Minnesota State Community and Technical College, MN

Project: Preparation for Accreditation Candidacy with NLN/CNEA

Version 1.0- Project

Q: What is the current status of your project?
A: Completed

Please indicate the original project start date, original project end date, and anticipated completion date if project is not completed. Please list dates on separate lines.

A: This project was started in March, 2016.

The original project end date was March 2017, and we needed more time than anticipated for completion.

The project end date was December, 2017.

Briefly describe the current status of the project. Explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution’s most recent or soon-to-be submitted systems portfolio, if applicable.

A: The current status of the project is that the project goals and deliverables were completed successfully and the action project structure supported the College's efforts to progress with the initial stages of the nursing accreditation process with NLN CNEA. In December of 2017, NLN CNEA notified the College that we were granted pre-accreditation candidacy, which is a required step in a multi-step process. This project does relate to the strategic challenge from our systems portfolio review relative to the systematic use of data for continuous improvement and completion of this project would not have occurred without systematic use of data, as that is what this programmatic accreditation requires.
List the project goals as stated in the original project declaration along with the Q: metrics/measures for assessing the progress for each goal.

| A: *Implement an evaluation plan monitoring calendar to be used by the nursing department and nursing dean.  
This calendar was produced and is in continued use to monitor stages of the nursing accreditation process.  
*Incorporate student involvement and input in the accreditation process.  
In coordination with the institutional research department, additional student and employer surveys were developed and implemented.  
*Improve advisory committee meetings and interactions through the use of the advisory committee handbook.  
An updated advisory committee handbook was reviewed, discussed and is now guiding the meeting processes and interactions. This particular outcome helped to support the institution's decision to employ an annual advisory committee survey for all program advisory committees. To date, 204 advisory committee members have responded, and we are in the process of preparing a data report to share with the college community to inform future improvements.  
*Attend NLN CNEA accreditation conference that is appropriate for the current phase of the accreditation process.  
The nursing dean, the nursing director and a nursing faculty member attended a national NLN CNEA conference that was designed to help prepare programs for the initial steps in the accreditation process.  
*Prepare a report on the outcomes from the NLN CNEA accreditation workshop.  
This report was not done. Because of the documentation required for the pre-accreditation candidacy application, it would have been a redundant exercise for the faculty.  
*Encourage nursing faculty and nursing dean to apply to become NLN CNEA peer reviewers.  
The president, vice president of academics, associate vice president of academics and nursing dean encouraged applications. Three College employees were selected for this role. The director of nursing was also selected to serve on the Nominating Committee for one year and participated in an accreditation site visit in September 2017. This action project provided supporting rationale for approving additional expenditures for faculty and administrator professional development. |
Describe what has been accomplished with this project over the past year, specifically referring to quantifiable results that show progress. You may need to include a discussion clarifying how the original goals and anticipated outcomes may have shifted during the year.

A: This project provided a structure that enabled the nursing program to "chunk out" the beginning stages of a very rigorous accreditation process. Achieving pre-accreditation status represents an important step toward achieving candidacy for accreditation and accreditation. By "chunking out" the process into an action projects that addressed what was needed in the early stages, the program dean and program director helped to build confidence in the department with respect to the remaining steps of the process. In terms of quantifiable results, the official notice of pre-accreditation status and the official notices of employee selections as peer reviewers provide evidence of progress.

Describe how various members of the learning community have participated in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project’s duration, particularly during the past year.

A: This project required the involvement of every faculty member in the nursing department, the nursing dean, the nursing director, the institutional research director, the institutional data analyst, the chief academic officer, the associate vice president of academics, the administrative assistants to the nursing dean and associate vice president, the academic leadership team, the academic advising team and many supporting and encouraging employees in various departments at the College. This project helped to illustrate that programmatic accreditation require a team approach.

Describe the effect that this project has had on the institution, students, and others in the learning community. What has the institution learned that can be identified as a good practice to use in other aspects of its quality work or from which other institutions might benefit?

A: The effect of this project has been positive, in that it did help to provide a support structure that was used to check off some very important tasks that needed to be completed in order to accomplish pre-candidacy status. One lesson learned from this action project is that we did need to change some approaches related to data collection, analysis and use in order to work on the program's systematic evaluation plan. While this required faculty and staff to work in different ways, those efforts support data informed continuous improvement.
Describe the anticipated challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project’s goals.

Q: The main challenge relating to learning from the project’s goals will be devoting the time to reflecting on them and communicating them out in a way that resonates with other employees. We are a very fast paced organization, and it can be a challenge to stop to look back on something instead of moving on to the next order of business.

A: In light of the project goals, current circumstances, institutional learning from this project, and anticipated barriers to success, list the next steps to be taken over the course of the next 12 - 24 months in order to complete or institutionalize the results of this action project. Provide a timeline for completing each next step.

Q: This project is now complete.

A: N/A

Version 1.0- Update

Q: I certify that this project is ready for review.

A:

Declaration
Briefly describe the project in less than 100 words. Be sure to identify the key organizational areas (departments, programs, divisions, units, etc.) and key organizational processes that this action project will affect, change, and/or improve.

A: This project will strengthen our response to the recommendations from a previous evaluation of our nursing candidacy application as we prepare for the next steps in our work to achieve programmatic accreditation for our nursing programs. This project will help us to clearly identify and monitor our progress with the goals and deliverables needed for this work. In addition, this project will help us to better use data in our response to the candidacy presentation and evaluation and in developing strategies for continuous improvement of nursing education at the College. The key organizational areas that will be impacted include nursing faculty, the academic leadership team, and Institutional Research.

Describe your institution’s reasons for initiating this action project now and how long it should take to complete it. Why are this project and its goals high among your institution’s current priorities? Also, explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution’s recent or soon-to-be submitted Systems Portfolio.

A: This project will be complete in March of 2017. It is our goal to use this action project as a springboard to another action project that will also be related to the work that is needed to be awarded programmatic accreditation for nursing programs. This project is high among our institutional priorities, as it is directly aligned with two of our top institutional priorities for the past two fiscal years - Strengthening Student Success and Learning and Strengthening Workforce Partnerships.

List the project goals, milestones, and deliverables along with corresponding metrics, due dates, and other measures for assessing the progress toward each goal. Be sure to include when you anticipate submitting the project for formal reviews.

A: These are the project goals and deliverables. We anticipate submitting the project for formal review in March of 2017.

Implement an evaluation plan monitoring calendar - calendar published by March 2017

Incorporate student involvement and input in the accreditation process - input questions developed and asked by March 2017.

Improve advisory board meetings and interactions through use of the advisory committee handbook - review of agendas and utilization of handbook complete by March 2017.
Deploy employer and advisory board survey in collaboration with faculty and

Attend NLN CNEA accreditation conference that is appropriate for current stage in
process - conference attendance documented by December 1, 2016.

Prepare a report on the outcomes from the NLN CNEA accreditation workshop - report
complete by February 1, 2017.

Encourage nursing faculty and nursing dean to apply to become NLN CNEA site
reviewers - review of success achieved on December 1, 2016.

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Describe how various members of the learning community will participate in this
action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the
project’s duration.

**Q:** Successfully completing the pre-accreditation candidacy steps and candidacy steps for
nursing accreditation will involve all of the nursing faculty, the health sciences dean, the
academic leadership team, the staff members who support the student development
processes and services for nursing students, and our external stakeholders. At each stage
in the process, these members will have the opportunity to provide documentation,
comments, and progress reports for each project deliverable.

**A:**

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Describe how the institution will monitor project progress/success during, and at the
completion of this project. Be sure to specifically state the measures that will be
evaluated and when.

**Q:**

**A:**

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Describe the challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the
project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project’s goals.

**A:** As a multi-campus college with four campuses located in different communities, it can be
a challenge to convene people to work together on those projects that are best
accomplished through face-to-face meetings. To lend some idea of our geographical layout, our Wadena campus is 91 miles from our Moorhead campus. We have nursing programs, faculty, and students at each campus, in addition to an approved off-site location that is roughly 35 miles from our Moorhead campus. It is a challenge to work on such a large scale project in a way that acknowledges all stakeholders' voices in the work at the same time as ensuring that the deliverables are produced. An additional challenge includes incorporating the learning process that is part of programmatic accreditation; we are still learning more about the specific expectations about the NLN CNEA accreditation process and will have to adjust as need.

| Provide any additional information that the institution wishes reviewers to understand regarding this Action Project. |
| Q: Our College must be in the formal stage of accreditation candidacy by January of 2018. |