

Soft Skills

QEP Miniplan - "Go Pro" 2

Topic:

1. Purpose Statement – Students will attain professional behavior for career readiness in the areas of: attendance, accountability, communication, professional appearance, and collegial behaviors.
2. This will align with #1 and #2 of the college mission statement by preparing students for the workforce.
3. This miniplan addresses soft skills.
4. Key terms, as identified in the purpose statement are defined as:
 - a. Attendance – being punctual and present for all classes
 - b. Accountability – turning in work on time, taking initiative, self-motivation
 - c. Communication – appropriate use of language in written, verbal, and listening skills
 - d. Professional appearance – appropriate attire
 - e. Collegial behaviors - partner with others to meet goals, accept constructive feedback, engage in assertive behaviors which are respectful to self and others, team player

Need:

1. College-wide, students are in need of the professional behaviors that will make them more successful in the college environment and the workforce.
2. Data that supports the need to implement this proposal
 - a. Attrition due to attendance issues
 - b. Number of disciplinary procedures
 - c. Potential employer surveys

Learning Outcomes:

1. Possible student learning outcomes that this plan will address:
 - a. Attendance: Students will exhibit professional behaviors of punctuality and consistent attendance.
 - b. Accountability: Students will demonstrate accountability, initiative, and self-motivation through acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility of actions.
 - c. Communication: Students will communicate effectively through the use of appropriate written, verbal, digital, and listening skills within the college environment and the workforce.
 - d. Professional appearance: Students will demonstrate professional appearance when applicable for workforce readiness.

- e. Collegial behaviors: Students will partner with others to meet goals, accept constructive feedback, engage in assertive behaviors which are respectful to self and others, team players.
2. All students will be impacted with this plan.

Activities:

1. ACA 111 classes – covers all 5 areas previously defined
 - a. “Dress for success” seminar
2. Orientation mandatory – professional appearance, attendance, collegial behaviors, accountability; “Go Pro” live or online demonstration
3. Consistent enforcement of attendance policies displayed by faculty and students
 - a. Tardy policy developed and implemented
4. Professional appearance
 - a. Professional appearance day once a semester
5. Integrate professional communication into all programs
6. Attendance tracking developed and maintained college-wide.

Assessments/Outcomes:

1. Hypothesized Outcomes
 - a. Employer surveys will report increased satisfaction with communication, punctuality, attendance, professional appearance, collegial behaviors.
 - b. Student attendance will increase college-wide.
 - c. Students will exhibit decreased tardiness.
2. Assessments used to measure learning –
 - a. Attendance - Online attendance and 5 year tracking
 - b. Accountability – Faculty surveys developed to track process and employer surveys to track accountability outcomes
 - c. Communication – Faculty surveys developed to track process and employer surveys to track outcomes of oral and written skills
 - d. Professional appearance – Employer surveys
 - e. Collegial behaviors – Faculty surveys developed to track process and employer surveys to track outcomes

Budget:

1. How much funding will be required to implement and sustain this proposal
 - a. Develop surveys using panels of existing faculty and staff members (\$.00)
 - b. Dedicated position to send, collect, enter data in format ready to be analyzed (\$30K-\$40K)
 - c. Additional software, hardware, and/or online resources may be required to accomplish above data collection and analysis (\$20K)

2. How much organizational energy will be required?
 - a. Organizational enthusiasm – faculty and staff must support initiative
 - b. Staffing requirements – See above
 - c. Departmental involvement – all departments will be involved
Each department will select a representative for the panel to develop the faculty and employer surveys, so the surveys will be relevant

QEP miniplan # 5

Topic: Developing better soft skills

Need: I believe that having a degree will not open doors without a corresponding good set of people/soft skills. In today's competitive market, having the key mix of interpersonal, negotiating, thinking quickly on your feet skills may land a job with competing individuals with the same educational levels.

Learning Outcomes: (SACSCOC defines learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or values.)

1. Students will learn better communication skills, especially under pressure.
2. Students will learn better interviewing skills.
3. Students will learn better techniques in dealing with difficult people or situations.
4. Students will learn better negotiating skills.

Activities:

1. Have students (individually or as a group) in the ACA 110/A 111 course address a challenging topic. Volunteers at the college will allow the student/students to come to them with a difficult situation. The instructor will require the students to think hard on their approach and the volunteer will explore options and challenge the student to be creative in approach and resolution.
2. The topics will need to be thought out in advance and somewhat current (i.e. what do you think the super committee on the debt ceiling will do; what do you think about giving a choice to unemployed 18-15 yrs old; military, Peace Corps or Civilian Conservation Corps).

Assessments/Outcomes:

1. Students will be required to research a current topic and develop a position/ approach.
2. Students will need to be prepared to discuss opposite points of view convincingly.

Budget: Release time to develop these activities.

QEP Mini Plan # 11

Will possibly be shared in the future per author request.

QEP Topic Miniplan #13

Use the following format to submit your plan for a QEP topic. Please remember that miniplans will be subject to blind committee review, so do not include your name or identifying characteristics as part of your miniplan.

Topic: A.P.P.S. in Oral Presentations (Accountability, Presentation, Problem Solving in Oral Communication).

1. This project purposes to develop students' soft skills through oral presentations in courses.
2. Our mission is to educate the workforce--these soft skills that employers need will be emphasized.
3. Soft Skills.
4. Definition of terms:
 - a. Accountability--defined as students' ability to be responsible for attendance and work.
 - b. Presentation-- this covers the students ability to present themselves including
 - i. Appearance
 - ii. Organizing Ideas
 - iii. Wording
 - c. Problem Solving--the oral communication will be goal directed in solving a real life problem.

Need:

1. In the Fall convocation, many people focused on the need for soft skills training. We all know that employers need/want employees who have great communication skills. Those skills include verbal and nonverbal communication.
 - a. 2011 Hart Research 89% of employers want oral/written communication skills
 - b. 2006 NC Market skill survey by NCDOL communication ranked second after attitude.
2. Include any data you are aware of that supports the need to implement your proposal.
 - a. Faculties often complain about how students approach them or present ideas or thoughts.

- b. As a former employer, I was often appalled at the way people dressed for an interview. (As were other employers I spoke with whom I spoke.)

Learning Outcomes: (SACSCOC defines learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or values.)

1. Students will learn to make a commitment and keep it as well as appropriate procedures to take when unable to fill their commitment.
2. Students will learn to identify a problem, analyze the problem and present a solution.
3. Students will learn how to present themselves professional both in appearance and organization.
4. All programs will be impacted.

Activities:

1. Each program of study will develop an assignment in a capstone course which requires oral presentation of student solution to a problem.
 - a. Could be what needs to be done to fix this car/presenting as they would to a customer. (automotive technologies)
 - b. Could be addressing a current issue at the college or community.
 - c. Could be simple as a job interview.
 - d. Could be student presenting solution to a math problem or teaching a math lesson.

The assignment needs to include;

- a. Student scheduling a time to present their solution.
 - b. Student presenting the solution in oral format (video, web assisted, or face to face).
 - c. Student needs to be required to dress appropriated and include standard organization of message.
 - d. Teacher should grade student not solely on presentation material but overall skills to achieve this including accountability, appearance, organization of message.
2. Ideally, each program would have multiple points to assess this, so that several courses would allow the student the opportunity to practice these skills prior to final assessment.

Assessments/Outcomes:

3. Students should leave COA with a set of skills that allows them to appropriately address professional audiences they will encounter in daily life. (employer satisfaction surveys/student self report)
4. Students should be able to present their ideas in an understandable and persuasive manner.
5. Ideally, we would have both direct and indirect measures.
 - a. Direct--include pre and post assessments of these presentation skills (at lowest level course in the major and then at highest level course in major).
 - b. Indirect--employer surveys and student self report surveys

Budget:

1. Need to upgrade Tk20 software package to include student portfolios that allow video capture. (I don't know)
2. Would be nice to facilitate training by having classes contribute or communications instructor help assess these presentations. (salary= 40,000)
3. Professional Development training
 - a. Developing assignments
 - b. Using tk20
 - c. Grading expectations
4. Estimate how much organizational energy will be required to implement and sustain your proposal. For example:
 - a. Organizational enthusiasm--everyone needs to buy into this
 - b. Staffing requirements--someone to help with tk20
 - c. Departmental involvement--every dept at every level.

QEP Topic Mini plan #17

Use the following format to submit your plan for a QEP topic. Please remember that miniplans will be subject to blind committee review, so do not include your name or identifying characteristics as part of your miniplan.

Topic:

1. Write a purpose statement for your topic proposal.
 - a. The purpose of this plan is to reduce absenteeism and in the process maybe increase completion rates
2. Explain how this topic aligns with college mission.
 - a. We are attempting to get student completers
3. State which of the four areas your miniplan addresses.
 - a. Soft Skills
4. Define any key terms.

Need:

1. Describe the need you see for implementing your proposal.
 - a. We have too many students who are absent and do not take the responsibility to inform their instructors why they were absent or that they are going to be absent.
2. Include any data you are aware of that supports the need to implement your proposal.

Learning Outcomes: (SACSCOC defines learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or values.)

1. Identify possible student learning outcomes that your plan will address.
 - a. Students will learn that they are responsible for their actions and their actions have consequences and that we care about them.
2. Define the group or groups of students that your plan will impact.

- a. Students impacted will be those who are on the verge of dropping out or doing poorly because they do not believe that attendance is necessary for a good grade.

Activities:

1. Describe the activities that will/could be undertaken as part of your QEP topic.

Assessments/Outcomes:

1. Describe the hypothesized outcomes from your proposal.
 - a. If we attend to students the first time they miss an activity or a class they will learn we are serious and they will become serious which will increase attendance, and work completed.
2. Explain assessments that will be used to measure learning.
 - a. How many completers do we have, how many absentees do we have, average grades should increase.

Budget:

1. Estimate how much funding will be required to implement and sustain your proposal.
 - a. We would need an electronic form that can be emailed to the correct person who would follow up that day and email the response back to the instructor. No cost. If it works and we wish to continue as a school wide policy we would need a full time counselor in the position of student retention specialist.
2. Estimate how much organizational energy will be required to implement and sustain your proposal. For example:
 - a. Organizational enthusiasm
 - 2.a.i. Every instructor should be on board without any rahrah
 - b. Staffing requirements
 - 2.b.i. One person to follow up on the reports
 - c. Departmental involvement
 - 2.c.i. The instructors and student development would be involved.

At the very first absence in class or the very first missed assignment in on-line classes a form is forwarded to the student retention specialist who calls the student that day to find out why they did not complete the assignment or come to class. The student's answer is taken down and emailed back to the person who submitted the form. Depending on the student's answer, if intervention is required by a counselor one is assigned, and if the student did not understand the assignment the instructor will submit a "better" explanation to the student. This should increase the student's understanding of their responsibilities and better inform the students about their work requirements. Also, it should allow the student to feel that we care.