




Title: **Improving program retention**
Date Begun: 2.1.08 Status: Current

Form Navigation

Note: Some institutions have elected not to share all information with the public. Therefore you may notice some fields on the form are not filled out.


Timeline:

Kickoff: January 2008
Target Completion: May 2010
Actual Completion:

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


This project focuses on five pilot college academic programs, both one- and two-year programs with attrition concerns, to reduce attrition rates. The 1st order of business will be to determine and analyze appropriate data. The 2nd will be to work collectively to establish goals, learn of and apply retention best practices, collect and analyze post improvement implementation data and enact further improvements, both in the classroom/lab as well as in student learning support services. The data utilization and decision-making processes will be disseminated and applied to other program cohorts within a yearly program review cycle.

This project will also address results data generated from the Academic Progress Reporting System (an intervention system design to address students at-risk of failing) and how to increase effectiveness and utilization of this system.

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


Primary

Category 1 – Helping Students Learn


Rationale for Action  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:

Student success and welfare is central to our college mission, vision, and values. This project supports and augments its sister Action Project: *Increasing enrollment: Sealing the deal*, which will create profiles of each program and its students to ensure each program is able to reach and speak to the demographic diversity within its service region. It makes sense for our college to focus on program retention: MnSCU dashboards of retention and success rates provide data that may be useful in a broad sense, but does not provide insight to assist programmatic decision-making – by not identifying and providing data that individuals can truly impact at the program level, we miss valuable opportunities for program betterment. With both action projects working simultaneously, the college intends to better understand student and other stakeholder needs, and improve current, or create new, processes to address those needs.

While overall college success/retention rates exceed MnSCU system averages, Southeast Technical has committed to improving retention and success rates as a college goal and has committed to a 1.5% improvement in college retention as a MnSCU system target. To achieve these targets we need to ask if we have the data and forums needed to address attrition at the program level, are we identifying at-risk students soon enough and are we getting our students the help they need.

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


Academics, Student Services

Processes Affected  Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:


Program Review, Student Advising, Tutoring, APRS, Advisory Committee interactions and decision-making

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

This project is designed to establish an annual mini program review process. Two years is the target to move from pilot to implementation of a perpetual cycle of data analysis at the program level.


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

Project progress satisfaction among participants; All action projects are evaluated regularly (2X per semester) by both the college Institutional Effectiveness committee as well as the college Executive Council, and evaluated once per year by faculty in program review. Additionally, college action projects may receive review/discussion at MnQIP – the MnSCU-sponsored organization to promote the sharing of best practices among MnSCU AQIP-member institutions.

Outcome Measures  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:

Improve program completion rates: Reduced attrition post drop/add period; Reduced attrition by term; Increased retention by term; Increased retention by year; Increased APRS utilization; Improvements to APRS.

Year (or Phase)	Quantitative and Qualitative Stretch Targets		
	Determining needed data; data analysis; establish benchmarks	Establish Education sequence	Academic Progress Reporting System
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish project co-leads • Determine and gather program attrition and related data for both 1 and 2-year programs • Determine and engage program cohort for pilot • Analyze attrition/retention data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who are the students who are leaving? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patterns within each program, with considerations including gender, age, cultural, basic skills test scores, previous education, off-site commitments ○ Define what we mean by an “at risk” student and timely intervention best practices. ○ Determine within each program why students are either declaring new majors, transferring to other institutions, or leaving SE Technical altogether; • Determine improvement opportunities • Assist program instructors with enacting improvements • Establish and track success measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determine opportunities for improvement ○ Establish college implementation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate and deliver education sequence, with specific dates projected, for faculty and staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Readings and presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student learning behaviors today vs. yesterday ▪ Retaining students of varying generations ○ Forums for discussion and sharing of best practices ○ Forums for data analysis and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRS: analysis of current data relative to utilization and success • Determine and enact improvements • Establish campaign to increase utilization
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis: what is/not working • Determine application to other program cohorts • Establish process for annual review and continual action 		

Keeping Focus  How do you plan to keep your institution's focus on this project?

- Establish communication/education plan to include:
 - Defining retention/attrition for all college employees
 - Data presentation on 1st cohort baseline, improvements and results
 - Education sequence for all faculty/staff on retention best practices
 - The interplay of student learning styles and instructor teaching styles
 - Expansion of assessment and teaching methods
 - There is potential for this project to utilize Faculty Excellence Award grant money to assist the 1st cohort in engaging with this project and its processes in an atypical manner: Through regular off-hours reading/discussion/planning and implementation sessions.
 - Periodic data analysis and dissemination of results

Contact Person Information: 

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Opportunities

- Improve contact with students who leave college. Update survey and try to reach students.
- Program (Graduate Surveys)
- If we retain students...Good Advertising by “word of mouth” from students.
- Classroom presentations from graduates.
- Milestone advertising- Month 1-2-3, etc. for a chance to interact with students more often.
- Program direction plans-lay out by semester the classes a student is taking.
- Exit advising.
- Orientation on advising for faculty.
- Build numbers.
- Expand number of students.
- Articulation agreement.
- Funnel elsewhere.
- More program interaction/less cross correcting.
- Resource center tutors.
- APRS Student validation.
- Drop from full- time to part-time. Add certifications.
- Flexibility.
- Peer tutoring/tutoring in LRC.
- Contact with advisors.
- High school classes students can take Perkins 4.
- Scheduling of Fund Math and English in Summer Free.
- Continual education opportunities.
 - APRS.
 - Cost savings with retention.
 - Improve student support.
 - Better implement APRS.
 - Great marketing tool.
 - Remedial reading courses need to be offered.
 - Good advising-students deserve to have their life-hoe can we help them?
 - More flexibility – Offer evenings.
 - ESL offerings-Must have.
 - Have to open up numbers for theory 5011.
- Getting employers involved.
- Talk to students.
- Less demanding on employees so they can go to school.
- Offer evening classes. Flexibility in programs.
- Intervention with students. Change schedules of staff.
- Attract more capable student in the first place.
- Connect with major ASAP.
- Get them hooked.
- Progression committees/tutoring to help them succeed.
- ESL program.
- Track under-performing students, so we don't lose them.
- Understand concept of retention.
- See if students having problems. Plan ahead at risk students.
- Tutoring.
- Attendance. Students need to come to class.
- More flexible with working with student schedules, outside the box.
- Attract non-traditional students.
- Developing basic/soft/computer skills.
- Pre-classes/Summer/Evening.
- Ask what students' expectations are (face to face).
- Ask students what in their program were pros and cons.
- More program opportunities; More skills/college readiness.
- Tutoring/learning objectives.
- More hands on teaching.
- Separate gen-eds from trade specific
- Increase PSEO.
- Better advising/scheduling/career choices.
- Showcase our programs.
- Financial gain.\Better “word of mouth” from happier students. Special reputation.
- Faculty and staff care about students.
- Intervention programs.
- More personable.
- Advising students.
- To contact students in trouble.
- To save money.
- Benefit to parents if incoming student. Build more cohesive alumni.

Challenges

- Compliance from students/faculty for surveys.
- Look to “new” ways of doing...Change is hard.
- Facility.
- Should be put if daily work, built in system.
- Expectation- False perceptions on opportunities.
- Time cost to faculty.
- Scheduling problems in Fall.
- Students with undeclared major or no goals.
- Liability when instructor not present.
- Money for lab assistants and tutors.
- No time for advising.
- Need counseling personnel with full time hours.
- On-line course reduce retention. No on-site daycare??
- Need more supportive services.
- Attendance-How to get them to come.
- Maintaining costs.
- We don't have admissions standards.
- Assessing reading level.
- Language.
- People have to work and go to school at the same time, have to pay the bills.
- Students are tired-un-safe practices.
- Commitment from businesses.
- Finding time to be flexible.
- Undecided majors.
- Need to direct/counsel toward strengths.
- Financial Aid requirements require so many credits while working full-time.
- Many personal problems cause students to leave school.
- APR works b/c e-mails sent, but do v- e-mails? Most don't get 1 step further.
- Adjust and point faculty. Get them engaged with how to help students and resources available.
- Are there proper tutors available off-days for student help.
- Time. Don't understand idea that they may fail if they don't take steps.
- Do not lower the bar.
- Everyone is techno-literate.
- Improve services to students (Getting students to use it) Resistance.
- Readiness for college (Academically)
- Emotional readiness for college.
- Needs to have gen-eds. Industry requires Math/English.
- High schools- unaware of students best fit and what we can offer them.
- Difficult for some specific programs.
- Screening students (ie; nursing) ultimately help[s students in long run.
- Always be a transfer students group.
- Advising/not helping students reach goals/program criteria.
- More structure- Probation/Adversity.
- Students flexibility.
- Cost.
- Average age is dropping.
- Maturity level.
- Monies.
- Hard to collect data about reasons student left.
- Some students are not retrainable.

Volunteers: “Improving program retention”	
*Tracy Kirchner	*Erin J Latten
Kelly Kizer	*Gale Lanning
*Mike Lewis	Brian Masyga
Bunny Novak	Angel Mytas
Marsha Edblom-Zich	Patty Weigand
*Phyllis Swift	Leah Schnaith
*Sara Hoffman	Susan Reed
Brad Alsop	*Roger Holland
*Sandy VerBout	Al Ducett
*David Vincent	*Marilyn Tomfohrde
Paul Polzer	Roger Skugrud
*Tao Peng	Jeff Meyer
Betsy Woodward	Shelly Cierzan
Butch Bundy	*Greg Beckwith
John Hale	*Jill Halverson
*Julie Haedtke	*Kris Oувerson
Pat Gregory	Greg Cady
*Terri Fritz	*Melissa Carrington-Irwin
Connie Ducklow	Tony Fritz
*Mike Cappmeyer	Becky Korder
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