

Project Details

Title	Improving Institutional Effectiveness through a Long-Range Strategic Planning Process	Status	COMPLETED
Category	8-Planning Continuous Improvement	Updated	09-11-2008
Timeline		Reviewed	09-29-2008
Planned Project Kickoff	08-21-2006	Created	11-24-2009
Actual Completion		Last Modified	01-12-2010

- **1: Project Accomplishments and Status**

- A: Since September of 2007, Mineral Area College has administered one additional survey to staff, completed the analysis of data collected during the strategic planning process and finalized the five year strategic plan. The plan was formally presented to faculty and staff on September 05, 2008 at the monthly all staff meeting and was very well received. The plan is on the agenda for approval by the College Board of Trustees in October. At the suggestion of the 2007 reviewers, an external consultant was retained to assist with the completion of the strategic plan. Laura Robinson of Spectrum Learning and Performance began assisting the strategic planning team with data analysis in the spring of 2008 and facilitated the final planning meeting in July of 2008 where the plan and related action steps were drafted. Spectrum Learning specializes in planning and leadership development and has worked with both private and public organizations. Ms. Robinson is a native of the Mineral Area College service region which made her participation particularly relevant. Laura is Ph.D. A.B.D. in Educational Leadership and policy analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia (U.M.C.) and also holds a master's degree from U.M.C. in Higher Education.
- R: This Strategic Planning Action Project should prove to be the standard for other Projects. The accomplishments of a staff survey, data analysis, and the finalization of the five-year strategic plan should be celebrated. It is a large project and could have been too large to control and measure effectively. The team's choice to use employee groups and a consultant proved to be a wise choice. Such a large Project could have been unwieldy but fell together and was well received.

- **2: Institution Involvement**

- A: Mineral Area College has continued to expect a high level of staff and constituent participation in the strategic planning process. All staff members completed one last survey in January, the campus quality survey, and the strategic planning team jointly met over the year to finalize the priorities and draft the plan. During the final planning session, all levels of College staff were represented and participated including faculty, classified staff and administration. This is the group that finalized the six goals for the current plan and began developing the action steps and assessment processes that will ensure effective implementation of this new strategic plan. The presentation of the plan to all staff members was done by members of the strategic planning committee. Faculty and classified staff members worked with our consultant to develop the presentation and three

members of the committee had a role in the presentation. This group was extremely well received by their peers, and many staff members commented positively about the process and the resulting plan.

- R: The inclusion of varied groups was essential to the continued success of the Project. The update did not mention the participation of external stakeholders who were mentioned in the original Project description. Their inclusion and buy-in would be important to overall success. The use of committee members in the presentation was wise and indicates varied involvement.
- **3: Next Steps**
- A: In October of 2008 the Mineral Area College Board of Trustees agenda will include approval of the strategic plan. After Board approval, the strategic planning committee will begin asking staff members to serve on various work groups as identified in the plan action steps so that the goals of the plan may be accomplished. A steering committee of subject matter experts within the institution will be responsible for accomplishment of each goal. The action steps will ensure that tasks are assigned to the appropriate people and that the progress made toward the accomplishment of each goal is regularly assessed and evaluated. Specific timelines for each goal are outlined in the plan and the steering committees and work groups will be expected to stay within the timelines. Work groups will report to the strategic planning committee on a regular basis so that the committee can evaluate the progress made toward the accomplishment of each goal.
- R: The creation of various work groups to continue the success of the Project is important, but the creation of these action steps with measurable goals is going to be another large challenge. Again, external stakeholder involvement was not mentioned. Perhaps an Action Project focusing on this aspect of the Strategic Plan should be considered. It might be wise to look at the number of action steps being created and also consider celebrating the close of this very large Project and create smaller Projects that could be more easily managed and measured. This might also drive the involvement of more stakeholders deeper into the institution's culture.
- **4: Resulting Effective Practices**
- A: Teams and workgroups from all sectors of the College have collaborated on this project. Administration has made every effort to keep people informed and engaged which has created an environment of trust among staff members. One faculty member who was involved in previous strategic planning for the College commented that this was the first time she had been involved in this process where it was clear that checks and balances to measure success were included. Based on staff feedback from the earlier survey, the College has developed a human resources office and hired a new human resources director. This long needed expansion of services to College staff is a direct result of the College's involvement in AQIP and the adoption of our Action Projects.
- R: The growth of involvement of various constituencies at the College should continue to grow. The addition of a new human resources director should help the College enhance how people are valued and encouraged to participate in professional development and quality processes. The earlier suggestion to create more Action Projects rather than more action steps might help grow involvement in the College's quality improvement.

- **5: Project Challenges**

- A: The obvious challenge will be to meet the timelines to accomplish the goals set forth in the plan. Much work needs to be completed by steering committees and work groups so that the plan does not lie idle until time to develop the next five year plan. Part of the plan addresses facility and capital needs for the next five years. These needs will be identified in the ten year campus master plan. Given the uncertain economy administration will be challenged to secure the necessary resources to make significant progress toward the facility needs of our growing student population.
- R: Great strides have been made in the creation of the College's Strategic Plan and that should be widely celebrated. Many challenges are ahead for the Steering Committee due to the breadth of "Improving Institutional Effectiveness through a Long-Range Strategic Planning Process." Perhaps it would be less daunting if it were decided that the "planning process" has been accomplished and now it is time to create smaller Action Projects to "implement" various goals under the umbrella of the Strategic Plan.