Improvements Completed by the Program

The Improvements section is an opportunity for programs to tell their story as it relates to student learning and programmatic improvements. Improvements should be developed from previous action plans or assessment findings. This should be written in the past tense and reflect completed actions taken by the program.

A well-written improvements section should address the following areas:

1) A brief description of the data and/or discussions that prompted action for improvement.
2) A description of the action that was implemented.
3) A description of the intended or expected change in student learning (improvement).

Meets Standard Criteria:

Improvements are developed directly from, and are aligned with, previous action plans or findings; improvements describe previous actions taken to improve program, teaching methods, or curriculum; previous actions may also describe modifications to learning outcomes or assessment strategies; changes in student achievement may be stated OR intended changes in student achievement may be stated.

Exceeds Standard Criteria *Gold Start Learning Improvement:

Improvements are clearly developed directly from, and are clearly aligned with, previous action plans or findings; improvements richly describe and analyze previous actions taken or modifications made to improve program, teaching methods, or curriculum; previous actions may also describe modifications to learning outcomes or assessment strategies; clearly explains rationale and explanation of the modifications; results are re-assessed with strong evidence, from direct measures, that lead to notable improvement in student learning; would want to use as an example for other programs.

Example 1: Undergraduate

[1] In 2015-2016, students in CSD 351 were not meeting the target set by the program. [2] As a result, the program and its instructors decided to implement additional online resources to supplement class lectures. [3] With these course modifications, students improved their scores by 13% and their ability to integrate knowledge of scientific foundations of SPLA in 2016-2017. Specifically, students were able to successfully explain the physiological processes engaged during speech, language, and swallowing in healthy individuals.

1. Data prompting action
2. Action implemented
3. Description of change in student learning
Creating an Effective Academic Assessment Plan

Example 2: Undergraduate

[1] Over the past several years the program has seen a trend in students receiving low pass rates on the Praxis I. [2] After some analysis and review by the program, the decision was made to purchase the NorthStar PRAXIS Core Prep package that is accessible on-line for free by all students. All IDS-TP teacher candidates are advised to use this resource. [3] Since the addition of this resource and targeted advising, students’ Reading scores on PRAXIS Core continue to be stronger than their scores on the Writing subtest. The 87% pass rate for the PRAXIS I/Core Reading subtest exceeds the 67% pass rate last year. The 68% pass Rate on the PRAXISI/PRAXIS Core Writing subtest exceeds the 50% pass rate last year. A seven-year trend in scores reflects that these are the highest pass rates in 7 years. There was significant improvement in both Reading and Writing PRAXIS Core scores this year.

Example 3: Graduate

[1] The program noticed that students switching from the thesis option to the exam option were failing sections of the comprehensive exam. Upon review of the data, it was this specific group of students who were performing poorly on the exam. [2] In order to support these students, the program developed a course: HIST 676 Examination Preparation Transition, a one-credit course designed specifically for students needing extra review and development of program skills (eg. who took the thesis option and completed 6 thesis credits, but then shifted to the examination option). [3] We will know whether or not it has made a positive impact in our program and the students during the next assessment cycle.

For more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

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