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Problem Solving Framework

1. ***Fully* understand the problem we are trying to solve**
   * **DATA** - Use data to fully understand the problem and support decisions-making
     + Review student success data with disaggregation by appropriate characteristics (e.g. underrepresented students, academic program school)
     + Identify what data is missing that should be considered
   * **SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS (e.g., ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS)** - Complete analysis using feedback and input from students, faculty and staff while also considering existing structures and policies (state, federal, system office, college)
   * **SCOPE** - Describe the scope of the problem - what is working, what is not
   * **TURN DATA AND KNOWLENDGE INTO** **ACTION** - Determine how to turn data and knowledge into action, including identifying how the solution can be tailored to a specific population to benefit all stakeholders
2. **Identify the key factors to determine the efficacy of the potential solutions**

Is the problem worth solving? Is it a solvable problem? Is it a measurable/assessable? Is our goal clearly defined and how will we know when we have met it? What is the outcome we desire?

* + State why the problem should be solved and potential benefits to students and the institution (include any target populations used for the design of the solution)
  + Identify constraints to potential solutions (e.g. compliance, policies, procedures)
  + If previous attempts to solve the problem were not successful, identify why they didn’t work and what is different this time
  + Identify any existing efforts to solve the problem
  + Identify any high-impact practices from other colleges and institutions
  + Identify any potential effects on external stakeholders (system office, foundations, community, industry, etc.)
  + Identify individuals and departments that need to be a part of the solution planning process

1. **Intentional planning - Identify the who, what, when, how**
   * **WHO** - Create a diverse team for solution planning that includes stakeholders and identify who is responsible for:
     + Implementation
     + Accountability (decision-maker)
     + Who needs to be consulted
     + Who needs to be informed - consider any stakeholders invested in the outcome of the solution
   * **HOW** - Identify resources needed to develop and implement the plan (e.g. financial, human, facilities, training, technology). If applicable, plan for supports inside and outside of the classroom (e.g. ELL, Math Lab, reading)
   * **WHEN** - Determine the implementation schedule including action steps, long-term and short-term goals, and how to assess project implementation and project success
2. **Implementation and closing the loop**
   * Set Key Performance Indicators (KPI) using SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) for both implementation phases and evaluation of the solution once implemented
   * Assess implementation and be willing to accept input and adapt throughout the process
   * Communicate with all stakeholders throughout the implementation process
   * Share the results of implementation as well as results on the solution