

## Action Project

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**Institution:** San Juan College  
**Submitted:** 2006-09-14                      **Contact:** Laurie Gruel  
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### Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 04-01-2006

Target completion date: 07-30-2008

Actual completion date: --

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

Research and Report Best Practices in Adjunct Faculty Development Programs

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

The San Juan College President assigned Quality Student Learning Council (QSLC) the responsibility of researching national best practices in Adjunct Faculty Development Programs and reporting findings to the Vice President for Learning. The Vice President for Learning will submit the findings to the Executive Leadership Team for review, and if acceptable delegate the responsibility for phased implementation to the Associate Vice President for Learning. The overall goal is to improve student learning and retention by valuing people and providing appropriate support services.

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:

Nationally, Adjunct Faculty make up 67% of total faculty and instructional staff headcount, while in New Mexico, part-time faculty headcount is nearly 70% for a full-time equivalence of 46.9% (New Mexico Higher Education Department, 2005). During the 2006 Spring Semester at San Juan College, total faculty headcount was 260 (excluding full-time faculty overload) with 103 full-time faculty, or 28% and 260 part-time faculty, or 72% part-time. Further, in the 2004-05 academic year at San Juan College, full-time faculty taught 46% of the total number of classes while, part-time taught 54%; full-time faculty taught 44% of the total enrollment while part-time faculty taught 56%; and full-time faculty were responsible for generating 49% of the total student credit hours where part-time faculty were responsible for 51%. Considering the college's massive reliance on part-time faculty to deliver instructional services to our students, prudence guides our interest in creating effective and efficient recruitment processes, providing adequate physical space to work, store files, and meet with students, developing appropriate training and professional development opportunities, and improving systems for evaluation and feedback. Through improved recruitment processes and on-going professional development, an increase in student course completion, student retention, and adjunct faculty retention should prevail.

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

Office of Learning, Learning Leadership Team, Schools, Adjunct Faculty and Faculty, Learning Academy, Human Resources, Office of Organizational Development

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

Recruitment of Adjunct Faculty, Adjunct Faculty Orientation/Professional Development, Evaluation of and Feedback on Instruction, Student Learning and Course Completers, Student Retention, Retention of Adjunct Faculty

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

\*\*\* Phase I will occur during the 2006-07 academic year and include: • Develop linkages between the full-time faculty Learning Academy and the Adjunct Faculty 1st-Year Orientation (Learning Academy Coordinator, Associate Vice President for Learning). • Develop a plan that differentiates orientation activities from on-going professional development activities (Associate Vice President for Learning, Senior Director for Organizational Development). • Propose Adjunct Faculty office, work, and storage space in Phase II of the Learning Commons Renovation (Vice President for Learning, Associate Vice President for Learning). • Begin developing an effective and efficient Adjunct Faculty Recruitment Program with Human Resources, Deans, and Department Chairs (Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Deans, Department Chairs, Associate Vice President for Learning). • Develop an Adjunct Faculty advisory committee to the Associate Vice President for Learning as a means to identify challenges and dialogue to reach potential solutions (Associate Vice President for Learning). • Research and report findings to the Vice President for Learning on online adjunct faculty resources for just-in-time training, mentoring programs, payment incentives for length of service or rank and promotion, and extended terms of appointment options (Quality Student Learning Council; or, Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Associate Vice President for Learning). \*\*\* Phase II will occur during 2007-08 academic year and includes: • Implement changes to the Adjunct Faculty 1st-Year Orientation considering a balance between face-to-face orientation activities and just-in-time training based on adjunct faculty input (Cohort Feedback, Adjunct Faculty Advisory Committee, Associate Vice President for Learning). • Graduate the initial 1st-Year Orientation Adjunct Faculty cohort from the program and into the on-going professional development phase (Senior Director of Organizational Development). • Continue planning for Adjunct Faculty office, work, and storage space. • Begin implementation of the Adjunct Faculty Recruitment Program (Human Resources, Department Chairs, Associate Vice President for Learning, and Deans). • Begin implementation phase of mentoring programs (Department Chairs, Deans, Associate Vice President for Learning) and salary incentives for either years of service or rank and promotion (Human Resources, Associate Vice President for Learning). • Begin implementation of online Adjunct Faculty information and resources page (Associate Vice President for Learning, Office of Technology Services). • Prepare proposal for providing a centralized adjunct faculty office with support services (administrative assistant).

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

• Identify benchmark targets throughout the year. • Track benchmark successes and end of year recommendations or project completion. • Continue to obtain feedback from adjunct faculty on the semester orientation. • Develop new feedback forms or include adjunct faculty in Noel-Levitz climate survey.

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:

- Adjunct faculty attendance improves during orientation.
- Adjunct faculty retention improves (must begin collecting data for comparison).
- Student course completer's increase in adjunct faculty instructed classes.
- Student retention improves from semester to semester for students taught by adjunct faculty.
- Adjunct Faculty climate survey scores improve.
- Adjunct Faculty scores improve on Survey of Student Opinion of Instruction.

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

The Associate Vice President for Learning will serve as the "champion" for increased Adjunct Faculty support services.

K. Project Leader and contact person:

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### **Annual Update: 2007-09-02**

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

- Adjunct Faculty Work Space: Adjunct faculty work space is proposed in the Center for Teaching Excellent as part of Phase II of the Learning Commons Renovation.
- Adjunct Faculty Steering Committee: An Adjunct Faculty Steering Committee was created through nominations by each of the eight academic deans. The Steering Committee will begin meeting during the 2007 fall semester as a feedback mechanism for creating a comprehensive adjunct faculty program.
- Learning Symposium: The adjunct faculty Learning Symposium was piloted during the spring semester 2007 and included three concurrent instructional effectiveness sessions, each session contained four workshops. Fifty-three (53) participants attended the ½ day symposium.
- Adjunct Services Staff Support: In preparation of the development of a comprehensive adjunct faculty program, a half-time administrative assistant position was submitted for approval through the annual budget process to provide support to the Adjunct Services Office. The Executive Administration at the college chose to fully fund a full-time, instead of a part-time, position.
- Designated Adjunct Services Administrator: During fall 2006, the Vice President for Learning suggested that there was a need for one individual to coordinate adjunct faculty services and assigned these duties and responsibilities to the Associated Vice President for Learning as part of his Charter of Accountability.
- Connecting Adjunct and Full-Time Faculty Orientations: The Associate Vice President for Learning and the Learning Academy Coordinator met with the Vice President for Learning to discuss the potential for connecting full-time faculty orientation (Learning Academy) with the Adjunct Faculty orientation. While these connections between the full-time and part-time faculty have not been fully realized, the Associate Vice President for Learning and Learning Academy Coordinator have met throughout the year in planning the Learning Symposium and at other time to begin connecting the two functions.
- Professional Development Activities: Dr. David Bramhall completed the second of a three-year Annabelle Fiddle Distinguished Teaching Chair Award by offering two beginning seminars during the fall 2006 semester and one beginning and one advanced seminar during the spring 2007 semester.

Dr. Bramhall's work and the research conducted by the Quality Student Learning Council on adjunct faculty professional development has created the foundation for the creation of a comprehensive program serving San Juan College's part-time faculty. •Adjunct Faculty Web Page: A "shell" for an adjunct faculty web page has been created that includes a welcome page, a link to the adjunct faculty handbook in .pdf format, and links to a number of resources offered through various instructional sources, colleges, and universities. It is hoped that the site will go live during the fall 2007 semester.

**Review (09-27-07):**

The college has made good progress toward meeting the goals of the Action Project, with nearly every step originally identified for the 2006-2007 academic year now being completed. This project has been identified as primarily addressing the AQIP Helping Students Learn category, but it can also make significant contributions in the category of Valuing People, as it addresses the professional development needs of adjunct faculty. The College has committed significant resources of time, energy, and funding to putting in place programs and processes that can be sustained over the long term. While the college is to be commended for funding a full-time administrative assistant position to support the Adjunct Services Office, expenditures on administrative support (in lieu of increased compensation for adjuncts) may be viewed by adjunct faculty with some degree of resentment if visible outcomes benefiting them are not quickly forthcoming.

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

•The plan to implement a comprehensive Adjunct Faculty program resulted from the year-long work of the Quality Student Learning Council during the 2005-06 academic year when they were charged with "Researching and reporting best practices in adjunct faculty development programs." The committee was comprised of faculty and staff from across the institution with a meeting attendance of approximately 20 per meeting. •The Associate Vice President for Learning collaborated with the Learning Academy Coordinator and the Dean of Humanities to develop and pilot an Adjunct Symposium for adjunct faculty during the spring 2007 semester. •The Adjunct Symposium work team sought out full-time faculty who were interested in providing one-hour instructional effectiveness workshops/seminars for adjunct faculty during the Saturday, February 10 event. The response from faculty was overwhelming when close to 30 seminar sessions were submitted for only 12 slots. •The Associated Vice President for Learning requested nominations from each of the Deans to provide an adjunct faculty member from their respective school to serve on the Adjunct Faculty Steering Committee. •Dr. David Bramhall has continued in to the third of his three-year Annabelle Friddle Distinguished Teaching Award, which expanded from a beginning to a beginning and an advanced seminar. Four cohorts (3 beginning and 1 advanced) (15-FA05; 11-SP06; 19-FA06; 14-SP07) completed the semester long seminars this past semester.

**Review (09-27-07):**

The process of implementing the Adjunct Faculty program has involved administrators, faculty, and staff from several areas in developing the Adjunct Symposium. The full-time faculty's interest in and commitment to adjunct faculty development, as evidenced in their willingness to prepare and lead instructional effectiveness workshops, is admirable. Adjunct faculty members have been nominated for participation on the Adjunct Faculty Steering Committee which will be convened this fall (2007).

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

•This fall (2007) the Associate Vice President for Learning will begin convening the Adjunct Faculty Steering Committee. The committee's charge for the 2007-08 academic year will be to create a committee structure that can be sustained during the development of the comprehensive program and will define terms and duration of terms of committee members, committee member duties and responsibilities, and begin to plan a 1st year adjunct faculty experience and an advanced instructional effectiveness experience as components of a rank and promotion proposal. •Develop a rank and promotion structure where adjunct faculty members are recognized and rewarded for their years of service and completion of instructional effectiveness activities and present the proposal to the Learning Leadership Team and President's Cabinet for approval and inclusion in the 2008-09 budget process. •Offer two Learning Symposia during the 2007-08 academic year; one each during the fall and spring semesters. •Begin discussions with Human Resources and the academic deans to expand the adjunct faculty recruitment fair and to develop a documented process to recruit qualified adjunct faculty. •In coordination with Human Resources, develop a process where the Office of Adjunct Faculty Serves collects, records, and documents all incoming adjunct faculty employment applications through a database that is shared with Human Resources and each of the academic schools. •Develop a database and begin tracking adjunct faculty service to the institution to aid in providing information for adjunct faculty rank and promotion and service recognition. •Coordinate with the adjunct faculty steering committee and other appropriate individuals to develop program for a year-long "1st year experience program" that includes instructional effectiveness training workshops for implementation beginning fall 2008. •Coordinate with the adjunct faculty steering committee and other appropriate individuals to determine the purpose of the adjunct faculty mass orientation during fall and spring semesters. •Continue discussions between the Associate Vice President for Learning and the Learning Academy Coordinator to determine the manner in which the Learning Academy for full-time faculty and the 1st year experience for adjunct faculty will be connected.

#### **Review (09-27-07):**

The discrete steps and stages outlined for the second year of the project reflect the College's awareness of areas of complexity and allow for due deliberation. However, it is important to have some highly visible progress to point to early on, and the two Learning Symposia scheduled for the 2007-2008 academic year can contribute to that. The database for tracking adjunct faculty service is also a critically important early step in developing the information that will be needed for putting in place rank and promotion system and means of service recognition for adjunct faculty.

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

The implementation of the Learning Symposium appears to have all the components of an effective practice based on attendance and feedback from the initial spring 2007 offering. Two Learning Symposia will be offered during the 2007-08 academic year; one during the fall semester and one during the spring semester.

#### **Review (09-27-07):**

As mentioned above, the learning symposia are highly visible activities that can potentially involve both adjunct and full-time faculty in meaningful exchanges with tangible outcomes for Helping Students Learn.

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

•One challenge that existed this past year (2007-08) was that the Associate Vice President for Learning was assigned to cover the vacant Dean of the School of Math & Science position. While efforts were made to continue forward momentum on the project, the workload prevented the project from advancing as quickly as had been hoped. •A second challenge is that the Associate Vice President for Learning, the Senior Director for Organizational Development, the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Technology Trainer, the Assistant Director of Human Resources, and the Learning Academy Coordinator all play a role in the orientation needs of San Juan College employees with little coordination between the resource providers.

**Review (09-27-07):**

Despite problems resulting from the reassignment of the Associate Vice-President for Learning, the College has made significant progress on the project. Coordinating a variety of administrative units' contributions to a new program is always a challenge, beginning with identifying each unit's specific areas of authority and accountability. It will be especially important for each of the offices involved to determine what particular resources and unique expertise it brings to the Adjunct Faculty Development Program and for leadership from each of the areas to work together to articulate the project's interdependencies and make the connections between the AQIP Categories Helping Students Learn, Valuing People, Leading and Communicating, and Building Collaborative Relationships.

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?

Not necessary.

**Review (09-27-07):**

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