

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

The Curriculum and Faculty Development Action Project was directly linked to Vincennes University's Strategic Plan. Goal IV of the Plan indicated that, by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, Vincennes University would establish a continuing fund equal to 1.5% of the total full-time faculty compensation base to support curriculum development, faculty development, increasing faculty formal educational level, and/or recruiting/retaining faculty with advanced degrees. Objectives within the Strategic Plan aimed at accomplishing this Action Project include the following: 1) Prepare a professional development plan within each instructional department/program that addresses full-time and adjunct faculty; 2) Establish a continuing fund equal to 1.25% of the total full-time faculty compensation base; 3) Establish a process for requests to be submitted, evaluated and funded for necessary professional memberships, certifications, program accreditation affiliations; 4) Establish and implement a process for requests to be submitted, evaluated and funded for faculty development endeavors that facilitate curriculum development; 5) Develop and implement a comprehensive orientation program for new faculty members and adjunct faculty; 6) Develop and implement a process to support programs, departments and/or divisions to prepare and submit proposals to external funding sources to support curriculum and professional development initiatives; 7) Complete an analysis of faculty degrees/certificates to determine areas of need to support faculty to pursue advanced degrees/certifications; 8) Implement a plan that encourages faculty to tender advanced degrees/certifications; 9) Establish and implement a process for requests to be submitted, evaluated and funded for faculty pursuing further formal education; 10) Increase the continuing fund to equal 1.5% of the total full-time faculty compensation base; 11) Establish an on-going fund to support faculty identified as needing to pursue advanced degrees/certifications; 12) Develop and implement a new faculty recruitment plan that will ensure attainment of the highest levels of academic preparation of new faculty. To date Objectives 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11 have been started and concept work completed. Objectives 1 and 12 are 50% to goal but to date, have produced no results. Objectives 5 and 7 are deeply deployed, 75% to goal, and beginning to have results. Objectives 2 and 10 are fully deployed with 100% success on results.

REVIEW

(09-29-07):

This action project was first developed in June of 2005 with a target completion date of June 2008. That would make the 2007-08 year the projected final year of the project. The original project was comprehensive, logical, and seems valuable as a Valuing People initiative. Good progress seems to have been made and it appears that the project is on target to be completed as planned. There are many positive aspects regarding the way this action project is being handled. The importance of the action project as a strategic issue is evident. It

also appears that priority has been given to the numerous parts of the project as one would want to be the case. The continued progress demonstrates that careful planning was done at the outset. Equally important is that the institution has demonstrated excellent discipline to follow the plan. It is unclear if baseline measurements of satisfaction or teaching effectiveness were made prior to making the changes identified. Mention is made that the responses to the New Faculty Orientation were "very positive." If quantitative measures were not gathered, it would be good to do so. Watching for trends in effectiveness and finding ways to compare the effectiveness with other institutions may help the institutions gain a broader sense of relative success in the orientation. The project seems to have a great deal of institutional commitment with more developments emerging. It is not clear how data is being used in leading to the changes or how the effectiveness of the changes is being measured. This may be happening, but the use of data is not evident in the report. The developments seem logical and appropriate but perceptions can be unreliable. Developing baselines prior to initiating change and making sure that measures of effectiveness are included in the planning will make sure efforts spent to improve an area are grounded in reality, not just the imaginations of participants.

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

The Action Project and Strategic Planning Committees working on this project/goal include the university president, vice presidents, provost, multiple faculty, deans and department chairs, fund administrators, staff from the grants office, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and multiple members of the university's professional and support staff. Work done by the committees is continually being shared with the Board of Trustees, Provost Council, Professional Staff Congress, Support Staff Council and Faculty Senate. This Project was kept on the institutions' priority list by linking it directly with one of six Strategic Planning goals. A copy of the Vincennes University's Strategic Plan and associated Action Project was distributed to employees this past summer. In addition, a report of progress on the six Goals of the Strategic Plan, and therefore this Action Project, was distributed at the 2006-7 opening meeting of the university.

REVIEW

(09-29-07):

Many of the principles of high performance organizations are evident in this project. Especially evident are the principles of focus, involvement, leadership, agility, and collaboration. Excellent communicating and leading processes appear to be at work.

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

VU will continue work on the uncompleted objectives listed in Question 1. In addition, plans are underway to hire a Professional Development Consultant to work with the Action Project Committee. This consultant will take a pivotal role in establishing “next steps” taken for this Action Project.

REVIEW

(09-29-07):

The steps identified seem to continue the careful planning that was done earlier. The work being done appears to bring the project to the point where it can be retired and a new project developed. The allocation of funding to carry out the project is an indication of the excellent collaboration that appears to characterize this project.

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

The “best practice” learned from working on this Action Project was to link the Action Project directly to the Strategic Plan. So doing, the Project has been kept on the institutions’ priority list. It is helping the university prepare for the impending retirements of a high percentage of faculty and providing orientation for the new faculty who will replace them. It has helped us endure that our curriculum is current and responsive to continuing technological advancement. This Action Project is already supporting additional faculty development.

REVIEW

(09-29-07):

The university is to be commended for the collaboration evident in this project, the communication, the clarity with which the project was designed, and the discipline used in carrying it out.

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

- 1) Establishing a process for requests to be submitted and evaluated for necessary professional memberships, certifications, program accreditation affiliations has been difficult. There seems to be no fair way to accomplish this goal. Multiple opinions on how this should be done exist depending upon the position held at the university.
- 2) It has been a challenge to solicit an interest by departments to prepare and submit proposals to external funding sources to support curriculum and professional development initiatives. The university has only one grant writer and faculty are busy with teaching loads.

REVIEW

(09-29-07):

Several other challenges come to mind. The first is to develop and

implement processes that evaluate the changes made so that continued improvement is possible. Without continued measurement, the changes will become stale and at some point the changes will no longer be as effective as they are at the point of implementation. The second challenge is to find ways to compare the effectiveness of the professional development at Vincennes University with other institutions.

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?
