


AQIP:


A Decade of Assessment & Improvement at the University of Wisconsin-Stout

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University of Wisconsin-Stout

- Founded in 1891 by James Huff Stout
- Located in Menomonie, Wisconsin
- One of 13 universities in the UW System
- Polytechnic University with career-focused programs
- 97% job placement rate
- 9,500 students and 1,300 faculty and staff
- Laptop campus
- **AQIP Participation since 2002!**




What Works?

Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Leadership


- Continued commitment, support and visible involvement of top leadership
- Leadership and governance structures that provide administrators, faculty, staff and student groups with a voice in campus decision-making
- Chancellor's Advisory Council includes representation from all key internal stakeholder groups and meets bi-weekly to share information and discuss issues



What Works? Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Strategic Planning


- The strategic plan includes five-year goals (Focus 2015 Goals) and shorter-term action plans
- Broad-based participatory planning is used to identify and fund university priorities/AQIP Action Projects each year
- Systematic review of progress at all levels
- The strategic plan aligns resources and actions leading to desired results



What Works? Best Practices/Lessons Learned

AQIP Action Projects

- 16 projects completed in several AQIP categories
- Majority of projects in "Helping Students Learn"
- Including:
 - General education revision
 - Academic program development
 - Globalization
 - E-learning
 - Ethics and leadership development
 - Sustainability



What Works? Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Centralized data collection & analysis


- Office of Planning, Assessment, Research and Quality
- Centralized administration of tests, surveys, focus groups, etc.
- Assessment incorporated into each AQIP Action Project and University Priority
- Data shared widely with appropriate groups on and off campus through numerous channels
- Very important to demonstrate that data was used for improvement
"You Said...We Did...Sessions" delivered to campus



What Works? Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Use of Existing Structures/Groups


- No AQIP Steering Committee or Action Project Teams
- Oversight from key campus leadership groups:
 - Chancellor's Advisory Council
 - Strategic Planning Group
- Involvement from offices and committees as related to specific AQIP Action Projects (examples)
 - General Education Committee
 - Office of International Education
 - Applied Ethics Center



What Works? Best Practices/Lessons Learned

AQIP Systems Portfolio


- Shared widely with campus and external groups
- Content used in numerous program-specific accreditation reports
- Reviewer feedback shared widely with campus
- Reviewer feedback analyzed, prioritized and used for improvements
- AQIP Improvement Plan is one of the campus action plans reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee twice each year
- *Example* – Student success data is now shared with state high schools to assist schools in preparing students for UW-Stout



Current/Future Challenges

Continued Budget Reductions affecting:


- Funding available to advance university priorities
- Resulting in new initiatives being scaled back, postponed or modified due to resource limitations
- Examples:
 - *scaled back involvement in downtown redevelopment*
 - *technology and equipment upgrades/replacement*
 - *elimination of low-enrolled courses and programs*



Current/Future Challenges

Continued Budget Reductions affecting:

- Ability to compensate faculty and staff adequately
 - Furloughs
 - No salary increases for six years
 - Employees paying more for health and pension benefits
- Ability to recruit and retain qualified faculty and staff
 - High turnover level – retirements, resignations
 - Failed searches
- Faculty and staff less willing to participate in new initiatives without additional compensation




Current/Future Challenges

Continued budget reductions, related tuition increases and general economic conditions affecting:


- Enrollment of full-time students
- Retention and graduation of students

Leading to changes in university priorities; student recruitment and retention initiatives; and methods of engaging faculty and staff



Looking Back: Long-Term Benefits of AQIP

- Comprehensive framework for assessment & quality improvement
- Systems view of the institution
- Consensus on priorities & needed actions
- Focus on Student Learning
- Increased use of data, analysis & quality tools
- Enhanced communication
- Increased level of teamwork
- Increased rate of implementation
- Examiner feedback
- Useful framework for all budget/resource situations



Moving Forward

- Continued focus on mission, vision and Focus 2015 goals
- Continued focus on planning for the future and allocating funds for university priorities
- Continued assessment of external environment and adjustment of programs and services
- Continued engagement of senior leadership in understanding AQIP and “walking the talk”
- Engaging faculty and staff in solving problems and creating opportunities
- Recognizing accomplishments and celebrating successes of faculty, staff and students



Questions?