
Action Project

Institution: San Juan College
Submitted: 2006-09-13 **Contact:** Ron Jernigan
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Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 07-01-2006

Target completion date: 06-30-2008

Actual completion date: --

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

Centralized Advising and Counseling Center for San Juan College

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

The goal of the centralized advising center is to provide for a comprehensive advising and counseling model to increase student retention at San Juan College. This centralized model for advising, when fully implemented, will link to the strategic goals of San Juan College, specifically Valuing Educational Access and Student Success. The Center will provide a critical underpinning for a holistic learning environment. It certainly is a need based student support system. The stated purpose of the Advising and Counseling Center is to coordinate and support a program that provides students with academic information and personal counseling, and assists students in developing sound educational, career, and professional goals in order to make more effective decisions about courses and programs according to their values, interests, and skills.

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

Primary Category: Helping Students Learn

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:

San Juan College has undertaken this major initiative as research indicates that students persist at a higher rate when strong advising is present at the institution. Quality advising is a result of planned development and commitment to an effective advising program. According to the Noel Levitz 2005 National Research Report, students rated academic advising as one of their most important needs. San Juan College advising committee members have collected information from the National Advising and Counseling Association, as well as information from student focus groups in fall 2004. The information from the students indicated one of their top concerns was the current advising process. Some of the current obstacles described by students involved hours of availability which do not match up between faculty and students, advisors assigned outside the student's field of study, faculty advisors lacking current information such as transfer guides or program requirements, or advisors lacking good communication and relationship building skills. The College also does not have a clearly designated position in charge of advising. The sometimes inconsistent information, or information that is just incorrect, is not being controlled by one office which leads to these discrepancies. The lack of enforcement of pre-requisites leads a number of students to be unprepared for coursework assigned. Inconsistent and outdated articulation agreements cause students preparing for other college curriculums to be advised wrongly in their coursework at San Juan College.

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

The organizational areas most affected by, or involved in this project, include the San Juan College Counseling Center, Dean of Humanities Office, Dean of Business Office, Dean of Math and Sciences Office, Dean of Allied Health Office, Dean of Energy Office, Dean of Trades and Technologies Office, TRIO Talent Search Office, TRIO EDGE Program Office, Admission Office, Vice President for Student Service Office, Vice President for Learning Office, Director of the Kirtland Campus, Aviation Program Office, and staff and faculty currently involved in advising.

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

The organizational process (es) this Action Project will change and improve are student advising leading to student retention and increased completers.

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

The process of implementation for this Action Project involves a timeline which started early in the spring of 2005. The committee was formed and as a result of that committee's discussions, Tim Champarde, a consultant for NACADA, visited the campus in April, 2005. He interviewed students, faculty, administration, and Counseling Center staff to determine the state of advising on campus and recommend a model, supported by research, to improve advising on the campus. He recommended shifting to the least intrusive model, using the Total Intake Model. In this model, initial advising of all students is conducted in a central advising unit (Pardee 2000). Student are referred to advisors in their field of study or academic program after reaching specific criteria (which could include completion of remedial courses, a certain number of credit hours, all general education classes, etc.). The committee met to determine the model to be used late in the summer of 2005, and the Vice Presidents for Learning and Student Services requested that the final model to be determined by May 2006. The committee has meet on a routine basis during the fall of 2005 and the winter of 2006 to further develop and agree on the model of advising needed at the College. The centralized model of advising was agreed to in a meeting with the Vice Presidents in March, 2006 and the finalized model will be presented in May, 2006. Implementation of this advising center model will start in the summer of 2006 as budget discussions have occurred to secure the necessary funds for the implementation. The Advising Center will be initiated with first-time students going through the centralized model in the fall semester of 2006. Over the course of 2006, core faculty advisors will be selected and trained to complement the work of the professional advising and counseling staff so students will be engaged in quality advising throughout their San Juan College career. The advisor selection and training will be fully implemented by fall 2007 to complete the full centralized advising center model program.

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

The College will monitor the success of this Action Project in a number of ways. The first is to continue to use the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction survey results to assure that our ratings continue to increase in a positive ratio compared to previous years and the national averages concerning advising on campus. We will utilize the results obtained from student focus group on an annualized basis to assure that we are meeting all student needs in our advising efforts. Retention and completion benchmarks will be established to indicate through hard data that we are achieving those goals of increased numbers respective for each area. The baseline numbers are to be established in the 2005 cohorts.

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:

As indicated in Item H, the success of this Action Project will be measured by increasing positive ratios in the succeeding Noel Levitz surveys, taken every two years and base-lined on the 2005 survey. Retention and

completion numbers of students will be increased as measured through comparison with 2005 baseline numbers. Student focus groups and internal surveys will be conducted on an annualized basis to maintain student satisfaction indicating a successful advising program.

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

The “champion” for this effort will be joint effort of the Vice President for Learning and the Vice President for Student Services, as the Advising Center will report to that office. They have agreed to jointly assure this effort is successful as both areas have responsibility in the final outcomes.

K. Project Leader and contact person:

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