

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Joliet Junior College

Project Details		
Title	Fostering a Positive Institutional Culture to Reinforce the College as a Premiere Learning Community	Status COMPLETED
Category	Any Category	Updated 09-14-2004
Timeline	Planned Project Kickoff 05-11-2002 Actual Completion	Reviewed 10-14-2004 Created 11-23-2009 Version 1

1: Project Goal

A: The institutional climate at Joliet Junior College, albeit not commonly communicated, does have a strong positive force on student learning. This precedent was demonstrated by the aggregated results of the fall 2000 Organizational Survey. Administered to faculty and staff, the participants indicated that they aspire to the mission and philosophy of the college. However, they did not believe that there was uniform commitment to this mission across employee constituency groups. The primary objective of this project is to strengthen the collegiality among faculty, staff, students, and the other stakeholders of Joliet Junior College. To this end, the college has articulated six institutional core values. Via the continuance of monitoring and improving, the college will strive to incorporate those values in every process that affects student learning.

2: Reasons For Project

A: This project can only enhance the realization of the college's mission and goals. Promoting a collegial environment among peers will more acutely capitalize on the talents of the staff and faculty. Subsequently, efforts to reinforce the college's culture will overtly demonstrate the college's commitment to strengthening the learning community that currently exists.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: -Human Resources, -Faculty Development, -Student Services-Counseling, -Student Services-Registration & Admissions, -Student Services-Financial Aid, -JJC Bookstore, and -Business Office - Student Services Center Business Office-Student Service Center

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: Performance management: The next step in the process is to disseminate the college's core values to the college community at large and have the core values demonstrated by example and recognition. Staff commitment to these core values will be vital to the further endorsement of the institutional culture. Therefore, one vital process is a recognition and reward system that ensures that staff is consistently acknowledged for their alignment with these core values. Recruitment, admission, and registration of students: With new college-wide customer service expectations in place, each student will be assisted promptly & adequately and treated fairly & consistently. Counseling and academic advising: Students will also be treated with respect; their concerns will be valued. Accordingly, staff will be responsive in terms of timeliness, appropriateness, and relevance to student requests. Institutional planning: The strategic planning process will continue to incorporate input and counsel from the various stakeholder groups. The strategic plan will reflect the institution's core values and its critical importance to the college's competitive advantage. Information technology: The phone system will be revamped to include a friendly, easy to use menu for college constituents to reach the most appropriate office. Staff and faculty alike will have a consistent message that is informative and friendly.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: -The college is presently publishing a monthly new sletter dedicated to continuous improvement and institutional culture activities. It is anticipated that this will be ongoing. Slated are articles to feature institutional core values, customer service training & new customer service processes, and a regular updates on the AQIP and strategic planning processes. -The core values team has been established as a sanctioned college committee. As such, their charge for the 2002 year is to: develop examples of institutional core value

behaviors, to generate recognition systems that feature the adoption of core values, and to regularly monitor the core values for their relevance to the college climate and their pertinence to student learning. -Customer service training will continue. Modifications to the training will reflect upgraded skills on the part of the student support staff and the expression of needs and expectations of students and college stakeholders.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: College Relations: The number of publications, training, committees, and other functions that distribute and assimilate the college's core values into their activities will be tracked. Employee Relations: The number and context of professional collaborations among staff that directly affects student learning will be highlighted. Exemplary examples of these partnerships will be shared to encourage an increase in the cohesiveness of this learning community. The occurrence of these extraordinary examples will be monitored in the fall 2002 year. Recognition & Compensation Systems: By 2003, faculty and staff will be compensated, in part, by their demonstration of institutional core values. This system still needs to be developed.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: -The establishment of institutional core values. As a side bar, the articulation of those core values by all campus employees is equally as important, -Consummate examples of faculty collaborations on projects that impact student learning, -Documentation of the linkage to the core values to the strategic plan, and -Improvement in student satisfaction (of 5% or more) with respect to knowledge of staff, timeliness of response, and helpfulness with problems in the following support areas: Admissions, Records & Registration, Financial Aid, Payment Center, Academic Advising, and Counseling.

8: Other Information

A: -College core values published in at least 5 college publications -2002 student satisfaction ratings improve by at least 5% over 2001 student satisfaction ratings in each of the following areas: Admissions, Records and registration, Financial Aid, and the Payment Center, Academic Advising, and Counseling -Establishment of institutional core values -Designated staff participate in Customer Service Training -Inclusion of institutional core values in the college's Strategic Plan Action Strategies -Integration of CQIN, AQIP, Quality Initiative, and Assessment Committees regarding their respective mission and objectives-The proposal of three recognition or compensation systems by faculty and staff -By random sample of 50 employees, 100% of faculty / staff will be able to: 1) Recall 4-6 of the institutional core values, 2) Cite examples of their work that is aligned with the core values -2003 student satisfaction ratings improve by at least 5% over 2002 student satisfaction ratings in each of the following areas: Admissions, Records and registration, Financial Aid, and the Payment Center, Academic Advising, and Counseling -Institutional core value work examples are articulated and disseminated -New staff/faculty orientation will include a review of institutional core values -Customer service best practices identified and disseminated -Best practices in terms of faculty collaborations/partnerships will be identified -Integration of CQIN, AQIP, Quality Initiative, and Assessment Committees regarding their respective services and programs-Three faculty or staff collaborations will be showcased at two college-wide events -2004 student satisfaction ratings improve by at least 5% over 2003 in each of the following areas: Admissions, Records and registration, Financial Aid, and the Payment Center, Academic Advising, and Counseling. -In place will be a recognition and compensation system that rewards the championing of core values -At least three support service areas will demonstrate their alignment with best practices identified in 2002

Project Update

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: This Quality Action Project accomplished a great deal and in some ways completed many of the goals set for the first three years in the first year. The institutional core values were adopted in spring 2002 (RICH in Quality - Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, Humor & Well Being, Innovation, and Quality). The 6 values have been used in the development of the budget the last two years as requestors needed to justify which institutional core value(s) would be affected by a request for new money. The campus clerical and support staff were exposed to a series of programs concerning "customer service" and the core values took a lead role in that training. As part of the Quality Action Project initiative, four large customer service seminars were conducted. The seminars were tailored to the results of the 2000 Organizational Climate Survey, the CLARUS enrollment and marketing audit, and the Institutional Culture Quality Action Project stretch targets. Over 130 employees from all constituent types (Administrators, Faculty, Physical Plant, Clerical, Support Staff, and Food Service) have been trained in identification of customers, customer service delivery, and customer service core

values: Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, and Tangible (properties of interaction). A review of the performance targets for Years One and Two shows that quantitative and qualitative stretch targets have been accomplished for years one and two. AQIP and CQIN are coordinated activities which focus the campus on the internal and external customer. Satisfaction surveys demonstrate the success of recent efforts and fulfill the goal of increasing performance by 5 % per year. The only exception to the achievement of established goals was in the area of design and execution of a survey to ascertain whether or not employees recognized and regularly used the core values. During Year Two work was begun to achieve the important goals of Year Three under the performance targets; namely establishing a recognition and compensation system that champions work on the institutional core values and having three student support areas demonstrate their alignment with the best practices and core values. The plan is to accomplish this through the development of the Performance Appraisal System (PAS). PAS is being developed and is intricately tied to the core values. As part of the new performance management system all student services units will have to establish annual performance goals which will be related to institutional goals and core values.

2: Institution Involvement

A: People involved in this project were: • Core Values Team • Quality Planning Team The Core Values Team and Quality Planning Team consisted of representatives from all the employee groups. Moreover, the Core Value Recognition Program Team is being facilitated by a support staff (para-professional) employee. For the Customer Service Training, a pilot group of employees were asked to participate and provide feedback on the originally proposed instruction. The final training program was developed in relation to the results of the 2000 Organizational Climate Survey. PAS will be piloted this Fall. Two employee committees composed of support staff and administrators have worked with a professional consulting firm to develop the new system.

3: Next Steps

A: The biggest next step in this Quality Action Project will be the important final step. Years One and Two were devoted to establishing core values and laying the benchmarks for an institutional plan which organizes planning, budgeting, and finally employee evaluation and development around an agreed upon set of values, goals. Joliet Junior College is right on the cusp of establishing a system which will have annual institutional goals, "functional unit" goals, and individual goals driving planning, budgeting, and evaluation. The annual planning and budgeting cycle has been firmly established; however, the evaluation piece is still on the "to-do" list. After some three years of background work to develop the goals and values, and with the assistance of RSM McGladrey, Inc., the final touches are being placed on a new comprehensive evaluation system for support staff and administration. This system is being fine-tuned by representative committees and was unveiled in February 2004. This system will require the Board and senior administration to establish annual goals and will be followed by "functional units" establishing their goals (from the set established). Individuals will then work with supervisors to establish annual goals and training needs. All of this was completed just prior to the April timeframe. This coordinated system is what was first envisioned when this QAP was developed.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: Performance Appraisal System The College has operated under a compensation and evaluation system which was based on a model used successfully in manufacturing (MEMA) since the beginning of the 1990's. This system did not seem to be able to handle the changes in position description and compensation, especially in the areas related to technology, as the years progressed. The College employed RSM McGladrey, Inc. to help it through the process of redesigning its classification and compensation system for administrators and classified staff. Specific goals and outputs of the program included: (1) documenting a compensation strategy that will guide JJC in evaluating and enhancing its compensation program; (2) reviewing job descriptions for compliance with governmental regulations; (3) finalizing a job classification methodology tailored to JJC's unique jobs and environment (4) completing an analysis of JJC compensation levels vis-à-vis the competitive employment market for 60 benchmark positions; (5) developing a salary administration plan that considers both internal equity and competitive market; (6) documenting salary administration policies and procedures; (7) preparing a final report that documents all key project findings and recommendations; (8) communicating to relevant constituencies during the course of completing the project work. McGladrey, Inc used two of its professional staff to meet with the President's Cabinet and a committee of selected, representative administration and support staff to design and complete the project. The work included an opportunity for all staff affected (slightly more than 200) to examine and update their job descriptions. Information from the ICCB salary survey and regional comparative job placements from business and industry were used to complete this project. At the completion of this work a number of staff and administrative positions were re-graded and appropriate salary compensation assigned. The College completed this work in the last year and now believes it is well positioned for the next decade or more with salary and compensation for administrators and support staff. As Year Three of this QAP begins, the College is well entrenched in the work which will be step two of this "best practice". Namely, RSM McGladrey, Inc. is well along its way in assisting JJC to design a

performance appraisal system to compliment its new classification and compensation system. A committee of representative administrators and staff worked on the annual performance review system and designed a performance appraisal system which will annually evaluate all administrative and professional staff against a series of college, unit, and personal goals. The performance appraisal system will use the SMART approach (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-defined). It will be a cascading process to establish/communicate priorities and subsequently develop both functional and individual metrics and objectives. The most exciting outcome of this second phase of the process will be the development of a system whereby individuals and units set annual goals within the context of institutional goals and their performance measured against these goals. A merit-based section of the annual compensation system will be the eventual outcome of the performance management system.

5: Project Challenges

A: The challenges ahead for this QAP are sustainability in an era of reduced funding. Despite, as the Constellation Survey results showed, employee agreement on the alignment of what Joliet Junior College does best and what matters most to it are evidence that Joliet Junior College has made great strides over the past 5 years in institutionalizing a culture of quality.

6: AQIP Involvement

A: Yes. JJC is willing to share our success in this project with others. For more information on the transition to a performance management system, contact John Byrnes, Human Resources (815-280-2515, jbyrnes@jjc.edu). For information about the success of the employee recognition program, contact Kelly Rogers (815-280-6626, krogers@jjc.edu). For information about the quality planning team or action projects contact Denis Wright (815-280-2245, dwright@jjc.edu) or Ryan Smith (815-280-2568, rsmith@jjc.edu).

Update Review

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: A. Based on the provided information, the College's Action Project, Fostering a Positive Institutional Culture to Reinforce the College as a Premiere Learning Community has made significant progress in its implementation of articulated objectives. The College has progressed each year with its quantitative and qualitative stretch targets. College core values were established and published with expected improvements in student ratings. Customer service training and inclusion of institutional core values in the College's Strategic Plan action strategies occurred. Student satisfaction surveys after years one and two of this Action Project demonstrate improvement and the success of recent efforts. Year three highlights the recognition and compensation system that aligns best practices and core values. A Performance Appraised System (PAS) is being developed and is tied to core values. As part of this system, all student services units will establish annual performance goals which will be related to institutional goals and core values. I would encourage you to post the AQIP principles on this Action Project that apply to the AQIP criteria to further define this project.

2: Institution Involvement

A: B. Efforts have been made to involve broad participation all of the College's employee groups. Support staff and administrators worked with a professional consulting firm to develop the new PAS system.

3: Next Steps

A: C. Your next steps to establish a system which will have institutional goals, unit goals and individual goals that will drive planning, budgeting and evaluation is to be commended. This directly applies to the AQIP criteria of planning continuous improvement. The evaluation component is described as being fine tuned as the new comprehensive evaluation system for support staff and administration is implemented.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: D. The Performance Appraisal System is described as positioning the College well for the next decade or more with salary and compensation for administrators and support staff. Year three will move the College further towards its work to design a performance system to compliment its new classification and compensation system. A merit-based section of the compensation system is expected

to be the eventual outcome.

5: Project Challenges

A: E. The greatest challenge noted is sustainability in an era of reduced funding. Otherw ise, great strides have been made in institutionalizing a culture of quality.

6: AQIP Involvement

A: F. The College has identified contacts for further information regarding the PAS.