

Staff Development Grant – Normandale Community College

Normandale Community College

Project: Using Hyperion/Brio Dashboards and Institutional Accountability Measures to Encourage Data-Enhanced Decision Making

Description: This project will improve decision making on campus by training select staff, administrators, and faculty department chairs in accessing the Hyperion/Brio dashboards and in using the dashboards and institutional accountability measures.

Project leader: Michael Berndt, Dean of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Award: \$4725.00

Project Re-cap:

Our campus planned three training workshops: 1) Train Deans and Department Chairs in using the instructional cost study dashboards to evaluate programs, 2) Train Continuing Education and Customized Training Staff in using the CECT dashboards, and 3) Train Human Resources staff to generate internal reports from the HR dashboards. The workshops were intended to generate enthusiasm for using BRIO by providing information directly relevant to operational and planning needs in each of the three areas.

Initial enthusiasm for the project was high, but when it came to actually committing to attend the workshop and to use the dashboards, interest waned. People could not find time among all the competing demands to learn how to access and use the BRIO dashboards. The focus for the project then shifted from training employees to use BRIO to automating reports and writing instruction sets, so people in these three areas could get the data they need for decision making with minimal investment of their time.

Ten Department Chairs did attend the BRIO training on the instructional cost study. From that training, the college developed an e-learning module, so future chairs can go through the training when they actually need to go into the dashboard (e.g. during program review). We are currently working with Finance personnel at the System Office to provide annual reports for CECT and Human Resource personnel at the System Office to create tutorials in how to pull and organize regular institutional reports.

Funds were initially targeted to provide stipends for trainers but are being reallocated to an instructional designer to develop the e-learning module and assist in writing the instruction sets.

Impact:

Initial impact was small. While we secured access to BRIO for many more faculty and administrators on campus, use of it has not increased dramatically. Feedback from the Chairs training indicates that people vary in their levels of comfort using data. While some enjoyed having access to data they could manipulate, most just wanted to know enough to get in, get what they need, and get out.

We anticipate long-term benefit from the project in stimulating the use of more data in decision making, but we have realized that we are going to have to take even smaller steps than we had planned and extend our horizon for facilitating this culture change.

Reflections:

One of our goals in pushing out BRIO access and training, in addition to improving decision making, was to relieve some of the pressure on our College Institutional Research Office for data reports. What we have realized is that other areas also feel overburdened; they see the data training as one more set of responsibilities they must try to manage. By shifting to more just-in-time training and automated reporting, we hope to still realize the grant's goals.