Institution: Kaskaskia College  
Date Submitted: 8/12/2008  
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Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 10/31/08  
Target completion date: 5/15/2010  
Actual completion date:  

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:  
Kaskaskia College Diversity Awareness Initiative

B. Describe this Action Project’s goal in 100 words or fewer:  
This project’s fundamental goal is to raise awareness of the necessity for tolerance towards all aspects of human diversity throughout our entire campus community. In today’s complex world, an informed environment recognizes that pluralism is the established paradigm. Tolerance of diversity needs to become routine and fully integrated in all the areas of the KC campus including staff, faculty, and students. Becoming aware of our own prejudices and preconceptions and broadening our definition of diversity is just the beginning. Some of the major categories of difference to be approached are culture, religion, race, gender, age, health and socio-economic conditions.

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

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:
Our college is located in a fairly insular setting. Many of our students, faculty, and staff may only occasionally come into contact with people who are very different from them. By raising awareness of varying life conditions and promoting a true understanding of others’ belief systems, our community can offer students, staff and faculty alike a renewed mission of respect and tolerance for all peoples that will better prepare them for work and life in a more diverse community. In the absence of proper education and exposure, prejudice towards others may grow unchecked, leading to alienation, hostility and unfortunately even violence. As this community becomes more diverse, or as members leave the community for more diverse regions, they will be better prepared to be better citizens of the country and the world.

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

Our goal is for the impact to be campus-wide, affecting all programs and job categories on campus:

- Administration
- Human Resources
- Student Services
- Staff
- Students
- Faculty
- Education Centers
- Adult Education
- Community Education
- Board of Trustees

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

- Improve student services’ processes emphasizing sensitivity towards the individuality of each student and their particular challenges.
- Impact the teaching approach of faculty so as to routinely include a diversity component as one objective in individual courses or in their overall programs.
- Create an environment on campus that is more welcoming to diversity.
- Create an environment on campus that welcomes honest discourse thereby empowering both staff and students, including student support for diversity issues.
- Explore expansion of course curriculum with offerings on subjects such as
world cultures and comparative religions.

- Involve all departments and areas in planning and implementing changes that will be most relevant in their individual areas.
- Train advocates for advisement to deal with personal issues, conflict resolution and crisis intervention.
- Graduate students that have a greater understanding of different belief systems, practices, and cultural values.

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

Promoting a culture of diversity is a huge undertaking and we can only succeed by taking incremental steps with a long term commitment.

A. With the introduction of this project this fall, we will invite the College community to select representatives from each area and department including student groups, to meet for initial dialogues to identify area-specific topics and goals.

B. This group will review sample surveys and design or modify a survey to introduce specifically to this campus and community that will assess the perceptions of the community on aspects of diversity as well as a response to this project and how then best to proceed.

C. Having introduced these ideas, we will encourage campus-wide-project ownership in order to have a cohesive investment campus-wide from the very beginning of the project.

D. At one of the scheduled staff development days these comments/ surveys will be shared and we will initiate plans for semester topics and goal setting.

E. Each area will be responsible for compiling information and statistics for fact sharing with regard to issues of concern, topics and goals.

F. At consecutive staff development day, we will have panel discussions in order for the educators and staff to become informed regarding topics selected. We will encourage creative information sharing such as web tools, workshops and role playing.

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

- Each area will establish an appropriate measurement instrument for their area.
• Student surveys performed fall 2008 and spring 2010
• Faculty and staff surveys performed fall 2008 and spring 2010.

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:

People’s internal perceptions of others are difficult to quantify or measure. However, student exit surveys and staff/faculty surveys can show a shift in perceptions and awareness. Additionally, there may be an increase in the diversity of new hires to the campus and an increase in employability of student graduates due to their increased awareness of diversity issues.

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

We will involve International Students & Friends student organization, human resources programs, guest speakers, workshops etc… as well as resources available from Teaching Tolerance and other national or regional organizations. We will also investigate our involvement in the ICISP – Illinois Consortium for International Studies and Programs – for opportunities for international travel for our faculty and students.

K. Project Leader and contact Person:

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