Action Project

Institution:	Colorado Mountain College		
Submitted:	2007-03-30	**Contact:**	Dr. Meeta Goel
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Timeline:
Planned project kickoff date: 07-01-2005
Target completion date: 09-01-2009
Actual completion date: --

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:

Improve Access for CMC Learners

B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

The Colorado Mountain College (CMC) student population will reflect CMC service area community demographics. The CMC AQIP Access Team and Diversity Council desire to systematically review the demographic make up of the college community compared to the demographic make up of the service area community to identify any gaps therein that signal access barriers to segments of our community. To this end, the AQIP Access Team in collaboration with the Diversity Council have identified two immediate sub goals: Sub Goal 1: Build a Systems Portfolio that will identify underrepresented student groups by campus and college wide as compared to community demographics to determine future AQIP Access goals. Suggested cohorts to pull: first generation, low income, special populations, ethnicity, gender, by age, remedial student conversion to college courses; ESL student conversion to college courses; GED graduate conversion to college courses; local high school graduate participation rate. As data is compiled for Sub Goal 1, both the Diversity Council and AQIP Team determined that, parallel to this data gathering, action should continue to honor the work and research of prior Diversity Council groups and thus a continued focus on our Latino/Latino /Hispanic population was established as: Sub Goal 2: Align the Latino/Hispanic student participation rate with the non-Latino/Hispanic participation rate. Therefore, increase to 18% the college-wide participation rate of Latino/Hispanic students enrolled in college courses not including ESL and GED. [Note: although this project and initiatives will target meeting needs of the entire Latino/Hispanic population, the indicator for success on this project will be the alignment of the % Latino/Hispanic students graduating from local high schools in the district with the % of Latino/Hispanic students enrolled in CMC courses not including ESL and GED]. Rationale for this specific sub goal is due to the large influx of Latino/Hispanic residents to the CMC service area. Some K-5 schools in the service area are over 50% Latino/Hispanic. As a growing and significant population within the community, we will insure that Latino/Hispanic community members are demonstrably encouraged and feel welcomed to college courses that take them beyond ESL and GED.

C. Identify the single AQIP Category which the Action Project will most affect or impact:

Primary Category: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

As a learning-centered college, CMC is committed to building initiatives based on fact-based, data-driven information. Coupled with the community college mission of access, CMC desires to collect and synthesize data to better understand our community needs and potential barriers to access.

As CMC builds this data, CMC will incrementally target specific and focused cohorts of students to determine participation rates compared to predetermined benchmarks. With a systematic, data-driven approach to understanding community (students' and stakeholders') needs, CMC feels it will successfully launch a continuous improvement cycle for insuring that the mission of access is a reality for the entire CMC community.

E. List the organizational areas - -institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

Students Student Development (a.k.a. Student Services) Institutional Research Diversity Council (college wide action-oriented committee)

F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

Outreach efforts High School Relations Advising Communication pieces (marketing) Student Support Services: tutoring, testing, orientation, financial aid First Year Experience program development Strategic Planning and Budget allocations Student Surveying

G. Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

Diversity Council, Diversity Action Teams, and AQIP Action Team meet with a focus on the established goals which is demonstrated with notes/minutes, reports and outcomes. Action items with assessment are established and are reflected in campus and functional area strategic plans. Diversity Council, Diversity Action Teams, and AQIP Action Team follow up on assisting with the assessment of action items and use the results to establish/revise action items and/or establish new goals. This will be demonstrated in annual reports produced for the Diversity Council, AQIP, and Student Development. Students and/or community members will be surveyed systematically to determine trends in their perspectives. At least one annual college wide workshop/training on diversity awareness will be held and evaluated by participants.

H. Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

Sub goal 1: Systems Portfolio – a data-trend matrix will be developed tracking success and retention factors by student cohort and further refined to reflect per campus trends compared to service-area demographics. Sub goal 2: measure of success will be the college wide participation rate of Latino/Hispanic students in credit and/or non-credit courses not including ESL and GED. Align the percent of Latino/Hispanic students graduating from local high schools in the district with the percent of Latino/Hispanic students enrolled in CMC courses not including ESL and GED. Definitions: College-wide: statistics and measurements based on aggregate data for entire CMC system versus per campus. Participation rate: percent of students enrolled in courses not including ESL and GED beyond drop for refund date. Rationale for sub goal 2: CMC recognized that it easily reached an acceptable participation rate for Latino/Hispanic students when including ESL and GED since a large portion of enrollees in these specific areas are Latino/Hispanic students. However, participation in ESL and GED alone did not signify to CMC that it had genuinely created the level of access desired for all community members. Therefore, after discussions in the CMC leadership groups of ALT (Administrative Leadership Team) and Diversity Council it was determined that to truly meet the challenge of access, the goal needed to be narrowed to capture access (participation rate) of Latino/Hispanic students in credit and/or non-credit courses not including ESL and GED. Rationale for sub goal 2 benchmark: it is noted that this benchmark focuses on the high school graduating class demographic makeup versus comparison to the simpler benchmark of the service-area community demographic makeup. In this case, it was acknowledged that simple alignment with the service-area demographic make up for CMC college-level courses was an unrealistic and unfair measure of CMC accessibility to Latino/Hispanic students. This is based upon two realizations: - the challenge of our immigrant community having a consistent level of education and literacy at the high school level. -

Immigrants may tend to only seek ESL courses that assist them in securing work. It is believed, through anecdotal interactions with our Latino/Hispanic community, that economic survival is a priority for our immigrants leading to multiple jobs and/or jobs with unstructured hours leaving little room or interest in courses beyond ESL and GED. Therefore, although this project and initiatives will target meeting needs of the entire Latino/Hispanic population, it was concluded that a fair and true representation of CMC's success in Latino/Hispanic accessibility is insuring that the Latino/Hispanic high school graduates participate at CMC at the same rate as the non-Latino/Hispanic high school graduates.

I. Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

July 2005: The AQIP Access Team and Diversity Action Teams established: DAT UNO (Spanish): – An internal clearinghouse to communicate recommended Diversity Council action items to campuses and functional areas and compile a document of what strategic action plans each campus and functional area have identified for the upcoming year and ultimate accomplishment of those plans. DAT UNO coordinates its activity to be in concert with the annual strategic planning process. Outcomes: DAT UNO creates an annual document identifying the college-wide strategic action plans by campus and functional area and the accomplishment thereof. Diversity Council follows up on acknowledging and celebrating accomplishments. DC continues to pass suggested action items through DAT UNO. DAT DEUX (French): The Think-Tank Team to research best practices (i.e. existing CMC practices, literature review, conferences, community and other colleges, etc.). Outcomes: DAT DEUX compiles an annual "laundry list" of suggested action items which are highly detailed, are measurable and the suggested method to measure impact/success of the action item plus any success stories of that action item. DAT TRE (Italian): The team to arrange annual college wide workshops and presentations on diversity topics. Outcomes: an annual college-wide workshop or presentation that has a 50% college-wide participation rate. (Note - % of participation or other measure of success to be determined) DAT FUMF (German): The Student Perspective Team. This team gathers data from various groups of students on their perspective of the CMC environment and support/comfort of all types of students. This may be accomplished via surveys, focus groups, and such. Outcomes: An annual report on the data, how collected, and the interpretation of the results. Results will be used to create additional action items through DAT DEUX. Results will also serve as a baseline for measuring CMC success in diversity initiatives. September 2005: participation rate trends for Latino/Hispanic students and service- area high school graduate demographic make up are pulled and analyzed. By December, 2005: a Focus Group and/or survey is conducted of Latino/Hispanic Students/community and compiled by the Diversity Action Team on Student Perspective (DAT Fumf). Best practices and initiatives are identified by the Diversity Action Team on "think-tank" (DAT Deux). Practices and initiatives are highly detailed with recommended assessment tools. March, 2006: Results and findings from DAT Fumf and DAT Deux are reviewed and prioritized by Diversity Council and AQIP Access Team. The Diversity Action Team on "clearinghouse" (DAT Uno) insures dissemination and use of the action items college wide along with follow up on assessment of success. A Diversity Council Strategic Plan is developed for implementation for 06-07. The Systems Portfolio (data trend matrix) is complete and reviewed by the Diversity Council to identify gaps in access to be addressed as future goals. May, 2006: DAT TRE: college-wide faculty and staff training piece. This committee lost their chairwoman and therefore was delayed in action. A questionnaire was administered to faculty/staff with a very limited response. The timing on this may have been off. In the future, DAT TRE will start putting together training after DAT DEUX has done research. This way, they can look at the data from DAT DEUX and use it. DAT TRE puts together a display for Appreciation Day celebrating our students and staff/faculty entitled: "Together, all of us impact lives!". By Summer/Fall, 2006: identified action items are implemented for the 06-07 academic year. (Strategic Plan attached) July, 2006: Diversity Council initiates and charges new DAT Teams. October, 2006: Diversity Council and AQIP Access Team reviews progress and prepares to assess success of action items. March, 2007: Diversity Council and the AQIP Access team review the

updated trend data including participation rate benchmark for progress. Action items are reviewed and adjusted as necessary to continue progress toward meeting benchmark and/or a new goal is identified that focuses on another underserved student/community cohort. Diversity Council and AQIP Access Shortlist of 06-07 Projects Completion of the Diversity Council Strategic Plan initiatives and assessment thereof. Completion of the Diversity Council PowerPoint Presentation and subsequent showing at Foundation, College Council, and the Board of Trustees. Creation of a video documenting student testimonials and CMC's impact on their lives for next Appreciation Day. Expansion into the Arts including annual purchase of student art for permanent display at campuses. Completion of the Data Portfolio and identification of other student cohorts who may be under-represented. Creation of strategic plan for 07-08 based on identified student cohort.

J. Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

The Action Project Goals are goals both for the AQIP Access Project Team and the larger college wide Diversity Council. Both the Diversity Council and the AQIP Team are chaired by the Chief Student Development Officer who will produce annual reports demonstrating progress on goals, assessment thereof, and new or revised goals. The annual report will be disseminated college wide and to the Governing Board. This accountability through the annual report coupled with the identification of a primary "driver" on this goal will keep attention and energies focused on the goals.

K. Project Leader and contact person:

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Annual Update: 2009-09-11

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

The goals that were laid out for this project have largely been met because when participation rates are determined including developmental and ESL courses, CMC's overall Latino participation rate of about 22% is reflective of our community make-up. The Latino participation rate of about 11% in college level courses has suggested a need to intervene even sooner in developing college readiness skills. This has indicated a need to collaborate more effectively with area public school personnel, students and their parents. Consequently, CMC has been focusing on developing these partnerships. Due to the recent legislative changes regarding concurrent enrollment, CMC is strengthening its partnerships with local school districts and is poised to maximize college preparedness for first generation college students and its outreach into the schools. Legislative changes now allow CMC to offer Developmental Education coursework to students during their senior year. Now, more than ever, CMC is prepared to create seamless pathways for college readiness via the forging of necessary partnerships and learning that is integrated earlier in the students' academic career. The pre-collegiate program has become engrafted into the fabric of college functioning, along with many other strategies e.g. increased scholarship fundraising efforts, particularly for Latinos accompanied by strategies for increasing awareness and applications for such financial aid.

Review *(10-07-09):*

Project goal of having its student population reflect the demographics of its service area communities. The project has met its goal of increasing the college-wide participation rate of Latino/Hispanic students enrolled in college courses not including ESL and GED. The institution has identified through a systematic review of the project that a need still exists for intervention in developing college readiness skills for Latino students. As stated, the college has recognized the need for early intervention and has taken the appropriate steps to collaborate more effectively with

area public school personnel, students, and their parents which demonstrates the AQIP Collaboration Principle and AQIP Category (9) Building Collaborative Relationships. The integration of the pre-collegiate program along with other strategies in response to analyzing the changing needs of student and stakeholder needs demonstrates a commitment to the AQIP Agility Principle and AQIP Category (3) Understanding Students' and other Stakeholders' Needs. Because the institution has demonstrated an understanding of the new legislative factors, the project has appropriately directed and modified efforts to be responsive to these changing conditions which demonstrate the institution's ability to be flexible, respond quickly, and allocate appropriate resources (AQIP Agility Principle). Although the project is set to conclude this cycle, some next step might include collecting and analyzing performance results from these efforts to determine how they have contributed to understanding student and other stakeholder needs (AQIP Category (8) Planning for Continuous Improvement).

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

In addition to the external partnerships with CMC's many school districts, Student Affairs staff led by the VP of Student Affairs have continued to further access related initiatives college wide through collaboration with the CMC Foundation, Academic Affairs and campus personnel e.g. Latino Youth Summits, the Trio grant, increased HERO & other scholarship opportunities. There has been clear support from top level leadership & staff, especially from the close partnership between the Student & Academic Affairs departments.

Review *(10-07-09):*

The institution has integrated collaboration and relationship building (AQIP Categories (4) Valuing People and (9) Building Collaborative Relationships) as well as broad based involvement (AQIP Involvement Principle) in the project plan by including external partnerships with the school districts. Continued collaboration between Student Affairs staff, led by the VP of Student Affairs, have continued to further expand related initiatives college wide via collaboration with the CMC Foundation, Academic Affairs, campus personnel, Latino Youth Summit, and the Trio grant, (AQIP Leadership, Collaboration and Involvement Principles).

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

The results of this action project are now embedded into the college's annual work cycle and have the requisite college support to be sustainable. Although we are continuing to work on closing the gap for Latino student participation and promoting this college wide, we're working on rethinking this project since the processes related to it have become a part of our daily function. Our President's vision for the college is for it to be our communities' first choice for learning, partnerships & leadership and he has trained numerous continuous improvements over the past year to target key processes for improvement. Student engagement in & outside the class was the focus of two such teams and how we assess student progress on a number of key performance indicators. We have also been working on improving the first year experience for students. Thus, we will likely retire this project in its current form to further address/improve the assessment of student learning inside & outside the classroom. However, we will develop this as we reexamine our strategic priorities in the coming months.

Review *(10-07-09):*

The College has noted that this action project is embedded into the annual work cycle with committed resources to support the efforts, thus this particular project will be retired to further address and improvements in response to understanding student and other stakeholder needs (AQIP Categories (3) Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs and (6) Supporting Organizational Operations). The institution has identified that focusing on other initiatives designed

to improve student engagement and the first year experience are critical next steps. The leadership's focus on building partnerships and collaborative relationships (AQIP Category (9) Building Collaborative Relationships and AQIP Collaboration Principle) demonstrates the institution's commitment to using AQIP approaches for improvement. The project team has indicated that new strategic priorities designed to further address and improve assessment of student learning are planned as next steps (AQIP Category (8) Planning for Continuous Improvement).

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

The strengthening of school district partnerships & CMC's outreach opportunities that have resulted partially due to changing legislation, have opened the door for significant positive changes in how students transition to college and succeed there. We are also very focused on how we measure student success, both inside & outside the classroom.

Review *(10-07-09):*

The institution has identified a potential effective practice integrated into this concluding project. The institution has noted that the element of collaboration (AQIP Category (9) Building Collaborative Relationships) has been effective through the strengthening of school district partnerships and outreach efforts which have enabled the institution to improve efficiency in services (AQIP Agility Principle).

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

No notable challenges at this time because of the college wide support for improving student access.

Review *(10-07-09):*

The College has noted that there are no notable challenges at this time for the project. However, continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of the project outcomes by measuring results and assessing effectiveness may enable the institution to further improve in the area of identifying any gaps that signal access barriers to segments of the community (AQIP Category (8) Planning for Continuous Improvement).

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?

Not at this time, but we will let you know at the November Strategy Forum if we need assistance to proceed with formulating our next steps. The VP of Student Affairs can be contacted at bbankhead@coloradomtn.edu should you have any additional questions.

Review *(10-07-09):*

The institution did not request assistance from AQIP at this time, but has noted that they will use the November Strategy Forum as a resource for assisting with next steps. Should the institution find the need for further assistance, they are encouraged to contact AQIP.