



Academic
Quality Improvement
Project

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

Action Project Annual Update Review

June 10, 2003

Institution Name: Augsburg College

Action Project Title: Assessment of Student Learning

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

Review: AQIP is pleased to know you are continuing to meet your institutional goals regarding this project. Your Assessment Committee has obviously been busy sponsoring various opportunities for faculty and staff to learn about and to improve department-related assessment plans. Using an outside presenter to initiate your project, and then to capitalize upon in-house resources for continued momentum, supports your focus on enhancing a learning-centered environment while encouraging responsible institutional citizenship.

The benchmarking instrument to be designed by your Assessment Committee for measuring assessment implementation could be a powerful tool. It is not clear, however, how that will be designed except that the Higher Learning Commission's criteria will be included. It is also not clear how the final tool will be utilized, or what potential ramifications may exist for those departments not complying with the institutional focus on documentable assessment.

B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

Review: Your broad-based academic staff involvement with this project is exemplified by your multiple opportunities for staff participation in the assessment re-design process. Formal meetings, brown bag lunches, e-mails, etc., reflect an attempt to develop a collaborative work environment. It is not clear how this collaborative environment will be maintained throughout the life of the Project. How do you intend to maintain a continuous quality improvement attitude within your academic community? What steps are being taken to support assessment as an important Division-wide initiative in the upcoming academic year? Without a specific plan for monitoring the assessment of student learning, it is not uncommon for momentum to be lost to the apparently more pressing day-to-day issues of departmental function.

C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

Review: Your intentions for continuing your work in this area reflect your intention to use data provided by your academic departments in support of your decision-making processes. Again, it is not clear how the mechanics of this process will work. How will data submitted in July, 2003 be used to determine priorities? How will the survey instruments be used to drive change? What

resources are available through the Assessment Committee and how reputable are they viewed by institutional staff?

D. Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

Review: Several potential “effective practices” have been mentioned in your Action Project Update. It seems too early to determine if any or all of these will actually mature into efforts that can demonstrate replicability, positive cost/benefit analysis, or broad-based applicability to other higher education organizations. You should continue in your development efforts, and when you believe they have resulted in measurable results, contact AQIP so your efforts can be recognized by the broader higher education community.

E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

Review: You have made admirable progress, but there is still much to be done. The continuing evaluation of departmental assessment plans in the face of budget cuts coupled with the ever changing role of the higher education environment deems this Action Project one requiring constant shepherding. Keep up the good work. You are making notable progress!

F. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?

Review: N/A