Campaign One: Helping Students Learn
Action Project A

Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: In progress; revised project (originally posted April 2006)
Target completion date: 2009-05-31
Actual completion date:

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:

General Education Reform

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

The purpose of this revised project is to reform Indiana University Northwest's General Education program to provide a coherent educational experience leading to the following student learning outcomes: preparation for lifelong learning, preparation for ethical practices, preparation for successful careers, and preparation for effective citizenship. The General Education/Assessment Committee completed its revision of the General Education Goals (Spring 2006), and it will develop learning experiences, delivery formats, and assessment strategies for each new goal/principle (first goal/principle completed Fall 2006, second and third goal—2007-2008; and fourth and fifth goal-2008-2009) and will seek the appropriate constituency approval at each stage in this revision process.

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

Primary Category: Helping Students Learn

D. 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:

Based on IU Northwest's Systems Appraisal Feedback Report (April 11, 2006) and the information gleaned at the 2007 AQIP Strategy Forum, the Strategic Planning Team, the AQIP Team, and faculty reaffirm our commitment to the comprehensive revision of General Education and will use these feedback mechanisms to capitalize on effective practices we have already incorporated into our process. In the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, the reviewers note the following in relation to IU Northwest's General Education (the 2006 feedback was received as we were already well into the first phase of revision efforts) and the *Criteria for Accreditation*:

> IUN mentions nine general education goals which align with program-specific outcomes, academic units, and campus mission. The broad general education

goals/statements fail to supply an outcome-oriented basis to allow IUN to demonstrate the pattern of knowledge and skills acquisition expected of students upon program completion. Without specific, measurable common student outcomes, IUN will experience difficulty providing direct measures of effective teaching and learning within the university and among peer institution comparisons. Results of student outcomes attainment will help IUN identify and focus areas of improvement to set the stage for continuous improvement processes surrounding Helping Students Learn. (6)

As the reviewers were preparing this apt feedback, the General Education/Assessment Committee was in the midst of producing such outcome-based goals for the General Education program; however, that is just the first phase of an extensive process.

The rationale for the centrality of this project is that the General Education program influences the learning of all IUN students. This project and its focus are vital at this time because the General Education program has not been revised in a decade, the IU system is revising its General Education program (and we are steps ahead of this larger process), and the IUN Strategic Planning process has identified academic excellence as an area of focus. The underlying rationale is to provide an education responsive to the needs of a 21st-century student in a global environment by providing experiences that lead to the achievement of the learning outcomes identified in the Vision. However, after attending the January 2007 Strategy Forum, we concluded that the General Education Project was too large and broad; therefore, we separated the assessment piece and developed it into an additional Action Project under the AQIP "campaign" of "Helping Students Learn."

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

Academic Affairs,
All academic units and departments, and
Student Services

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

Program design and implementation/ Curriculum development: General Education Program will be revised, and those revisions will be implemented. Other programs may be revised to implement innovative general education initiatives.

Course preparation: New courses will be designed and implemented, and faculty development opportunities will be offered.

Budgeting: Funds will be provided for faculty development, course/program revision, and conference travel related to General Education.

Planning: Faculty Organization General Education/Assessment Committee will develop drafts for faculty input and approval. As initiatives are approved by the Faculty Organization, they will be presented to the appropriate curriculum committees. The institution will also be planning at a strategic level to accommodate the necessary changes in such a revision process.

Faculty development: The Academic Affairs office will make resources (funds, opportunities, speakers, etc) for faculty development available. The Faculty Organization General Education/Assessment Committee will help to coordinate and design necessary faculty development opportunities.

Advising: As the faculty revises the General Education program and the campus implements these revisions, advisors will be informed and oriented to these revisions so that students can be appropriately and effectively advised.

Co-curriculum development: Co-curricular components of an effective General Education program will be designed and implemented.

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

The rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project is related to the natural progression through the following phases and the length of time necessary to effectively accomplish them:

Phase One: Revise General Education Goals (Spring 2006--completed),
Phase Two: Develop Outcomes, Learning Experiences and Assessments for Principle (Goal) #1 (Fall 2006--Spring 2007),
Phase Three: Develop Outcomes, Learning Experiences and Assessments for Principle (Goal) #2 and #3 (Spring 2007—Spring 2008),
Phase Four: Develop Outcomes, Learning Experiences and Assessments for Principle (Goal) #4 and #5 (Fall 2008—Spring 2009).

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

We will monitor the following processes to assess our progress:
Faculty Organization decision-making and approval process,
Curriculum committee(s) processes,
Process of faculty input,
Academic Affairs processes,
Deans' Council processes,
Processes of Faculty Development, and
Processes of implementation of learning experiences and assessment.

I. 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:

The outcome measure will include the approval of the revised goals and the

implementation of learning experiences and assessment measures. Ultimately, the outcome measures that will indicate the success of this Action Project will be the result of stages slightly beyond the revision and implementation when we begin to assess the individual and specific student learning outcomes. See also Section G above.

J. Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

We will keep our institution's attention and energies focused on this Project and its goals in the following manner:
* locate this project in faculty-driven committees and structures,
* provide funds for faculty development and course development, and
* provide institutional/administrative support of project

K. Project Leader and Contact Person

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