Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative report represents the work that the institution has undertaken to fulfill the Improvement Process of the Open Pathway.

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor

Dr. Mark S. Bryce

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Eastern Arizona College

Name of Institution

Thatcher, Arizona

City and State

The institution uses the template below to complete its Quality Initiative Report. The institution may include a report it has prepared for other purposes if it addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the narrative in the template. This template may be used both for reports on initiatives that have been completed and for initiatives that will continue and for which this report serves as a milestone of accomplishments thus far. The complete report should be no more than 6,000 words. Quality Initiative Reports are to be submitted between September 1 of Year 7 and August 31 of Year 9 of the Open Pathway cycle. Submit the report 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.

Date: August 25, 2016

Name of Institution: Eastern Arizona College

State: Arizona

Contact Person for Report: Jeanne Bryce

Contact Person's Email Address: jeanne.bryce@eac.edu
Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished, and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

   Eastern Arizona College's (EAC) Quality Initiative focused on developing a self-governing quality culture. As stated on EAC's Mission Statement, continuous improvement has been a priority at EAC for over a decade. EAC's participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) from 2003-2012, helped the College to develop valuable continuous improvement tools and processes. In 2012, EAC made the decision to transition to the Open Pathway. With this transition, it was important to ensure that continuous improvement remained a priority at the College and that the key improvement processes that were developed under AQIP were preserved. Further, EAC saw the transition as an opportunity to expand the quality culture at EAC. As such, the Quality Initiative of developing a self-governing quality culture was both timely and appropriate for the College.

   Perhaps the largest accomplishment under the Quality Initiative was the development of the President's Quality Council (PQC). The President's Quality Council serves as the oversight of continuous improvement at the College and involves all areas of the institution in its membership to ensure that all voices are heard and knowledge from all levels are utilized in determining continuous improvement opportunities. The President's Quality Council sits at the center of continuous improvement at the College to ensure consistency and accountability to EAC's commitment to continuous improvement.

   In addition, several of the sub-goals within the Quality Initiative have proven to augment the new oversight body. First, the continuous improvement assessment, through the Continuous Improvement Survey, allows the PQC to obtain employee insight into areas of improvement at the College and assess the effectiveness and level of employee involvement in continuous improvement. Second, Leadershops, on-site professional development training sessions, have proven to empower employees to get involved in continuous improvement and further develop skills that lead to continuous improvement throughout the institution. The final goal of the project, the institutional data Dashboard has enhanced EAC's transparency to stakeholders and expanded the analysis of key performance indicators. The Dashboard allows employees, decision making groups, and external stakeholders to see institutional key performance indicators. It serves as a tool for continuous improvement and benchmarking to peer institutions. In the future, the dashboard has the capacity to add program or department level dashboards which may augment the planning process at EAC.

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative's hypotheses and findings.)

   Eastern Arizona College's Quality Initiative has proven to be a success. It served as a springboard to transition EAC between the AQIP and Open Pathway accreditation models. The Quality Initiative created new processes to further expand the quality culture throughout the institution, while ensuring that the key learnings under the AQIP model were preserved.
The Quality Initiative included four main goals:

1) Continuous Improvement Assessment: An employee survey was designed to assess the level of employee involvement and perceived effectiveness of EAC's continuous improvement processes and create a sounding board for employees to voice areas of improvement.

Outcome: The EAC Continuous Improvement Survey was administered three times during the span of the Quality Initiative. From 2012-2015, there was a 69% increase in the level of employee understanding of continuous improvement at EAC and 27% increase in the involvement of employees in EAC's Continuous Improvement Process. The President's Quality Council used the results to implement five action projects and three quick fixes. Additionally, the feedback was used to determine the training needs of employees for the Leadership sessions (discussed below). The survey will continue to be administered every 1-2 years.

2) President's Quality Council: The President's Quality Council (PQC) was developed to serve as the oversight body of continuous improvement at EAC. The responsibilities of the PQC include prioritization/implementation of action projects and monitoring the progress of existing action projects. In addition, a sub-committee of the PQC, the Continuous Improvement Review Committee (CIRC) was developed to analyze institutional data and surveys to determine common areas of improvement.

Outcome: The President's Quality Council held its first meeting in January of 2013. The membership includes fifteen members, representing all areas of the College with action project leaders sitting on the Council for the duration of their project. The PQC meets monthly, with exception to College breaks. It has declared eight action projects and eight quick fixes and effectively oversees the progress of the projects. The Continuous Improvement Review Committee (CIRC) is led by an Academic Dean who sits on the PQC. The membership of the CIRC is also cross-functional. The CIRC has reviewed major institutional surveys, many of which have not been analyzed at an institutional level, and has brought over 20 improvement ideas to the PQC for review, many of which have been resolved through small quick fixes.

3) Professional Development Overhaul: A series of professional development training sessions were developed and offered to EAC employees to mitigate the complexity of obtaining professional development given EAC's rural location. The training needs of employees are primarily assessed through the Continuous Improvement Survey.

Outcome: The first Leadership schedule was released in the fall of 2013. The list was developed using the results of the first administration of the EAC Continuous Improvement Survey. A survey was developed to assess the effectiveness of each Leadership to ensure continuous improvement within the newly developed process. Both the Continuous Improvement Survey and the Leadership Feedback surveys have been used to develop the Leadership schedule for each subsequent year. In 2014, EAC began to broadcast the Leaderships to EAC's off-campus locations via the ITV system. In 2015, as a result of employee feedback, the Marketing and Public Relations department began recording the Leadership sessions which were then placed on EAC's intranet allowing employees who were not able to attend the live versions to view the information. A total of 115, 103 and 131 employees attended at least one Leadership in 2013-2015, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016, respectively.

4) Institutional Dashboard: An institutional data Dashboard was developed to allow for continuous monitoring of key measures of effectiveness.

Outcome: The institutional Dashboard was completed in the spring of 2016. The process of developing the Dashboard included prototypes, meetings with employee groups and the PQC to
ascertain the appropriate key performance indicators and satisfaction with displays. The project was led by EAC's Institutional Research Director with oversight by the PQC. Initially, the Dashboard was to be developed internally as a singular module. However, after careful research, EAC engaged a vendor to develop the Dashboard. The software allows for an institutional Dashboard and the future development of individual program dashboards. Although the initial launch of the institutional Dashboard has received overwhelmingly positive anecdotal feedback, the true effectiveness will be assessed in the coming years as programs and departments begin using it as part of their planning processes and the PQC begins using it to monitor the key measures of the effectiveness for the institution.

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

EAC’s Quality Initiative has dramatically improved the quality culture at the College. This is evidenced by data generated in the Continuous Improvement Survey and the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey. See attached report for details.

In addition, through the Quality Initiative, EAC created a formal self-governing Continuous Improvement Process. During the three years of the project, the President's Quality Council, EAC's continuous improvement oversight body, has declared several substantial improvement projects, listed below.

- Student Success Tracking Action Project
- Academic Advising Improvement Action Project
- Learning Resource Material Adoption Action Project
- Improve the Student Learning Environment Action Project
- Improve Campus Communication Action Project
- Revamp Course Evaluation Management System Action Project
- Obtain and Maintain Title V Funding Action Project*
- Program Assessment of Student Learning*
- Student Service Department Focus Group Development Quick Fix
- Install External Electronic Defibrillators Quick Fix
- Remedial Course Promotion Tool Quick Fix
- Develop Emergency Response Checklist Quick Fix
- Tool to Compare Student Success for All Delivery Methods Quick Fix
- Improve Food Service Options Quick Fix
- Develop Financial Aid Video Quick Fix
- Workplace Wellness Quick Fix*

*Action Project/Quick Fix has not been declared but is in the planning stages.
The continuous improvement projects subsequently generate changes within policy, technology, curricula, programs, and student learning and success.

4. Explain any tools, data, or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative.

The Quality Initiative has generated two tools that subsequently generate data and other information that aid in continuous improvement at EAC. First, the Continuous Improvement Survey is EAC’s new tool to assess the effectiveness of EAC’s quality culture. It measures employees’ level of involvement and perceived effectiveness of the continuous improvement process. It also results in information on areas of improvement that are reviewed by the President’s Quality Council (PQC), the continuous improvement oversight body. Second, the Dashboard serves as a tool to present and analyze EAC’s key measures of effectiveness. This tool provides employees and external stakeholders with a view of the health of the College and aids in early identification of negative trends in data. A review of the Dashboard is a standing item on the PQC agenda.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

The largest challenge and opportunity in implementing the Quality Initiative were one in the same. Historically, continuous improvement and accreditation were generally a function of administration and a select number of faculty. The majority of employees within the institution, having substantial workloads, viewed the added work of an action project as burdensome. As such, convincing the employee base that continuous improvement was a function of each employee at the College was expected to be a challenge and the greatest opportunity within this initiative. The plans to tackle this challenge/opportunity included consistent communication and undeniable proof that employee involvement in continuous improvement would benefit everyone at the College.

In an effort to expand communication and present evidence of the value of employee involvement, a section in the Communicator, EAC’s employee newsletter, was created to provide information on continuous improvement activities and results. This section produced regular communication to employees on data generated through the Continuous Improvement Survey and success with action projects. It showed employees that their voices were being heard and improvements were generated due to their valuable input into EAC’s Continuous Improvement Process. In addition, the same information was displayed on EAC’s internal information sharing networks - the Hive and Knowledgebase; and presentations were given at EAC’s regularly scheduled meetings such as Administration Faculty Meetings, Executive Cabinet and Faculty and Staff Orientations. The Provost, with additional responsibility of the Accreditation Liaison Officer, and the Coordinator of Accreditation and Continuous Improvement also created a two part series on accreditation and continuous improvement through EAC’s newly developed Leadership process. Over 80 employees were in attendance and received valuable information on how important their position is to both accreditation and continuous improvement at EAC. These communication initiatives are proving to expand the quality culture at EAC, as evidenced through the Continuous Improvement Survey and PACE Survey (see attached report). Communication on continuous improvement will continue in an effort to expand and support the quality culture at the College.

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.
The primary individuals involved in the Quality Initiative were Jeanne Bryce, Provost/Chief Academic Officer; Shannon Seballos, Coordinator of Institutional Accreditation and Improvement; and Glen Snider, Institutional Research Director. Jeanne Bryce and Shannon Seballos were the project leaders for the continuous improvement assessment, President's Quality Council and Leadershops. Glen Snider was the project leader for the Institutional Dashboard. The secondary individuals involved in the Quality Initiative, primarily through oversight of the progress, were the members of the President's Quality Council.

A survey was given to the individuals who were involved in the initiative to ascertain the perceived effectiveness. The results indicated that the group agreed that the Quality Initiative was valuable and had a large impact on EAC. Additionally, the group was in agreement that the President's Quality Council effectively oversees continuous improvement and that the Continuous Improvement Survey allows employees to provide input to the process. The majority of those involved felt that Leadershops added value while a few individuals expressed that more employees need to take advantage of the opportunities. Finally, over half of those involved expressed that the dashboard provides employees with access to valuable data. Those who were in disagreement, felt that they needed more time to assess the value of the dashboard given its recent launch date. Details on the results of the survey can be seen in the attached report.

7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

The most substantial lesson learned throughout the initiative is that change—especially change affecting an institution as a whole—takes time, constant communication and evidence showing the added value. Additional lessons learned, expressed by those who were involved in the initiative include:

1) make sure key decision-makers are involved early in continuous improvement projects

2) multiple employee groups requires creativity with effective communication and implementation of projects, especially Leadershops

3) employees are willing to dedicate time to projects once they see that their opinions are heard and respected

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical, and technological resources that supported the initiative.

The largest resource that supported the initiative was human. The members of the President's Quality Council dedicated substantial time to the initial meetings to assimilate to the new process and to work through the substantial amount of data and information generated through the first two administrations of the Continuous Improvement Survey. Additionally, a large commitment of human resources, through EAC's Institutional Research department, was necessary to research and develop the institutional dashboard. Financial resources were also allocated to this initiative to purchase the software for the institutional dashboard and in some instances, to compensate trainers for Leadershops.

Plans for the Future (Feature Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.
EAC’s Quality Initiative generated four new processes at the College all of which will continue to function into the foreseeable future. The Continuous Improvement Survey will act as a tool to measure the effectiveness of each of the new processes. EAC will use the survey to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the goals of the initiative and make modifications as needed. Additionally, as mentioned above, the effectiveness of the institutional dashboard will be reviewed in detail in the coming year as the tool is fully implemented into EAC’s continuous improvement culture and planning processes.

10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

Eastern Arizona College anticipates that this initiative will be of use to institutions that are in transition among the AQIP and Open Pathways or are looking to expand continuous improvement within their organization. EAC welcomes other institutions to explore this Quality Initiative and the processes that were developed as part of the initiative.
## Continuous Improvement Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you served on an EAC Action Project team?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the continuous improvement processes at EAC.</td>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the continuous improvement processes at EAC.</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the overall goals of the continuous improvement process at EAC.</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the overall continuous improvement goals of my division or department.</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I strive for continuous improvement in my current position.</td>
<td>97.6%</td>
<td>98.4%</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the support of my supervisor to pursue positive improvements in my division or department.</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am given the necessary time, within reason, to pursue positive improvements in my division or department.</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am given the necessary resources, within reason, to pursue positive improvements in my division or department.</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I have the knowledge and tools to make positive improvements in my division or department.</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PACE Survey Results

**Mean scores (scale 1-5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>EAC 2012</th>
<th>EAC 2015</th>
<th>NILIE ** Normbase Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution</td>
<td>3.470</td>
<td>3.629</td>
<td>3.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. I have the opportunity to express my ideas in appropriate forums</td>
<td>3.951</td>
<td>4.025</td>
<td>3.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Professional development and training opportunities are available</td>
<td>3.757</td>
<td>4.140</td>
<td>3.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. The extent to which the college's processes for implementing improvement lead to actual improvement*</td>
<td>3.750</td>
<td>3.850</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Custom survey item

**NILIE Normbase includes 87 community colleges across North America.

## 2016 Quality Initiative Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Cumulative Agreement %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Quality Initiative was valuable to EAC.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Quality Initiative had a large impact at EAC.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The President's Quality Council effectively oversees continuous improvement at the College.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Continuous Improvement Survey allows employees to provide input on the effectiveness of continuous improvement and needed improvements at the College.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaderships are adding value in supplementing the professional development process at EAC.</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Institutional Dashboard provides employees with access to valuable data.</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey was given to the individuals who were involved in the initiative to ascertain the perceived effectiveness. The survey resulted in a 77% response rate of the 22 individuals that were surveyed.