
Action Project: Discreet Registration

Institution: Madison Area Technical College
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Annual Update: 2008-09-11**A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.**

The College has used Six Sigma and the DMAIC methodology to guide its work to improve the registration processes for these three programs. The registration processes were implemented in phases, beginning with CNA registration, moving on to ABE/ESL registration, with contract training (38.14 contract) starting in phase three. Although most of the phases have moved forward certain portions of the work is uncompleted due to the Project's reliance on outside departments to complete needed work. This has slowed the overall Action Project by delaying the implementation of phases two and three by approximately six months. Therefore, the ending dates will also be delayed by approximately six months.

CNA Registration:

- Assessment requirement added to all offerings of the Nursing Assistant Course
- Regional campuses removed department consent from all classes allowing student to use self-service if assessment requirement has been fulfilled.
- Eliminated the requirement for the collection of grad fee at time of registration. Still provide the option for students to pay graduation fee and obtain diploma at the time of completion.
- Update Nursing Assistant Program information with the assistance of our Web Content Editor to provide accurate information in a simplified format.
- Updated web links to course offering information to point to Inside MATC where the most accurate representation of Nursing Assistant class meeting patterns is available.
- Changed practice of managing Nursing Assistant wait lists via a single section to align with standard wait list management practices. Allows the student to indicate class preference at the time that they are placed on the wait list.
- Proposed the automated Transfer Credit for implementation allowing students to register online without having to come in person when the student has fulfilled a pre-requisite at a different institution. One position to deal with this issue is currently being piloted with one year of funding.
- Proposed a simplified online application, which would automatically accept students into the program, thus, eliminating the manual graduation process. Request is pending with Enrollment Services.
- This is the most mature phase of the Action Project and is in the Control phase of the DMAIC process.

ABE/ESL Registration:

- The team met for an all day retreat in June 2008 and, using the data collected during the measure and analyze stages, brainstormed creative solutions. The solutions being advocated are, "Ensure students will have the opportunity to attend welcoming "orientation" / welcome session" and "Ensure course offerings provide agility to meet student needs".
- The team has implemented several communication improvements. A new student information brochure has been created, frequently asked questions, based on student input, have been written for the College's online frequently asked questions tool (AskMATC), a training manual has been created, and the ABE/ESL Website has been improved.
- Several improvements related to the first day of orientation have also been implemented. There are now additional testing times and days added to the assessment/ testing schedule. Staff collaboration on the development of the program orientation events has improved. A new and improved process to "Quick Admit" students has been developed. Additional resources that are needed to implement day one of orientation has been identified.
- Phase two of the Action Project is at the improve stage and after the fall 2008 semester will move into the control stage.

38.14 Contract (Training) Registration:

- Gather best practices from other institutions within Wisconsin
- Identified measures
- This is the third phase of the Action Project and it will be in the analyze stage during the fall 2008 semester.

AQIP Review (09-17-08):

The institution has made a good deal of progress on this project, which improves processes included in Category Six: Supporting Institutional Operations. The approach taken by the college in which they researched actual practice through one complete registration cycle demonstrates their intent to use information as the basis of decision-making. That gathered information evidences a regard for the concerns of Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs. The reported improvements to streamline the CNA Registration process suggest a thorough, thoughtful analysis by the leadership of the project that has worked to meet the needs of both students and college employees. The ambitious magnitude of changes for that registration process alone makes it easy to see how committed the college is to process analysis and improvement through this project. With that depth of work, it is not hard to see why the full three phases of the project is taking longer to facilitate than originally projected. Madison has the foresight to use the DMAIC process to monitor the effectiveness of all these adjustments to CNA Registration. The ongoing pursuit of the second and third phases of the project following a similar methodology administered in an extended timeframe should yield a similarly rich modification of those other registration processes.

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

This project supports one of the Board's End Statements: MATC provides open access and a welcoming environment for all students and members of the community in pursuit of lifelong learning opportunities. But more importantly, this project is will standardize the registration process for three educational programs that currently reside outside of the normal registration process and are therefore more open to errors and interpretation by the staff. Regular "tollgate" reviews have occurred with the College Council, keeping the College leadership informed about the progress of the team's work and gaining their approval for changes in key policy changes that will improve the registration processes for students in these three programs. The majority of the team members are directly involved in the day-to-day activities of each of the discreet registration processes. The Dean and Associate Dean of the Center of College Preparedness are both team members and heavily involved in moving these projects forward.

AQIP Review (09-17-08):

The college has wisely used the employees who through their daily work have acquired expertise in the processes being modified. This engagement of staff in analyzing and improving their own processes illustrates in actual practice the college leadership's regard for its people. Communication through the College Council should facilitate relevant information being shared throughout the organization. The College Council can also possibly recognize any obstacles encountered in Phase I that can be addressed allowing for a more agile facilitation of Phases II and III.

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

The CNA process is complete. The ABE/ESL process is in the implementation stage. The team identified solutions and will pilot them in October 2008. The 38.14 Contracts process is currently analyzing measures.

AQIP Review (09-17-08):

The project team appears confident in the effectiveness of the approach taken with Phase I which is in the Control stage. Phase II is entering into the Implementation stage while Phase III is still in the preliminary analysis stage. Madison leadership and staff seem to have crafted a parallel three-tiered plan of action for each of the project's three phases which allows for those working on the overall project to prioritize their efforts and thereby learn from the challenges of one phase in the achievement of the subsequent phases. Presumably the information gleaned from the Control stage of Phase I will be of particular benefit to the

modifications implemented in the other two phases.

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

Using Six Sigma methodology has proven to work nicely. Smaller teams, clear assignments, tollgate reviews to College Council, an invested champion and implementing (not just recommending) solutions, all help keep team members motivated. Regular tollgate review sessions with College Council are valuable. Keeping the leaders of the college informed about the progress of the team's work and getting their approval is crucial in maintaining motivation and communication.

AQIP Review (09-17-08):

This section of the update summarizes the strengths of Madison's systematic work on the project evident throughout the previous response sections. The selection of Six Sigma methodology adapted to the specific needs of this project has served the college well. The college's work on this project demonstrates their dedication to using the time and energy of their people well while keeping vital communication to the larger employee community timely.

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

Offering staggered class offerings is one of the suggested solutions to the ABE/ESL registration process. Getting faculty buy-in for this change in class offering schedules has been a challenge. A request to create an online application for the CNA phase of the Action Project has not been completed yet. The implementation of such an online application would require that personnel from MATC's Technology Services and Enrollment Services work with consultants from CollegeNet to complete the work. However, due to other high priority initiatives, this has not occurred yet. One position to handle transfer credit for CNA students has been funded for one year. However, it is estimated that this job will require two full-time staff to complete. The College Preparedness and Academic Advancement Center (CPAAC) will be bringing forward, during the unit planning process, the need to create dedicated computer lab space at each MATC campus. CPAAC will also be working with Technology Services to develop a system that will automatically load test scores from the ABE/ESL testing software into the PeopleSoft database.

AQIP Review (09-17-08):

The project team recognizes very specific challenges facing the full implementation of their recommendations and the advancement of those improvements. Further communication with faculty about the need for staggering course offerings could result in greater buy-in and the helpful use of insights from the faculty perspective. Hopefully, the delay of an online application due to work on other priorities will not cause the college to lose this modification now seen as necessary. An adjusted timeline created through consultation with all involved should alleviate that risk. The need for additional dedicated computer lab space and a possible additional staff person working on transfer credit should prompt the project leadership to communicate these needs into the college's budget process.

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?

None at this time.

Review (09-17-08):

N/A