HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

FORM

Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative proposal represents the work that the institution will undertake to fulfill the Improvement Process of the Open Pathway.



April 29, 2016

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor *Date*

John Masterson: President

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Allen County Community College

Name of Institution

Iola, Kansas

City and State

The institution completes the Quality Initiative proposal by responding to the questions in each category of the template. The institution may choose to submit a brief implementation plan or supplemental charts or graphs as appendices to the template. Proposals should be no more than 4,500 words. The Quality Initiative Proposal is due no later than August 31 of Year 7 (and will be accepted beginning September 1 of Year 5). Submit the proposal as a PDF file to pathways@hlcommission.org with a file name that follows this format: QI Report No Name University MN. The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a title and brief description of the Quality Initiative. Explain whether the initiative will begin and be completed during the Quality Initiative period or if it is part of work already in progress or will achieve a key milestone in the work of a longer initiative.

Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization

Allen County Community College

Overview of the Quality Initiative

Allen County Community College has selected the Quality Initiative, *Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization*, to fulfill the Quality Initiative component of the accreditation process through the Open Pathway set forth by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The Quality Initiative will focus on improving the collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization of institutional data. The College aspires to use quality institutional data toward improving student learning and over-all institutional effectiveness by making data-informed decisions. In addition, the College wishes to improve the quality and consistency of its data reporting to its coordinating body, the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), and its accrediting body (HLC).

As a rural community college in an economically-challenged region of Kansas, Allen County Community College is committed to offering its students exceptional learning experiences in a caring environment. For Allen to achieve its mission, institutional data collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization are essential. Data-informed decisions assist the College in using its resources wisely and efficiently in the best ways to support students in their learning and to support instructors and staff members in their professional development. Data collection must be accurate and efficient; data analysis must be appropriate and contextual; data reporting must be timely and complete; data utilization must be balanced and informed.

Allen strives for continuous quality improvement, directly addressing areas of concern when they are identified. Focusing on the College's data collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization capacity and processes meets a need within the College, addressing areas of concern identified by Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Business Affairs as priorities for improvement and growth within the institution.

This initiative is aligned with the College's Strategic Plan. The Quality Initiative builds upon Strategic Plan objectives in technology planning and infrastructure, student learning assessment, and institutional effectiveness. These institutional initiatives both provide foundational support and make imperative the improvement of institutional data in the four areas – collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization.

Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

2. Explain why the proposed initiative is relevant and significant for the institution.

Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

Relevance and Significance

Alignment with the Institution's mission and goals

Allen's Mission Statement: *As an institution of higher education, the purpose of Allen County Community College is to provide quality educational support services in an atmosphere that is caring, safe, and conducive to learning. Based on the belief that learning and self-improvement are continuous*

processes, the college is committed to a wide range of accessible, affordable educational programs to enable students to reach their academic, occupational, and personal potential.

The College mission statement is followed by several components as methods to accomplish the mission. This Quality Initiative aligns with the College's mission, relating directly to the component *Promote a program of continuous institutional improvement that ensures quality, effectiveness, and relevance*. Improving data quality and utilization will increase *effectiveness* and enhance *relevance* throughout the College by infusing the capacity for data-informed decision making in its programs and services. Additionally, and importantly, individual instructors and staff members, programs and work areas, and the institution will be more confident in decisions and reporting, with accessible and actionable data.

The Quality Initiative both aligns with and is a result of the College's current Strategic Plan. Within the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan, one of the key objectives is to *upgrade technology in the academic, student services, and administrative areas of the college to promote learning, serve students, and increase employee communication, efficiency, and effectiveness*. One goal of this objective to upgrade technology is to allow for better data utilization by the varying constituencies of the College.

3. Explain the intended impact of the initiative on the institution and its academic quality.

Intended Impact

While none of the following *intended impacts* is exclusive, and this listing is not exhaustive, the College has identified areas where we will work to improve during the timeline of the Quality Initiative and well after its reporting period.

Silos – Over time, many data reports have been created for individuals, programs, and work areas; most of these data reports have been created for specific circumstances and reviewed in isolation. Areas of the College are unaware of what data is available to other areas of the College. Much of our available data exists in silos. By assessing college-wide our institutional data usage and reporting needs, and by creating an institutional data reports directory, the College intends to be more purposeful in our creation of data reports and to be more purposeful about making these reports accessible to users.

Staffing – Historically, the College has employed one (1) Director of Information Technology who has been responsible for all technology and its infrastructure, data and reporting. Support has been offered through two (2) instructors with 3 credit hours and 6 credit hours re-assigned time (respectively) to maintain and trouble-shoot hardware at each of the College's two campuses. Through Strategic Plan goals and objectives, the College has recently engaged in a Master Technology Plan and made many technology improvements, some of which are to provide direct support for the Director of Information Technology. A next step is to address data and reporting functions. Through the Quality Initiative, the College intends to develop a position description for a new Research and Reporting position and to search for a qualified individual to join the College in this role. The intended impact of this new staff position is to help instructors, staff members, and

administrators in the collection, analysis, reporting, and usage of quality data. We view this new position as a member of a College team, sharing and growing in specific expertise – helping us all grow and improve in the inclusion and utilization of data in our processes and decisions.

Training – For instructors, staff members, and administrators to grow and improve in the inclusion, analysis, and utilization of data in our processes and decision making requires training. Through this Quality Initiative, we plan to train employees in institutional data collection and usage requirements and in the use of Jenzabar JX student information system (SIS) and its functions.

Usage and Reporting – Through this Quality Initiative, the College intends to improve in its usage of data. Approximately three years ago, the College engaged in a new Program Review process that included an annual review of student success data. This process is faculty-driven and reflects directly upon classroom instruction and student success. Additionally, in three-to-five year cycles, student learning assessment data is also included in the Program Review portfolio. With this approach to data-informed program reviews, faculty within divisions can better assess program and course effectiveness. This is one example of many of how the College intends to significantly improve its collection, analysis, reporting, and usage of quality data toward data-informed decisions that impact students, instructors, and staff members – the entire college community. In reporting to third parties, the College intends to improve its data collection and reporting with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), HLC, and KBOR, among many others. We wish to be more confident in our data collection, more efficient in our use of resources, and more impactful in our decisions by improved data quality and utilization.

Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

4. Describe the purposes and goals for the initiative.

Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

Purposes and Goals

Purpose Statement: To significantly improve the collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization of institutional data at Allen County Community College.

The goals of this Quality Initiative:

1. Improve data collection processes
2. Improve data analysis processes
3. Improve data reporting processes
4. Improve data utilization processes

- **Institutional Data Improvement Goals**
  - Assess institutional data use and reporting needs
  - Improve data security
  - Analyze institutional personnel needs in Information Technology, data and reporting
  - Develop a position description for a Research and Reporting position

- Implement Jenzabar JX Student Information System (rolling implementation)
- Train employees in institutional data collection and reporting requirements
- Train employees in the use of Jenzabar JX and its functions.

- **Institutional Data Utilization Goals**
  - Develop Acceptable Use policies and practices for institutional data
  - Train employees in institutional data analysis and utilization – acceptable use, statistical principles, trends, etc.
  - From the institutional data reports directory, identify standard institutional data reports to be reviewed by instructors and staff members on a term and/or AY basis
  - Continue cross-system integrations of Jenzabar (SIS) and Blackboard (LMS).

5. Describe how the institution will evaluate progress, make adjustments, and determine what has been accomplished.

Evaluation of Accomplishments

Within each term during the Quality Initiative, the Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization Task Force (a two-year QI task force that may be transitioned into a standing committee for continuing process development and oversight) will measure progress and accomplishments through the achievement of initiative milestones:

- **Institutional Data Improvement Milestones**
  - Create data standards and conduct data clean-up
  - Rename present institutional data reports for clarified accessibility
  - Create an institutional data reports directory
  - Create an accessible data report request and response process
  - Search for and hire an employee to fill a Data and Reporting position
  - Create an IT and Data and Reporting personnel succession plan
  - Implement the Accounts Receivable and Finance modules of Jenzabar JX.

- **Institutional Data Utilization Milestones**
  - Create and implement Acceptable Use policies and practices for institutional data
  - Create and implement a term / AY calendar for the review of institutional data
  - Create quick access to institutional data reports by employee function
  - Imbed expectations for data-informed decision making into college processes, focusing on Program Review, Institutional Effectiveness, and Budget development.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

6. Describe the level of support for the initiative by internal or external stakeholders.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Quality Initiative

Internal and External Support

This Quality Initiative is a major component of an on-going and College-wide strategic direction to address our technology infrastructure and improve our institutional data quality and usage. Senior leadership is committed to achieving concrete results to improve data collection, analysis, reporting, and utilization. The College has committed to and invested in the strategic direction through preparatory actions and accomplishments that include:

- Technology Master Planning (FY 2012-2013)
- College-wide technology infrastructure and network upgrades, including campus Wi-Fi capabilities (FY 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and anticipated in FY 2016-2017, 2017-2018)
- Migration to Microsoft Office 2013 and Outlook 365 (FY 2014-2015)
- Move to cloud-hosting of Jenzabar CX student information system (FY 2014-2015)
- Move to cloud-hosting of the public drive (P-Drive), College Endowment, College Bookstore, and back-up systems of the network (FY 2014-2015)
- Meetings and communication with Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) staff toward improved data quality and accuracy for State of Kansas / KBOR KHEEDS data reporting (2013 and ongoing)
- Annual attendance and participation at State of Kansas 2-day data conferences
- Budgeted new position for Research and Reporting (FY 2015-2016 and on-going)
- Preparation for possible performance-based funding model through KBOR (pending)
- Accreditation task force creation of an institutional data dashboard, located on the College myAllen portal, that supplies selected data fields/reports in real time (FY 2012-2013, 2013-2014)
- New Program Review for academic programs implemented in AY 2013-2014 that includes yearly reviews of academic program data conducted by the dean and the program instructors
- New Program Review for non-academic programs initiated in AY 2014-2015 that includes review of function area data conducted by the director and function staff members
- Planned and budgeted move to Jenzabar JX Accounts Receivable and Finance modules (anticipated FY 2016-2017, 2017-2018).

With this level of demonstrated commitment to and capacity for accomplishing the Quality Initiative of Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization, the College community will continue to commit the resources, time, and energy toward achieving the initiative's goals and marking its milestones.

7. Identify the groups and individuals that will lead or be directly involved in implementing the initiative.

Groups and Individuals Directly Involved in Implementation

Allen County Community College has a robust policy and system of councils, committees, task forces, and work groups. Each group is organized and charged with yearly goals at the beginning of each academic year.

Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization Task Force (AYs 2016-2017, 2017-2018) is the College-wide group that will be directly responsible for implementation of all aspects of the Quality Initiative. The task force will be co-chaired by a senior administrator and staff member or a senior administrator and a faculty member. The task force (N = 12 +/-) will be comprised of varying levels of staff members and instructors who volunteer to serve or are appointed to serve based on their roles within the College.

The Allen Jenzabar Users Group (AJUG) is an internal staff work group that is directly involved with the Jenzabar SIS and its efficient use across the College. With the AJUG primary charge "To review, plan, recommend, and implement applications and processes within the Jenzabar SIS database," this group will directly support the Quality Initiative goals and implement many of the actions which will become milestones. As examples, AJUG will be directly responsible for SIS data clean-up and involved in the implementation of Jenzabar JX modules.

The Accreditation Committee (N = 12 +/-) is a standing institutional committee that oversees aspects of the Open Pathway process for reaffirmation of accreditation within the College. The Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization Task Force will report to the Accreditation Committee on progress at its monthly meetings.

President's Council, Academic Affairs Council, Student Affairs Council, and the Business Affairs Council will all engage with reports from the Institutional Data Improvement and Utilization Task Force as initiative goals and milestones impact the various councils across the College. This system of involvement and communication has proven effective at Allen.

The College Board of Trustees continues to demonstrate support for the Quality Initiative with approval of funds for the Master Technology Plan and planned hiring of the Institutional Research and Reporting position. As the college implements the steps of the Quality Initiative, reports and proposals to the Board of Trustees will include more data and data-informed decisions.

8. List the human, financial, technological and other resources that the institution has committed to this initiative.

Institutional Resources Committed to the Initiative

The College is committed to dedicating the human, financial, and technological resources to successfully implement the initiative and its proposed on-going process changes.

Human

a. Director of Information Technology
b. Research and Reporting, new position
c. Registrar
d. Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Business Affairs instructors and staff members
e. President's Council, senior administrators

Financial

a. Employee training in data collection and reporting requirements
b. Technology Infrastructure upgrades
c. Transition to Jenzabar JX, Accounts Receivable and Finance
d. Employee training in the use of Jenzabar JX
e. Research and Reporting, new position

Budgeted Resources	FY 2016-2017
a. Employee training	$20,000
b. Technology Infrastructure upgrades	Ongoing
c. Cloud integration	$52,000
d. Microsoft Office 365	$28,000
e. Transition to Jenzabar JX Phase I	$53,535
f. Employee training, Jenzabar JX	Included in above
g. Research and Reporting, new position	$56,000 (with benefits)

Budgeted Resources	FY 2017-2018
h. Transition to Jenzabar JX Phase II	$75,000
i. Employee training	$20,000
j. Technology Infrastructure upgrades	Ongoing
k. Research and Reporting	$56,000

Technological

a. Transition to Jenzabar JX
b. Employee training in the use of Jenzabar JX
c. Technology Infrastructure upgrades
d. Data Reports Directory
e. MyAllen portal, Data Dashboard development

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

(The institution may include a brief implementation or action plan.)

9. Describe the primary activities of the initiative and timeline for implementing them.

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

Continuing the Initiative

Allen County Community College is committed to continuous quality improvement. This Quality Initiative is an aspect of a larger institutional strategic direction that has already begun, will develop in intensity and scope with the Quality Initiative, and will continue on into the future. However, for HLC Quality Initiative reporting purposes, the initiative will begin in the fall semester 2016 and continue for two academic years, ending with the close of the spring semester 2018. Activities included in the timeline include:

- Create data standards and conduct data clean-up
- Rename present institutional data reports for clarified accessibility
- Create an institutional data reports directory
- Create an accessible data report request and response process
- Search for and hire an employee to fill a Data and Reporting position
- Create an IT and Data and Reporting personnel succession plan
- Implement the Accounts Receivable and Finance modules of Jenzabar JX.
- Create Acceptable Use policies and practices for institutional data

- Create and implement a term / AY calendar for the review of institutional data
- Create quick access to institutional data reports by employee function
- Imbed expectations for data-informed decision making into college processes, focusing on Program Review, Institutional Effectiveness, and Budget development.

The timeline of the initiative is appropriate, and the goals are obtainable.

Institutional Contact for Quality Initiative Proposal

Include the name(s) of the primary contact(s) for the Quality Initiative.

Name and Title: Jon Marshall: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Phone: 620-365-5116 Email: marshall@allencc.edu

Institution: Allen County Community College