



Integrating AQIP Categories into WSCC Governance Structures

Q1. What is the current status of your project?

A. Completed.

Q2. Please indicate the original project start date, original project end date, and anticipated completion date if project is not completed. Please list dates on separate lines.

Original start date: January 30, 2015

Original project end date: August 30, 2015

Actual project end date: May 27, 2016

Q3. Briefly describe the current status of the project. Explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institutions most recent or soon-to-be submitted systems portfolio, if applicable.

A.

1. **The project is completed.** The proposed changes have been examined and found desirable, their implementation feasible, and going beyond the original project charter, we have moved ahead with the implementation phase.
2. **Committees and departments will now be charged with maintaining measurements, outcomes, and analysis of data related to those questions for which they have been assigned responsibility. The data will be stored in a common location on the college's intranet and provide detailed basis for measuring institutional performance while also providing key information for writing each Systems Portfolio. (See the link for this response for a spreadsheet detailing how responsibility for each AQIP question has been assigned to committees and departments across the college.)**
3. Associating governance responsibilities directly with relevant AQIP Systems Portfolio Questions (hereafter "ASPQs") will enable the college to directly address opportunities detailed in the 2015 Systems Appraisal Recommendations/Strategic Challenges as indicated below.
 1. *The prevalence of mostly top-down communication:* Incorporating ASPQs into ongoing governance will necessitate lateral communication between various teams, committees and departments. Some questions require the input of multiple committees and departments which will necessitate lateral communication.
 2. *Use of comparative data:* Incorporating ASPQs into ongoing governance requires the use of meaningful, comparative data.

3. *More consistent use of and communication about data:* incorporating ASPQs into ongoing governance implies a strong reliance on data indicators relating to all processes and systems. A more consistent method of interpretation, and consequently more effective communication of and about data will necessarily follow.
4. *Need to gather information about [workforce and other] partners:* The ASPQs require a continuous study of and response to partners and other key stakeholders, most notably students and faculty. Of necessity, lateral communication will be enhanced both internally and externally.
5. *Tracking outcomes of goals:* The ASPQs require a consistent, uniform and ongoing approach not only to tracking measurable outcomes of goals, but also to documenting how each goal was set, by whom, what the key metrics were expected to be, how they were to be collected, recorded and examined, what decisions were made as a result, etc., through the Demming cycle.
6. *Set specific performance target:* The ASPQs require identification of specific and measurable performance targets. Committees and departments will have to agree on metrics, how they're to be collected and interpreted, and who's most responsible. Data-driven decisions can then be made regarding measurable ways to improve processes.
7. *Outstanding Opportunities in Prior Systems Portfolio Feedback related to 1P9:* The ASPQs require strong institution-wide tracking of learning styles, how the school responds to them (or not, as the case may be), what measurements are used, how improvements are designed and incorporated, and whether or not they are working as expected. The responsibility for addressing this challenge is now more clearly defined.
8. *Opportunity related to 8R2:* As they continually answer ASPQs, many governance groups will have to rely on existing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This will necessitate ongoing thorough analyses of the KPIs themselves.

[Spreadsheet detailing AQIP question responsibilities](#)

Q4. List the project goals as stated in the original project declaration along with the metrics/measures for assessing the progress for each goal.

A. Project goal:

"To produce a feasibility study examining a possible restructuring of all institutional committee charters and organizational and managerial mandates, charging each group with continually asking and answering all pertinent AQIP questions."

Original Deliverables:

- monthly progress reports delivered to the Continuous Improvement Committee
- a chart or spreadsheet mapping WSCC standing committees to relevant ASPQs

- analyses of the practicality of expecting standing committees to incorporate answering ASPQs on an ongoing basis while also managing their mandated tasks
- a final report summarizing the feasibility, desirability and doability of the proposed changes

Q5. Describe what has been accomplished with this project over the past year, specifically referring to quantifiable results that show progress. You may need to include a discussion clarifying how the original goals and anticipated outcomes may have shifted during the year.

A.

- A complete list of standing committees and their charters was compiled.
- A spreadsheet mapping those charters to specific ASPQs was prepared, using the changes AQIP made to the Systems Portfolio structure in 2014 (Six categories instead of nine.)
- The list was re-written to include responsibility for ongoing documentation of assigned ASPQs into each charter.
- The spreadsheet and revised charters were presented to the Continuous Improvement committee for comment.
- Feedback from the Continuous Improvement Committee was documented.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), using a more complete understanding of the actual functioning of various governance groups on campus, suggested revisions to the spreadsheet so that ASPQs were more logically assigned.
- Existing committee charters were amended to include specific responsibilities for ASPQs as appropriate.
- Because the Continuous Improvement committee noted that many institutional functions are actually carried out by departments and governance teams that are not specifically chartered as standing committees, responsibility for some ASPQs were assigned to those groups rather than committees.
- The mapping of committees, teams, and departments to ASPQs was presented at an extended year-end meeting of the Continuous Improvement Committee; feedback was solicited, given and discussed.
- The mapping was revised on the basis of the input and then presented at a year-end meeting of all Committee Chairs; feedback was solicited, given and discussed.
- Final changes were made to the spreadsheet and committee charters.
- The consensus from both groups was that the proposed changes are feasible, desirable and doable.
- The new process is scheduled to be implemented during the 2016-17 academic year.

The original timeline proved unrealistic due to administrative and faculty personnel changes. However, the project actually went beyond the original charter of creating a feasibility study into implementation of the project recommendations.

Q6. Describe how various members of the learning community have participated in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project's duration, particularly during the past year.

A. The college's Continuous Improvement Team has guided this project. That team is a cross-departmental group consisting of faculty, professional staff, and administrators. Additionally, the President and Executive Committee reviewed the work as it was progressing and provided input and encouragement for the process. Finally, all of the chairpersons of the college's standing committees were involved in reviewing the plan and providing input. Along the way, all those involved and consulted strongly supported the effort to improve our processes for systematically gathering and analyzing performance data and provided excellent input into the final plan that we have adopted and are beginning to implement.

Q7. Describe the effect that this project has had on the institution, students, and others in the learning community. What has the institution learned that can be identified as a good practice to use in other aspects of its quality work or from which other institutions might benefit?

A. The project has required the institution as a whole to study the AQIP Systems Portfolio questions, examine the existing committee and governance structures, question both in detail, and draw conclusions regarding the possibility, practicality and desirability of using ASPQs to integrate continuous improvement more firmly into the institutional environment.

The outcome of this process is a better alignment between our committee and governance structures through incorporating the six AQIP categories and their related questions more firmly into our regular daily business. We believe this alignment will improve communication, data collection, data analysis, and use of data for improving the college and its systems. We also believe that it will create a consistent, ongoing process for tracking information required to write the Systems Portfolio.

Q8. Describe the anticipated challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project's goals.

A. This Action Project was originally proposed as a feasibility study only. The project of integrating Systems Portfolio questions into institutional governance on an ongoing basis was mapped, discussed, revised, and presented to all groups and individuals who would be impacted by such a change. Feedback was returned to the Action Project coordinator. Anticipated challenges such as reluctance to change operations were surprisingly minimal. On the contrary: there was unexpectedly engaged buy-in from all groups.

WSCC recognizes that integrating answering ASPQs on a continual basis into the work of each responsible governance body poses significant challenges. For one thing, we know that a change of this magnitude in the institutional culture cannot be pushed and will not happen overnight.

We expect there to be trips and falls along the way; but we expect that to be part of the continuous improvement learning curve.

The Continuous Improvement Committee will have to take charge of mentoring the changes, at least in rough outline, in conjunction with the committees, teams or individuals who have the most hands-on knowledge and responsibility. Therefore the Continuous Improvement Committee will at least temporarily (over the course of a few years, possibly), be re-shaping much of the way the institution operates. We recognize the daunting magnitude of the project.

Q9. In light of the project goals, current circumstances, institutional learning from this project, and anticipated barriers to success, list the next steps to be taken over the course of the next 12-24 months in order to complete or institutionalize the results of this action project. Provide a timeline for completing each next step.

A. Now that the committee charters have been revised to include reference to the specific ASPQs that each committee will "own" and track, we will need to implement that tracking process. Members of the Continuous Improvement Team will visit each committee at one of its fall semester 2016 meetings to go over the assigned ASPQs and discuss the expectations for longitudinally gathering information regarding the measurement, outcomes, and analysis of data related to those questions along with where that information should be posted annually on the college's intranet. A similar process will take place with college departments and governance teams that have also been assigned responsibility for ASPQs. At the end of the year, the committees, departments, and governance teams will be reminded to post their information by May 15. The Continuous Improvement Team will review the submission of data and follow up with the appropriate individual or group to obtain any missing data. This process will then continue annually as part of the college's regular processes. The Continuous Improvement Team will monitor the success of the process and recommend changes as needed.

Q10. Provide any additional information, inquiries or concerns that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project. Enter N/A if not applicable.

A. This is a big project that will eventually impact nearly every committee and department on campus, but there is consensus that it's likely worth the trouble. The expected outcome will be an institution that is fully committed to actual *Continuous* Improvement in the fullest sense.

The corollary outcome will be an AQIP Systems Portfolio that is a living document, useful and available to all, continually updated, a point of reference and guidance for everyone. Of course once we've reached that point, compiling a Systems Portfolio for submission to the HLC should be a relatively smooth and painless process - which is what launched the idea in the first place.

Version 1.0 - Update

Q11. I certify that this project is ready for review.

A. I agree.

Version 1.0 - Review

Q12. Please comment on anything that is omitted or incomplete in the project status, dates and summary field. Enter N/A if not applicable.

A. N/A

Q13. Check for accuracy and completeness against the original Project Declaration. Are the right metrics or measures included for each goal? If not, what revisions to the metrics/measures would you suggest that the institution consider?

A. The update is accurate and complete.

Q14. Has the institution acted in meaningful ways to pursue project success, making progress as anticipated in the original project declaration? If meaningful progress or project success has not been achieved, has the institution made appropriate revisions to the goals or anticipated outcomes for this project?

A.

- **Are descriptions of resources, organization, concrete results, and reaching milestones included?**
- **Make a statement of global judgement. (i.e. "The institution is making [excellent/good/satisfactory/acceptable/slow/casual/no] progress in this action project.").**

The project was completed nine months behind schedule. The project did complete more than was originally planned, and was slowed due to staffing changes.

Q15. Are the appropriate people involved sufficiently for the nature and scope of the project?

A.

- **Is there sufficient breadth of involvement?**
- **Are the right people involved?**
- **Emphasize the roles of those who can enhance the impact, success, or effectiveness of the project.**
- **Tactfully call attention to any people that appear to have been omitted or bypassed.**

This project has broad representation from throughout the institution. The cross-departmental Continuous Improvement Team guided the project, and had input from many other teams and committees.

Q16. Does the institution show evidence of learning from what it did well?

A.

- **Acknowledge any practice that could be replicated internally in future projects.**
- **Encourage the sharing of best practices with other institutions.**

Learning occurred because the project required WSCC to study the AQIP Systems Portfolio questions, and examine existing committee and governance structures. One outcome is better alignment between committee and governance structures through incorporating the six AQIP categories and their related questions more firmly into regular daily business.

Q17. Does the institution have a realistic understanding of what it needs to address in order to achieve progress and, ultimately, project success? Does it assess its internal and external environments, recognizing the potential forces that could hinder success? Is anything overlooked?

A. WSCC has a realistic understanding of what needs to be addressed for this project to be successful. WSCC indicates that it expects problems, and that this culture shift will not happen overnight. Although this may be true, WSCC must stay on track, especially when using data to drive improvement.

Q18. Does the institution understand the current status of its project and know how it intends to pursue project success?

A. WSCC identifies the steps it must take to complete this project. The steps seem appropriate and specific.

Q19. Overall, does the institution demonstrate a good faith effort in its pursuit of continuous quality improvement through this action project? Is there anything of concern that should be brought to the attention of AQIP via your mentor?

A. WSCC has demonstrated a good faith effort in pursuit of CQI with this action project. No concerns, except for completing what has been started, have been identified.