

## Implementation Proposal Narrative Example

### **Principles and Practices for Increasing Student Success through Institutional Improvement**

**Note: in this example, we included only one intervention and two principles. You should include all of your priorities and interventions.**

#### **Committed Leadership**

*The President and the senior leadership asked the Strategic Plan Committee to make student success and closing achievement gaps top priorities in the plan. The committee agreed and followed through, placing Achieving the Dream goals at the beginning of our strategic plan.*

*The President is currently leading the Board to be more data-driven by presenting data at each Board meeting, but the President isn't forcing or pushing them to adopt data-informed practices. We hope over the course of the next year the Board will begin to ask for data before making decisions and will critically question the data the President presents to them, especially on issues of equity.*

*The President has and will continue to commit resources to student success efforts and engage the Board using student success data and our interventions' evaluation data as it becomes available.*

*Faculty leaders, both full time and adjunct are leading Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGS) and will be researching questions of pedagogy. These faculty leaders have shown their commitment to student success by spending much more time in the FIGS than they are compensated for. It has been a great success regarding engaging faculty and generating commitment to and leadership in the cause.*

#### **Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services**

*See "Committed Leadership" above.*

*See the evaluation plan for the developmental math professional development intervention.*

*We will add 1.5 FTE to our Institutional Research office; an IR director and a part-time data analyst. We hope to further increase our IR capacity by having our new IR director and outside consultants train many of our adjunct and full-time faculty and staff in how to gather, analyze, and use data. We are building a data warehouse and programming common queries with data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, age, gender, and language spoken in the home so that faculty and staff can use those common queries to view the data for students with whom they are involved without going through the IR office. We hope this will ease the already increasing IR office work load. (The work load is increasing due to the beginning of a culture of evidence and an increasing number of requests from faculty and staff.)*

#### **Broad Engagement**

Regarding engagement of stakeholders to-date, please see stakeholders engaged in the developmental math priority.

Again, the Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGs) have been incredibly successful in engaging a broad array of full time and adjunct faculty. Faculty leaders are beginning to emerge from these groups. We are currently seeking funding to visit other Achieving the Dream Colleges with FIGS and maybe fund other colleges to come visit us.

Student services staff are very engaged in our Achieving the Dream work and have been thirsty for data that will help them improve their student support offerings.

Regarding sustained stakeholder engagement, we have asked the Student Government Association and the Alumni Association to nominate representatives for the Core Team. We will hold a town hall meeting in Fall 2013, publicize it widely across the community, and open it to all that want to come. We will discuss our student success data, our community's educational culture, and our Achieving the Dream interventions. Attendees (and others) will be invited to participate in a community conversation in Winter 2013 using Public Agenda's model. We will use the data collected to 1) improve current student success priorities and interventions; 2) craft additional interventions; and 3) shape how and what we communicate with the broader community, especially the African American community.

### **Systemic Institutional Improvement**

See "Committed Leadership" and "Use of Evidence" above. We are already seeing signs of an increasing culture of evidence and have plans to fuel and support the growing culture of evidence. Our faculty is enthusiastic about increasing our African Americans students' success rate and increasing outreach in our African American communities. The prospect of sending college advisors to feeder high schools, especially in our African American and low-income neighborhoods and helping children and their families complete the FAFSA has recently been discussed. The discussion has been too recent to include in detail in this proposal, but it does show that the faculty and staff continue to generate new, creative ideas even after we have "finished" our proposal.

Our strategic planning process will be very well aligned with our Achieving the Dream work and will focus on student success and equity.

We are currently seeking external funding to hold a summit with local high schools and the flagship university to discuss how we can better align our institutions from the state policy level all the way through to pedagogy and what we call our courses.

### **Data Analysis, Results, and Resulting Priorities**

#### **Quantitative Data Analyzed:**

Looking at our cohort data, we determined which student characteristics are most relevant to our college. They are: race/ethnicity, gender, Pell Grant status, part/full time, feeder high school, and language spoken in the home. We decided to disaggregate **all** the data we are analyzing by this set of student characteristics and call them our "standard" characteristics throughout this proposal. We analyzed the retention rates for all developmental and gatekeeper courses including Math 101, the lowest level developmental math class, and Math 110, Math 115, and Math 125 disaggregated by the standard characteristics listed above. We found that students enrolled in Math 101 only passed Math 125, our first college-level math course, at a rate of 5%. African American students taking Math 101 had a 0.5% rate of passing and students with Pell Grants a 0.5% rate of passing Math 125.

Students who passed Math 115, our highest level developmental math course, with a B or above were more likely than students not taking developmental math to pass Math 125 (25% compared to 15%).

#### **Qualitative Data Analyzed:**

After we looked at the quantitative data above and identified the low developmental math success rate, we held 7 focus groups, each with 15 developmental math students, to explore barriers, both personal and academic, to their current and past developmental math classes. The most common barriers they identified were 1) lack of preparation for college classes, including difficulty understanding the professor's expectations and how to prepare for classes and 2) financial difficulties, including not having enough money for books, unexpected personal expenses, and paying for classes.

We held phone interviews with 21 students who dropped out of developmental math last semester and with 14 students who failed. They said their main barriers were not knowing how much work college is and how difficult the classes were. Not knowing what they were getting into meant that they weren't prepared. They struggled, couldn't find help, and ended up dropping out or failing.

We also held a focus group with developmental math faculty, both adjunct and full-time. The faculty identified the major barriers for their students as 1) lazy attitudes, 2) not being prepared for college courses, and 3) not being prepared on a daily basis for class, including not completing homework.

**Major Findings of Data Analysis:**

Our developmental and gatekeeper math success rates are far below where our college would like them to be. However, those students that make it through the developmental math sequence do better in gatekeeper math than do students that didn't take developmental math.

There are student success gaps in developmental and gatekeeper math among student sub-groups categorized by race.

There is a major disconnect in the barriers students reported and the barriers faculty perceive. For example, students reported that they had difficulty understanding the professor's expectations and how to prepare for classes as a barrier while faculty identified students' lazy attitudes as a barrier.

**Stakeholders Engaged in Priority-Setting:**

*At a convocation focusing on Achieving the Dream, we presented the findings above to the entire college community including the Board of Trustees, part-and full-time faculty and staff and students. The audience was shocked by the dismal success rates and the disconnect between students' needs and faculty perspectives of their needs. The college was buzzing with recommendations.*

*We convened another group of current developmental education students and asked them what they need to be successful in their current class. We also re-interviewed some of the students that dropped out or failed a developmental math course last semester and asked them what they thought could have helped them be successful. It turns out that many of their suggestions were for supports and services the college already offers; professional tutoring, peer-to-peer tutoring, and emergency financial help for personal or academic costs; however, the students weren't aware of these services.*

**Other Information Regarding the Decision-Making Process:**

We convened a group of developmental education faculty, administrators, students and student services staff to work with the Core Team to conduct a more in-depth review of the quantitative and qualitative data to determine a priority.

**Resulting Priorities:**

Increasing Developmental Math Success and Student Orientation.

**Note:** For this example only two priorities and one intervention are provided. It is common to have two or three priorities and two or three interventions per priority. All your priority and intervention entries may not be as lengthy as the first, as you may be able to reference information from previous entries.

**Intervention Information:**

<p><b>Priority:</b> Increasing Developmental Math Success</p>
<p><b>Intervention Name:</b> Developmental Math Professional Development</p>
<p><b>Direct or Indirect Student Intervention:</b> Indirect</p>
<p><b>Start Date:</b> Fall 2012</p>
<p><b>Type of Intervention; choose all applicable:</b> Developmental Education, Equity, Faculty Professional Development</p>
<p><b>Specific Course Content Area:</b> Math</p>
<p><b>Target Student Group; select one or more:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race: Black/African American non-Hispanic, All</li> <li>• Academically underprepared students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Estimate Number of Students Enrolled or Otherwise Benefiting:</b> All developmental math students, approximately 250 each fall and 150 each spring.</p>
<p><b>Do students have to satisfy certain criteria to take part in the intervention?</b> (N/A would be an acceptable answer for this example. The following is an acceptable answer for a developmental math direct intervention.) Students testing into three levels below college algebra will be enrolled in the intervention automatically.</p>
<p><b>Are any special efforts made to recruit students to take part in the intervention?</b> (N/A would be an acceptable answer for this example. The following is an acceptable answer for a developmental math direct intervention.) Students testing into three levels below college algebra will be enrolled in the intervention automatically, however, all students testing into developmental math will receive a brochure about the intervention and all developmental math faculty will encourage their students to enroll.</p>
<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>This intervention is designed to provide faculty with a better understanding of needs of all students, especially African American students and students receiving Pell grants. With this knowledge, they can provide support to students that can help increase student success or connect students to relevant services.</p> <p>In Fall 2012, professional development will be mandatory for all full-time and part-time developmental math faculty. Beginning in Summer 2012, we will run a smaller version of the intervention for all new developmental faculty. Faculty will need to attend the professional development only once.</p> <p>The professional development will consist of 10, one-day sessions over the course of 10 months. This represents the most professional development on a particular topic that we have ever offered to our faculty.</p>

**Way(s) the intervention will help to close achievement gaps:**

Our African American students and students with Pell Grants have significantly lower success rates in developmental math than their counterparts. The professional development series will include a day-long session on cultural differences and we hope to have a panel of African American students share their experiences at the College. We hope this will help our predominantly white faculty understand their African American students better. We will also have a day-long session on financial issues our students face and the supportive resources available at the college and in the community.

**Measurable Yearly Goals:**

- Increase completion rates in the developmental math sequence from 4% to 6% the first year, 8% the third year, and 10% the fourth year.
- Decrease the current 4.5% developmental math course completion rate gap between African American and Pell Grant students compared to all students to 1% by Fall 2013 and 0% or a statistically insignificant difference by the end of Fall 2014.

**Achieving the Dream Student Progress and Success Measures That Will Be Directly Affected By This Intervention:**

- Percent of students who successfully complete developmental courses and progress to credit-bearing courses
- Percent of students who complete the courses they take, with a grade of C or higher

**Evaluation Plan Description:**

The IR office will collect retention and GPA data for all developmental math courses and the developmental math sequence, disaggregated by College X's standard characteristics (listed above), and compare it to our 2009-2011 cohorts. Each semester the IR office will share this information with the data and core teams and the President, who sits on the core team, will report the data to the Board of trustees. We will also disseminate the data through our new Achieving the Dream newsletter each semester.

We will ask attendees to complete anonymous surveys after each day-long session, at the end of the professional development series, and then at the end of the semester following the professional development series. We will look for ways to improve the series and assess which parts are most helpful, so if we choose to condense it, we can do so effectively. We will also assess if faculty put the knowledge and practices to use in the classroom.

**Evaluation Results Comparison; select one or more:**

- Baseline data

**Plan to Scale Up:**

If the professional development series results in increased developmental math success rates, we will expand it to developmental English and reading. If it continues to prove successful, we will apply a similar approach to professional development for the entire faculty.

**Sustainability/Institutionalization Plan:**

We will follow the plan outlined above, making mid-course corrections as needed based on the surveys. The first year of implementation will be the largest since all developmental math faculty will have to go through the training. The subsequent years will be smaller since only developmental math faculty new to

College X will be required to attend. After the second year of implementation, after we have received feedback on the training with a smaller audience, we will again modify the series as necessary; the revised training will be fully documented and institutionalized. Training will remain mandatory for all new developmental math faculty until data show it is no longer useful.

The President and Board have committed \$40,000 for the first year and then \$10,000 each subsequent year from Title V funds for this intervention and have committed to giving relevant faculty 10 days of professional development each year which, if successful, may expand to all faculty.

**Communications Plan:**

The President plans to write an op-ed piece for the local paper about the data we analyzed, both qualitative and quantitative, the priorities identified, and the interventions we will be implementing.

We will send a one-page memo to the developmental math faculty immediately informing them of the upcoming professional development series; the memo will include a section to be read to students in all developmental math sections. We will include an article about the intervention and about the hopes to bring the training to all faculty in our monthly college newsletter that goes to all faculty, students, and staff. We will use the newsletter and op-ed pieces to inform the college community and greater community of our work to close achievement gaps and increase student success.

**Internal and/or External Resources Needed:**

\$40,000 for the first year and then \$10,000 each subsequent year; 10 professional development days for all relevant faculty; release time for Jane Smith and John Doe to develop the curriculum and coordinate outside experts; \$10,000 to bring in experts to lead specific sessions- all from Title V funds. We may bring in our Leadership Coach and Data Coach for an extra day or two to facilitate one of the workshops.

**Institutional Policy Changes Needed:**

Additional professional development days for faculty.

**Anticipated Challenges:**

The Fall 2012 semester is already full of extra activities including our QEP and creating our 2014-2022 strategic plan. Getting all relevant individuals involved to focus on Achieving the Dream and student success will be a challenge in this already stressful year.

Our budget has been cut by X% and all “add-on” activities have been eliminated. Our President and Board recognize that Achieving the Dream isn’t an optional activity and that it will pay for itself in the long run. The challenge will be to mitigate potential resentment by faculty and staff who are/were involved with discontinued programs.

**Additional, Institution-Wide Decisions in Which the Resulting Evaluation Will Be Helpful:**

This intervention will be helpful as we prepare our next QEP and strategic plan.

Enrollment of African American students at the college does not reflect the proportion of African American students in the surrounding community. Our relationships with mostly-minority high schools are not as strong as those with mostly-white high schools. Outreach and enrollment in these communities is a challenge we will take on in the near future. In the next four years, we hope to bring our African American success rates up to those of our white students so when we do enroll more students of color, we know that College X is a place they can be successful. We hope to use increasing African American success

rates and closing achievement gaps to build relationships with some of our African American leaders in the community.

As mentioned earlier, the evaluation data will inform whether or not and how we bring the intervention to scale and involve all faculty and staff.

**Is there any other information you would like Achieving the Dream to know about the college or about the implementation proposal?**

Our President will retire at the end of the calendar year, but we are searching for our next president. Commitment to student success, closing achievement gaps, and Achieving the Dream are top priorities in our search. Senior administrators will lead the Achieving the Dream work during and perhaps after the transition.

## Implementation Proposal Work Plan Example

**Priority Area:** Increasing Developmental Math Success

**Measurable Yearly Goals:**

- Increase completion rates in the developmental math sequence over the next four years: 6% the first year; 2% per year for the next three years.
- Decrease the current 4.5% developmental math course completion rate gap between African American and Pell Grant students compared to all students to 1% by Fall 2011 and 0% or a statistically insignificant difference by the end of Fall 2012.

**Note-** This example only includes goals and tasks for one intervention as the example only includes one intervention. In your work plan you will include goals and tasks for all interventions relating to the priority.

Work Plan Action Steps	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Design and oversee overall professional development (P.D.) workshop series	X				John Doe
Design PD on financial services & identify outside speakers/consultants	X				Jane Doe
Design PD on cultural awareness & identify outside speakers/consultants	X				John Smith
Work with finance office and administration to confirm faculty release time	X	X			Jane Smith
Design evaluation with data team and IR office	X				Bob Brown
Oversee evaluation with help from data team & IR office	X	X	X	X	Joe Brown
Secure consultant(s) for P.D. identified by Jane Doe and John Smith	X	X	X	X	Jill Doe
Communicate evaluation results to college community via newsletter	X	X	X	X	Joe Brown
Communicate evaluation results to Board	X	X	X	X	President
Hold forums with faculty about efficacy and possibly involving all staff		X	X	X	John Doe
Revise P.D. series after the first year for a smaller group of faculty	X	X			John Doe

Lead discussion w/ core team about efficacy & possibility to take P.D. series to entire faculty			X	X	President
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