall retention efforts campus wide by sharing the EMC minutes with the Dean's Council, AQIP Steering Committee and with the general campus community.

J. Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

K. Project Leader and contact person:

Contact Name: Celeste Donovan, Dean of Student Services

Email: celeste.donovan@sccc.edu

Phone: 6204171016 Ext.