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## Action Project

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**Institution:** Glen Oaks Community  
College  
**Submitted:** 2006-05-31

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### Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 2006-05-22  
Target completion date: 2009-08-30  
Actual completion date:

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

Design, Form, and Train Core Strategy Project Teams

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

This Action Project will involve personnel from all institutional levels in the hands-on integration of the College's Strategic Plan into institutional systems and processes. This integration will occur through the implementation of diverse projects designed by Core Strategy Project Teams focused on strategic goals related to Board-adopted Core Strategies.

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:

In response to receiving Board-adopted Core Strategies for 2005 – 2010, the College Council (see Action Project Design/Launch a College Council Strategic Planning Model) formatted six Core Strategy Teams to develop institutional goals. After review and prioritization of the twenty (20) submitted goals, the College Council selected four (4) as First Areas of Focus, recommended them for immediate adoption, publicized them internally at a College-wide meeting in April 2006, and sent them to the Board of Trustees for adoption in June 2006. Now the College is positioned to implement those goals and views Project Teams as an effective means of both implementation and of operational change.

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

During 2006 – 2008, the initial Project Teams of this Action Project will address the Areas of First Focus recommended to the Board of Trustees by the College Council: (1)To develop a plan that enhances the success of current and future students from initial inquiry through completion of student goals; (2)To provide the technical framework (current use assessment, future use needs, software/hardware updates and training) to improve communication between all aspects of the college, representative of current business and industry standards, including internal and external stakeholders, through such things as web applications, student e-mail and

telecommunication technologies; (3) To create and implement an effective college-wide communication system; and (4) To create and implement a comprehensive human resources plan. These Areas of First Focus have an impact that is college-wide as they address issues related to student success, technology, communication, and human resources. Thus, all departments, divisions, and programs will be affected and involved in this Action Project.

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

This Action Project is designed to move strategic planning from plan to process. Its intent is to integrate the Strategic Plan into those institutional systems and processes related to the Areas of First Focus listed above. The College Council notes that quality principles need to be integral to the Strategic Plan implementation process and has, therefore, recommended that as a first step each Project Team will identify and flowchart the systems and processes of the College related to its respective goal. Furthermore, the College Council has noted that the budget process will be inherent to the implementation of each goal and has recommended that institutional budgeting be reflective of the Board-adopted goals and the activities related thereto as proposed by individual Project Teams.

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

The length of time planned for this Action Project is approximately 15 months: (1) Design the Project Teams: May – September 2006; (2) Form the Project Teams (recruit and assign members to Project Teams): September – December 2006; (3) Train the Project Teams (team training, information gathering, focused content training, and CQI training): January – May 2007; (4) Assess the Process: June – August 2007; and (5) Institutionalize the Process: August 2007.

Thus, May 2006 – August 2007 is the duration of this Action Project; however, the institutionalization of this Action Project will create a cyclical project as 2005 – 2010 Strategic Plan Core Strategies rotate into Areas of Focus (goals) adopted by the Board. Sixteen (16) goals of the twenty (20) generated by the Core Strategy Teams remain to be addressed. As this Action Project progresses, the remaining proposed goals will be reviewed, prioritized, and publicized by the College Council prior to their being recommended to the Board for adoption and assignment to new Project Teams during the duration of the current Strategic Plan. Thus, the institutionalization of the Action Project will occur.

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

The College Council will monitor the efforts on this Action Project, specifically the design and the formation of the Project Teams. The Council will assess the design process and pass the design by an outside consultant prior to implementation. In addition, the Council will assess the formation of teams from the selection of members to the determination of the charge given to each team. Throughout the duration of the Action Project, the Council will hear reports from Project Teams and will track both the continuous quality improvement and budgeting processes that loop through all projects implemented. Although the Council will coordinate training for team members, Project Team members will assess the training. Furthermore, the Core Strategy Teams that worked during the 2005 – 2006 academic year to identify goals related to each Board-adopted Core Strategy may also serve as an external check on the Council.

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:

The overall outcome measure is evidence of the Strategic Plan's incorporation in operational systems and processes of the College. The College Council will be responsible for identifying key indicators. The specific items of evidence, however, are yet to be determined, pending the charge given specific Project Teams. For some, the evidence may be information gathered; for others, a product, such as a measurable increase in student success; and yet for others, a process designed and implemented.

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

The College Council is the sponsor of this Action Project and will assume responsibility not only for its implementation but also for internal and external promotion of and publicity on its progress and success throughout the duration of the Project.

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Last Action Project Update: 2007-08-27

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

Following the College's participation in its 2005 Strategy Forum, the Glen Oaks Community College Council was formed as a representative body whose purpose is to develop, align, and integrate planning processes to facilitate positive change in the institution and to model continuous quality improvement principles. (See the retired Action Project to Design/Launch a College Council Strategic Planning Model.) In 2005, the Council reviewed six Core Strategies, earlier approved by the Board of Trustees: Learner Success, Community Connectedness, Technology, Employee Communication and Development, Continuous Quality Improvement, and Choosing and Implementing the College's Financial Future. The Council then established structure for Strategy Teams that would create goals related to each of the above Core Strategies. During the winter 2006 semester, the College Council reviewed, prioritized, and condensed fifty-two proposed goals to twenty and further identified four of the twenty as Areas of First Focus: 1) Develop a plan that enhances the success of current and future students from initial inquiry through completion of student goals; 2) Provide the technical framework to improve communication between all aspects of the college, including internal and external stakeholders; 3) Create and implement an effective college wide communication system; 4) Create and implement a comprehensive human resources plan. During summer 2006, the Council developed the concept of Project Development Teams (PDT) to design and implement diverse projects related to the Areas of First Focus. In July 2006, the College President and the Leader of the College Council sent a letter to all college employees inviting volunteer membership in one of the PDTs. The responses, received in August 2006, were reviewed by the College Council, and the Council recommended the volunteers and, where appropriate, additional personnel to be appointed by the President of the College to the specific Core Strategy Project Development Teams. At the all-employee meeting held at the beginning of the fall semester 2006, the College Council announced the membership of each team and provided the teams with a Council-designed project development form for the reporting of proposed projects. During the first week of October 2006, training was provided for the PDT membership, and the four teams worked for six weeks developing project proposals, submitting them at the end of November 2006. The projects were categorized according to the four areas of First Focus. The Council developed and applied a rubric for prioritizing the projects and, in December 2006, approved the following twelve: 1a) Develop a First Year Student Success Program; 1b) Develop a system to measure students' progress toward achieving stated institutional attributes/educational values; 2a) Recommend to the Board of Trustees to begin consideration and development of a process for choosing the College's future presidents; 2b) Consider opportunities to reorganize in the event of changes in leadership personnel; 2c) Embrace a centralized human resources philosophy and develop and implement a comprehensive human resources plan; 3a) Improve the telecommunications systems at Glen Oaks; 3b) Redesign the Glen Oaks' web-site to be professional and

user friendly; 3c) Implement web registration; 3d) Install LCD projectors in classrooms that currently do not have them; 3e) Evaluate computer classroom usage; 4a) Hold three college-wide meetings per year; and 4b) Create an employee information web page. The College Council appointed core members of project teams and appropriate contact persons. The College Council itself acted as the primary team for projects 2a and 4a and determined that no team would be formed for Project 3d. In January 2007, the College President and the Leader of the College Council sent a letter to all college employees inviting membership in the Project Teams. In response, teams were formed in January and February 2007. The teams began work in February and began verbally reporting progress on projects to the College Council at its bi-monthly meetings. Progress has been made on each of the projects. Projects 2a, 3e, and 4a have been completed, and significant progress has been made on 1b, 3a, and 3c. During summer 2007, the College Council developed a written reporting process for interim and final reports on the projects. A change of leadership in the presidency of the College, the Chief Operations Officer, the chair of the Board of Trustees, and in the Leader of the College Council, in addition to the vacancy in the position of institutional Web master, has slowed progress between April and August 2007. However, new leadership is now in place, and work is continuing.

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

In forming the project teams, letters were sent to all full time employees of the College. Furthermore, appropriate personnel with related professional expertise or concern were appointed to the projects. Approximately 33% of the full time college employees have been involved in the process of developing and implementing the projects. Membership continues to be updated, and, as sub-projects of the original twelve are developed, new opportunities to serve are presented. A third annual meeting of all college employees (Project 4a) has been adopted to help facilitate greater communication and understanding of the work of the Project Teams. Furthermore, Project Teams consult with stakeholders within the college community regarding information and work relevant to respective goals. When appropriate, teams have used college wide surveys to involve as many employees as possible and to fully realize the potential of the institution.

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

The Core Strategy Project Development Teams have been designed, formed, and trained. Thus, this Action Project has reached completion. However, the Project Teams will continue to move forward in the implementation of projects and will continue to report to the College Council. In turn, the Council will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented projects, and the project development cycle will repeat to address the remaining proposed goals beyond the four areas of First Focus established in 2006.

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

For the prioritization of goals, the College Council developed rubrics that greatly facilitated the development of Project Teams and the implementation of goals. The College Council also created forms for facilitating the development of projects and for interim and final reporting by Project Teams. These forms have allowed the College Council to compare and prioritize diverse projects. Each of these forms will need refinement in future cycles, but the initial work has provided a foundation for uniform reporting and a potential for future assessment of the work of the Project Teams.

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

This Action Project was successfully completed. While the Core Strategy Project Development Teams successfully achieved their task, inconsistencies in reporting and lack of effective communication between the College Council and the PDTs indicated that additional work would be needed. Training and preparation of the teams has still not become an integral part of the Project Team process. Although the College Council provided training for the PDTs, the diverse nature of the individual Project Teams has created difficulty in identifying appropriate training. Still, the College Council serves to establish and review each team, to develop, align, and integrate planning processes, and to model CQI principles. It is

challenging for the Council to create appropriate time for each of these roles while not taxing the time constraints of the membership. With new leadership and project management training, the College Council is attempting to create appropriate division of labor and to establish priorities to be efficient and effective in each of these roles. This should facilitate the training and preparation of future Project Team membership. As the project development cycle is institutionalized and, thereby, repeats to address the remaining proposed goals, however, communicating to the greater college community the work of the College Council and the Project Teams may be a challenge.

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?

This Action Project has been completed, and the College is currently implementing the projects developed by the PDTs. Thus, no assistance is needed at this time. However, as the College continues to implement and evaluate, AQIP will continue to be an important resource.

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