
Action Project

Institution: Ohio University
Submitted: 2009-03-03

Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 2009-01-01
Target completion date: 2010-06-30
Actual completion date:

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

Task Force on Centers of Excellence in Graduate Education

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

Ohio University supports 87 academic programs on the graduate level. The goal of this project will be to conduct a review of graduate programs with the aim of understanding how to strategically approach graduate education in the future. Successful completion of this project will put the institution in a position to strategically support academic program strengths and diminish programs which have limited potential. Successful completion of this action project will undoubtedly strengthen the university's competitiveness as an organization of higher learning and should also put the institution in a better position to benefit the citizenry of the State of Ohio.

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

Primary Category: Planning Continuous Improvement

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:

The budget constraints Ohio University has faced in the past and will continue to face in the future has made it imperative that the institution as a whole operate as efficiently as possible while effectively serving its various stakeholder groups. Being a complex and comprehensive university, it is becoming increasingly difficult in the current economic climate to support the academic mission of the institution without an effective process to strategically support and enhance the academic program strengths of the institution. Vision Ohio, the university's strategic plan, calls for the examination of graduate programs, the results of which will be used to guide future decisions on resources for research and graduate education. In addition, the Ohio Board of Regents has mandated that each institution put forward candidates for University System of Ohio Centers of Excellence. The Centers of Excellence review in Professional and Graduate Education will help to inform the process of selecting University System of Ohio Centers of Excellence.

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

* Academic Units- Academic departments/schools and colleges will be required to participate and provide information for the Centers of Excellence on Professional and Graduate Education.

* Office of Institutional Research- This office will be responsible for providing data and information to support the Centers of Excellence review process.

* Academic Executive Leadership- Successful completion of the project will require the university President, Executive Vice President and Provost and Deans to use the assessments from the review process to inform future decisions related to supporting the graduate mission of the institution.

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

Successful completion of this action project will strengthen the overall academic mission of the institution and put the university in a stronger competitive position with other institutions of higher learning. Completion of this project will undoubtedly result in a redefining of the academic mission of the university and increase efficiencies in the academic units. The review process will likely change the academic landscape of the institution in that certain academic programs will grow and likely increase in national/international reputation and others will be scaled back or possibly eliminated. Enhancement of academic programs identified as strong and productive should also result in an increase in the scholarly/research productivity of the faculty and attraction of quality students in these disciplines.

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

A process for the identification of academic centers of excellences on the graduate level began at Ohio University during the 2007-08 academic year with discussions on the procedures to be used in the identification process. Approval of the process occurred by the end of the 07-08 academic year and during the summer and fall of 2008, academic departments and schools submitted materials to begin the review process. It is estimated that the review process on the graduate level will be completed by the beginning of the 08-09 academic year. This project has significant institutional support and has gained a great deal of momentum over the past two years to insure its success.

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

Successful completion of the centers of excellence reviews on the graduate level by the beginning of the 08-09 academic year will also signal that this project has the momentum and support for a successful completion. The ability of the academic executive leadership to use the results of the review process to inform decisions related to budgetary decisions and the future of its academic offerings will be a critical element to the success of this project.

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:

* Successful completion of the "Centers of Excellence" graduate program reviews by the beginning of the 08-09 academic year.

* Use the results of the review process to inform future academic mission and budgetary decisions at the institution.

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

Last Action Project Update:

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

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

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

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

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

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?
