

Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Report represents the work quality improvement requirements of the Open Pathway.	that the institution has un	dertaken to fulfil	I the
TI-	6/1/2020		
Signature of Institution President or Chancellor	Date	S	
Dr. Tim Faltyn, President			
Printed/Typed Name and Title			
Oklahoma Panhandle State University			
Name of Institution			
Goodwell, OK			
City and State	_		

The institution uses the template below to complete its Quality Initiative Report. The institution may include a report it has prepared for other purposes if it addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the narrative in the template. This template may be used both for reports on initiatives that have been completed and for initiatives that will continue and for which this report serves as a milestone of accomplishments thus far. The complete report should be no more than 6,000 words.

The report must be submitted by June 1 of Year 9.

Submit the report as a PDF file at https://doi.org/upload. Select "Pathways/Quality Initiatives" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. The file name of the report should follow this format: QIReport[InstitutionName] [State].pdf (e.g., QIProposalNoNameUniversityMN.pdf). The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Date: 6/1/2020

Contact Person for Report: Julie Dinger

Contact Person's Email Address: julie.dinger@opsu.edu

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Open Pathway Quality Initiative Contact: 800.621.7440

Page 1

Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

Oklahoma Panhandle State University (OPSU) launched its Quality Initiative Project in the fall of 2015 with our entrance into the Persistence and Completion Academy. In this early phase of the initiative, our primary focus was to develop our capacity to understand the factors which were impacting our students' success and create the institutional capacity for sustained analysis and data-informed decision making.

The following was stated in our academy application:

OPSU wants to develop effective data collection procedures for student retention information and usable analysis of the information. The institution wants to utilize this information and the resulting analysis to develop a proactive retention plan intended to increase the persistence and retention of the students attending OPSU.... The university wants to develop and implement programs and services that meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

The quality initiative unfolded over the ensuing five years through many major changes to the university, including leadership transitions at the presidential and academic levels, a transition to a new student information system, and pressure from declining state appropriations. Even amid these changes and pressures, the Quality Initiative served as a galvanizing force to unite the campus community around the shared goals of student persistence and completion. Major accomplishments and milestones associated with the project include the following:

- Successful implementation and use of the student information system to provide timely, accurate, and detailed information for faculty, staff, and administration;
- A University Scorecard with central Key Performance Indicators related to student success;
- A system of evaluations and analyses built into regular university processes such as budgeting, assessment of student learning, program reviews, etc.;
- Dedicated staff and institutional expertise in institutional research and assessment;
- Revitalized faculty and staff engagement on matters impacting student persistence and completion as evidenced through participation in various campus committees, meetings, and programs to support these efforts;
- Integrated planning from various stakeholder offices in support of student persistence and completion during this initiative:
 - The annual number of graduates increased by 51%
 - Developmental education course pass rates improved 17% for English and 10% for math;

Audience: Institutions

Form

• Three high-impact strategies to promote persistence and completion adopted and evaluated: Peer Achievement Coaching program, an Early Intervention Reporting Form for faculty, and redesigned Student Success course.

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative's hypotheses and findings.)

The Quality Initiative for Oklahoma Panhandle State University was participation in the Persistence and Completion Academy.

Through this experience, the university accomplished many of the goals outlined in our initial application to participate in the Academy, as well as developed and made progress toward new goals as a direct result of our participation in the Academy.

The Persistence and Completion Academy project for Oklahoma Panhandle State University began in 2014/2015 with the university looking for a structured and supported approach to evaluate and improve student persistence and completion. The project unfolded in what we consider four distinct phases, beginning first with the university's placement on the data development track. The purpose of our participation in the Academy was to improve the university's retention efforts on a large scale, especially data analysis for the institution.

In 2014, when the university applied for academy membership, the university relied heavily on data released by the National Center for Education Statistics (IPEDs) for understanding student persistence and completion. While helpful for understanding large scale patterns, there were no real mechanisms to implement targeted interventions to make measurable improvements to retention and graduation. In addition to this lack of ability to understand the granular patterns in our population, we could not soundly assess the effectiveness of programs aimed at improving retention or graduation rates for any particular group or demographic of students. For example, at the time, the university had a University College, tasked with providing student orientations, tutoring services, counseling, and developmental coursework. This college operated with excellent intentions, but no analysis of the unit's efforts. It was understood anecdotally that tutoring services were underutilized. In addition, there was no clear data-keeping on tutoring sessions or tutor training documentation to help refine and target tutoring services to encourage student use. This was just one example of an area where retention efforts were underway. Therefore, without the ability to analyze the effort's impact, there was no way to improve the retention and graduation results. At the time of application, first-time, full-time freshman retention from fall to fall averaged 49%. Still, within that rate, we suspected variation based on socioeconomic factors, chosen major, and first-generation student status. The original project looked for the Academy to bring focus and intention to improving university persistence and completion as well as to create a culture of continuous improvement in these areas. Through our participation in this Quality Initiative, we have achieved—or are making measurable progress toward achieving—these original goals and have established a new, ongoing goal to institutionalize the processes learned as a result of this Quality Initiative.

Audience: Institutions

Form

Goal 1. (Original Goal) Increase retention rates for all categories of students.

Increasing retention rates for all categories of students was an ambitious goal and one for which we are still striving. In 2015 at the beginning of our Academy project, the team tasked with achieving our Academy goals came to the roundtable ready to drill down into the university demographics to improve retention for all students.

Beginning with that first roundtable meeting, the university started work in earnest on a data development track.

The team learned from experts, peers, and the academy mentor where to find data on campus and the kinds of questions they could answer. Leaving the first roundtable, the team had an actionable plan for data collection and an organized group of faculty and staff to meet regularly to evaluate programs and efforts in support of persistence and completion for their effectiveness. Specific categories of students identified at this stage included the following:

- Degree completion rates for both associate and baccalaureate degrees
- Persistence and retention rates for key demographics of interest, including
 - o athletes;
 - Hispanic students;
 - o transfer students;
 - in-state versus out-of-state students;
 - o students from urban versus rural communities;
 - o persistence for specific GPA thresholds.

These data would serve as the basis or backbone of a larger data book for the university to use for making specific policy and programmatic decisions in support of improving persistence and completion. The team worked in earnest to collect five years' worth of data and to disseminate surveys to gather insights that they then worked to into a digestible format for the university community. Results and insights were presented to the university community during all-campus meetings in August 2016. Changes were beginning to see policy and program recommendations starting to be made based on data. At this time, the ability to drill down or paint a more granular picture of student persistence and completion based on these or any other category still proved difficult in the SCT Student Information System. It wasn't until the Fall of 2016 when the university fully transitioned to the Banner Ellucian SIS that the university began to develop institutional capacity to validly evaluate students based on variables such as athletic participation, race and ethnicity, residency, and other demographic and academic factors.

Goal 2. (Original Goal) Effectively collect retention data from student information available each semester.

The ability to effectively collect and analyze student data was fully realized after a few years, and significant changes at the university began to take shape. The Banner Ellucian student information system was fully deployed in fall 2016. The potential for improved analysis was at hand. The university learned over the 2016/2017 academic year that this new system proved more complicated to extract information from than the level of institutional expertise in managing those data. Historically, institutional research was an additional duty for an existing staff member. During this

Audience: Institutions

Form

time in 2016, it was an additional duty for the full-time webmaster. In no small part on the urging of the Persistence and Completion Academy Team, the university leadership realigned budget for the fiscal year 2018 to hire a full-time Director of Institutional Research. With this change, the ability to collect retention information was much improved. Additional resources were secured during this period. EvaluationKit survey capability and expanded access to Office 365 apps improved our ability to survey and collect data form key groups of interest in support of persistence and completion and improve our ability to collect data in support of this goal.

Goal 3. (Original Goal) Analyze retention data correctly.

After fully developing our ability to collect information and data in support of student persistence and completion came the need for understanding. Assessment of Student Learning, much like Institutional Research, was an additional duty assigned to an academic dean when the university began this Quality Initiative. Seeing the need for enhanced structure surrounding analyzing data, and the limited human capital to do so, the university leadership—again urged by the Persistence and Completion Academy Team—realigned budgetary priorities to bring on an Assessment Coordinator in fiscal year 2019.

Together with the team, the offices of Institutional Research and Assessment began in earnest to bring a structure and order to the process of data analysis.

Goal 4. (Original Goal) Utilize information gained from this analysis to develop and implement assertive and sustainable retention strategies to maintain cohort groups through completion and graduation.

Early efforts to use data to inform decision making were hindered by the lack of a robust Student Information System, survey software, and human capital in the form of personnel dedicated to supporting the university with valid and reliable data for strategy. Achieving Goal 4 came quickly as these facets were in place, and the Quality Initiative began to evolve in our third-year review in the Academy in late 2018. Now that our structure and capacity were set, our focus shifted quickly to making data-driven interventions for student success. Three significant initiatives for promoting student success began with data collection: a Peer Achievement Coaching program, an Early Intervention Reporting Form for faculty, and redesigned Student Success course.

During this same time, the university completed a campus-wide strategic planning process whereby a new Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals were adopted. As a direct result of the Persistence and Completion Academy team's work on this Quality Initiative, the Strategic Plan was developed with a University Scorecard, which contains key performance indicators for all of the university's strategic goals. Featured prominently in these metrics are those that evaluate student success, persistence, and completion.

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

Goal 5. (New, Ongoing Goal) Structure and disseminate persistence and completion data, student success program analysis, and related student success information to promote broad engagement in student success.

By the 2019/2020 academic year, the Persistence and Completion team finalized its annual calendar of reports. This calendar is a living document that outlines the time of year different analyses of student success are collected, discussed, and disseminated either on a secure internal shared drive folder or, when appropriate, on the university website. The team meets bi-weekly to discuss and evaluate current efforts to make recommendations and review critical metrics for student retention and graduation.

A larger team comprised of members from across campus, including all student support offices, faculty from all colleges, executive leadership, and academic leadership representatives, meets monthly to review, discuss, and make recommendations based on the best available data.

One example of how this goal has made measurable impact on the university persistence and completion efforts came through the cooperative work between the offices of Academic Records and Institutional Research. Data are collected and analyzed by Institutional Research every semester for students whose academic hour progress indicates they may be eligible for graduation in an impending semester. These data are then used by the Office of Academic Records to coordinate with advisors and students to complete graduation evaluations and make definitive course maps for completion. This simple practice was impossible with the previous information system and when we had no dedicated institutional research expertise. Now, we have made demonstrable strides in improving the number of graduates and are making progress toward reducing the time to completion for students increasing graduates by 51% since 2015 and look for improvements in our six-year graduation rate in coming reporting years.

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

It is hard not to overstate the impact of this Quality Initiative on the university. There have been many changes made over the ensuing years since we began the initiative, both from external pressures like those of declining state appropriations, changing executive and academic leadership, and internal improvements made in the process, policy, and practice. The new, ongoing goal to structure and disseminate student success data and program analysis, which we developed in the last two years of the initiative, inform these ongoing consequences. The impact of the project can be seen in a variety of ways.

There have been many additions to data collection to assist in tracking important information related to our student demographics that impact student success and collecting more valid information in our program evaluations. Gone are the days of anecdotal experience to support programs or initiatives. There is a burgeoning culture of data-driven decision making at the university now. We make our decisions based on their relation to metrics and key performance indicators. These decisions, ranging from those highest stakes budget adjustments to the alignment

Audience: Institutions

Form

of presentations at weekly, monthly, and semester meetings, tie directly to the overall university strategic plan, central to which is the promotion of student success, persistence, and completion.

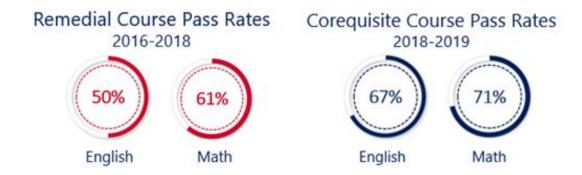
Some of these impacts include a new graduation evaluation from the Office of Academic Records to award associate's degrees in a timely fashion to ensure students earn their credentials and keep their momentum toward attaining ever-higher levels of success.

Several significant reports were developed and are now updated annually or semi-annually and disseminated through various channels, including monthly meetings with the persistence and completion team, semester meetings with the campus community, academic advisor workshops every semester, and other committee meetings across the campus community.

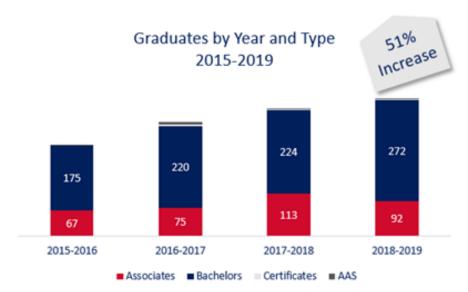
The major accomplishments of the quality initiative include the following:

- 1. A University Scorecard connected to the Strategic Plan
 - a. The scorecard has helped change to a data-driven decision-making model across campus.
 - b. These data inform program designs and investment.
 - c. These data are broadly distributed on the university website and at campus-wide meetings.
- 2. Intentional Programs for Student Persistence and Completion
 - a. Assessment Plans now feature metrics for persistence and completion.
 - b. Institutional Research is leveraged to improve student completion rates by providing Academic Records, advisors, and students with information on their path to graduation in a timely manner and provides better advising for on-time degree completion.
 - c. The Academic Resource Center has implemented high-impact interventions with annual evaluations and recommendations for continuous improvement:
 - i. Student Success course fully redesigned to improve the first-year experience;
 - ii. Peer Academic Coaching program to promote success and persistence;
 - iii. Early Intervention Reporting and analysis of the results of interventions.
- 3. Organizational Expertise
 - a. Offices of Institutional Research and Assessment were established to provide the infrastructure, support, and expertise to allow the university to fully collect and analyze student data in support of persistence and completion
 - b. Persistence and Completion Teams established to provide analysis and recommendations for persistence and completion:
 - i. These groups hold regular meetings with working agendas and minutes which are shared widely and stored on our secured shared drive;
 - ii. The institution redesigned remedial education offerings to improve student success. The persistence and completion team provided insight and analysis for the university community to widely accept and adopt these redesigns to promote student success.
 - c. Academic Resource Center works collaboratively with Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research to continue collaborative efforts to work with faculty and staff to evaluate, implement, and improve.

Audience: Institutions



The university also focused on promoting degree completion efforts during the initiative through process changes in the Office of Academic Records, and utilizing the student information system and the Office of Institutional Research, we have identified more easily students ready to graduate. These data allowed the Office of Academic Records to work directly with academic advisors and students to improve their barriers to graduation promote completion, increasing annual graduates by 51% between 2016 and 2019.



4. Explain any tools, data or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the initiative comes in the improved processes related to evaluating student success, persistence, and completion. Of crucial importance for the university is the regular updating and review of key reports and analyses according to the schedule developed as a result of the initiative. The university reporting calendar aligns all assessment, institutional research, and reporting departments into a single living document that organizes the times in which a specific report or analysis is completed and where the information should be shared. Systematizing our assessment and institutional research in such a way allowed for better dissemination of findings and is flexible enough to allow new tools to be included as they are developed by the persistence and completion team in biweekly meetings. Some of these critical reports include but are not limited to the following:

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

- academic program level return on investment analysis;
- pass rate analysis in general education coursework;
- first-to-second-year retention rates for key demographic categories and the overall student population;
- results for interventions reported through the Early Intervention Form in subsequent semesters as measured by their Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP);
- annual tracking strategic plan goals annually using key performance indicators and measures;
- the creation and revision of surveys to measure indirect impacts, including the total withdrawal survey, student satisfaction survey, graduation survey, etc.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

Some of the biggest challenges during the initiative would serve to become our greatest strengths as the initiative progressed. The first of these and the one which would, in turn, become one of the most significant opportunities for the university came when the system of colleges and universities for which we share a governing board began to transition our student information system from SCT to Banner Ellucian. This project required many additional hours and several months away from regular duties as staff trained for the new system.

Once in place by fall 2016, the new SIS created additional challenges in institutional research; the new system had the capacity for excellent data collection and analysis. Still, the university lacked the organizational structure to develop data which could then be pulled for analysis. The reports were only as good as the information entered, and the challenge of how to code students, create attributes, and then generate actionable reports from these data was great. Just as the student information system transition proved to be both a challenge and an opportunity, so was the next issue, a need for institutional expertise to support the initiative. This challenge was addressed by creating a dedicated team of Institutional Research and Assessment of Student Learning. Together these offices worked with Academic Records, Financial Aid, Fiscal Affairs, Academic Resources, and Academic and Student Affairs and became the catalyst for the creation of the most significant opportunity for growth in systematizing the efforts of these offices in service to analyzing and disseminating student success.

Another challenge faced in implementing the initiative came in the form of the Persistence and Completion team itself. Membership on the persistence and completion team transitioned over the five years. By year three, only one original member was still working at the university. One member passed away unexpectedly. Other members retired or took positions at other institutions. The challenge of a new team was transformed into a great opportunity. The newly formed team in 2018/2019 redoubled its focus and had an exceptional working year. After an in-depth consultation with the Academy mentor and scholar, who helped the team summarize all of the work completed up until that point, their expertise helped the team formulate its final phase of the initiative, articulated as Goal 5. This year brought about new programs for student success. However, perhaps more importantly, these programs were designed and implemented with program assessment and evaluation in mind so that after that year, the team could analyze their impact and make adjustments to improve persistence and completion.

Audience: Institutions

Form

The greatest opportunity of this initiative was the staying power and ability to transcend leadership change, personnel change, student information system change, and declining state appropriations. The initiative for Persistence and Completion provided the framework and support for the team to build the university's structure and capacity to meet its goals of data collection, data analysis, and improvement of programs designed to boost student success. The ability to harden this emphasis on student success by analyzing persistence and completion in a granular way into the university's standard operations represents the single most significant contribution of this initiative to improving the institution.

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.

From the outset of the initiative, participation has been broad and open to all. At the start of the initiative, key departments and offices outlined as members of the initiative included the following:

- President,
- Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Outreach,
- Retention Coordinator,
- Academic Deans,
- Dean of Student Services.
- Director of Institutional Research,
- Registrar,
- Director of Financial Aid,
- University College,
- Faculty.

Names and duties may have shifted, but the core emphasis on engaging a broad coalition of faculty, staff, and administrators in the process continued even amid personal tragedy and personal opportunities to pursue careers elsewhere. Participation in the earliest days of the initiative project was led by three academic deans and two faculty members. Beginning in 2016 with the advent of a full-time Office of Institutional Research, the team began to expand its conversations and saw a need for additional university expertise in analyzing data. In 2017, a stand-alone Office of Assessment of Student Learning was created, and a larger multidepartment committee began to attend monthly sessions. A smaller core group of Persistence and Completion Team leaders met biweekly. The larger group was comprised of representatives from across the university to ensure broad participation. Members included the executive leadership team, academic and student affairs leadership teams, the Assessment and Institutional Research Team, Academic Records, Financial Aid, Bursar/Fiscal Affairs, and faculty.

This group meets with a working agenda of annual activities based on our yearly calendar of evaluations and reviews specific items brought by the subcommittee, which meets monthly and is comprised of executive and academic leadership, Assessment and IR, Academic Records, Academic Resource Center, and faculty. One of the ways how we evaluate perceptions of the worth and

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

impact of the initiative is the willingness and diversity of the membership of the broader working group. Members of both groups engage in lively and productive agendas, and members report satisfaction with the results of their efforts on the committee. One of the places where the team receives this feedback most clearly is through the Student Success course. The team evaluates preand post-survey information from students with faculty teaching this multidisciplinary course. In this process, the teams and faculty share their contributions and make sure the initiative is serving all of our constituents. These positive perceptions of the persistence and completion initiative feature prominently in public forums, all-campus meetings, advisor workshops, etc. All on campus share the goal of improving student persistence and completion. As a community, our focal point for the year is our commencement exercises, a time of joy and celebration that we share with our students, faculty, staff, and community. The project of improving persistence and completion is one we all share.

7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

There were many individual lessons learned throughout the initiative and the Persistence and Completion Academy participation. The university learned three critical takeaways throughout this initiative. The most crucial point was first to have an established set of goals committed to by the institution. We also learned that the university must have the institutional capacity to collect, analyze, and make data and program evaluations easily understood in both systems and human capital. Finally, we recommend the promotion of secure cloud-based or dedicated server-based record keeping.

The first important point is an established set of goals and a dedicated plan for improvement. The team that started the initiative recognized that there was a fundamental need to understand student persistence and completion, but the team was not equipped to research these challenges effectively. There was also an understanding that this initiative was coming when there were declining financial resources available from state appropriations, which meant that many on campus already had various responsibilities that might prevent full participation. From the initial application:

OPSU wants to develop effective data collection procedures for student retention information and usable analysis of the information. The institution wants to utilize this information and the resulting analysis to develop a proactive retention plan intended to increase the persistence and retention of the students attending OPSU. The university will focus on at-risk students (those entering with academic deficiencies), students matriculating directly into a 4-year degree program, student/athletes, students not participating in athletics, and minorities. The university wants to develop and implement programs and services that meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

The Persistence and Completion Team in 2015 created specific and attainable goals for the initiative (outlined in section 2). This careful planning was crucial in setting the initiative on a path for success.

The second important point is capacity, both in terms of the technical power to achieve the initiative goals and the expertise to extract and aid in interpretation. For OPSU, this expertise came with the

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

establishment of dedicated staff and offices to support the initiative and continue its work beyond the Academy. The first half of this capacity building was hard but essential to achieving the initiative goals. Transitioning to a new student information system required investment of time and financial resources, but ultimately provided a level of sophistication in understanding student data that we would not have otherwise been able to achieve with such efficiency. To build expertise, dedicated offices and staff in Institutional Research and Assessment needed to be added. These changes were difficult in lean budget years but critical to fully realizing our student information system's potential and achieving our initiative goals. These changes and having an institutional structure that can support persistence and completion efforts beyond the initiative and Academy gives the university the tools it needs to make student success attainable. This expertise provides the ability to analyze variables that impact student success and evaluate programs for their effectiveness in improving persistence and completion.

Finally, we learned in the initiative the importance of record-keeping on either a centralized shared server or a secure cloud-based solution.

Many data reports, analyses, and minutes from meetings where recommendations for programs were made were lost in the early years of the initiative. While key documents were secure, without a policy and procedure for keeping those reports and analyses in a central location, they were subject to technology failure and the passing of time. In 2016, the university moved to cloud-based Office 365 services and implemented a centralized, secure, shared server where these documents are now collected for all departments across campus. Centralizing these artifacts further supports future work, eliminating the need to "ask" for data when it is already made available in a secure way, which prevents personally identifying information being released.

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical and technological resources that supported the initiative.

The human resources which made the initiative possible included the collaborative work of the academic leadership at the dean and department chair level, and the offices of Academic Records, Financial Aid, Fiscal Affairs and Bursar, Information Technology, Institutional Research, and Assessment. The last two offices of this list were created during the initiative because the team recognized the limitations of the existing university structure to reach our goals without them. The financial investment in these two offices amount to an annual budget for Institutional Research and Assessment of \$110,896.

The technological and physical resources which supported the initiative included the move to Banner Ellucian for our student information system, implementing Office 365, and a shared drive system. The financial resources to support these technological services include annual operating budgets of \$164,695, in addition to existing investment in Information Technology personnel to support these resources.

Audience: Institutions

Form

Published: September 2019 © Higher Learning Commission

Plans for the Future (or Future Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.

The work of the initiative will continue. The processes and structure established as a result of the initiative are well accepted. The campus community recognizes the importance of making student success, persistence, and completion a central organizing feature when making programmatic, budgetary, and personnel decisions. A general understanding has replaced the original fears of faculty engagement that providing support and evaluating success efforts allows the university to achieve our mission.

Our way forward is guided by Goal 5, Structure and disseminate persistence and completion data, student success program analysis, and related student success information to promote broad engagement in student success. In addition, the Persistence and Completion Academy continues to make policy and procedure recommendations based on data and analysis. One new persistence project, Conditional Enrollment, began in Spring 2020 due to the persistence and completion analysis of barriers to enrollment in subsequent semesters. The committee recommended moving from the traditional bursar hold after student bills were generated, to a model where all students were placed on a manageable payment plan and were allowed to register for subsequent semesters provided they were making satisfactory progress. Early analysis of results is currently underway, but initial takeaways are that the majority of students taking advantage of this program are making a measurable difference in their likelihood of enrolling sooner and helping them avoid the accumulation of large bills. This effort may be adapted as the analyses are complete for a year. Still, the effort itself is indicative of the shift in approach at the university toward promoting persistence and completion in innovative ways but always attending to the results of these efforts.

10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

The university would be happy to share any information regarding this Quality Initiative. The practices which we believe other institutions would find meaningful include regular data analysis reviews according to a schedule appropriate to the various programs and processes impacting student success, persistence, and completion. We found embedding evaluations and analyses into regular university processes from outcomes assessment, program reviews, and budget planning to be very useful. We also recommend integrating critical metrics for institutional goals into broader university-wide planning, as OPSU did in strategic planning for the university which included a scorecard with student success metrics and which can be found at https://www.opsu.edu/About/Strategic-Plan/.

Audience: Institutions

Form