As part of our continuing effort to support your team's action plan implementation process, project staff will be collecting a number of campus reflections during this academic year. We ask that your team spend some time together answering these questions so we have a representative understanding of the progress of your BEAMS work to date. We will use your campus responses to follow up with your team and to keep your campus consultant up-to-date on your team's progress toward plan implementation. We also hope that your team will find this reflection a useful rubric for thinking through important issues facing your action plan implementation process. The project contact should submit the campus reflection for your institution no later than December 11. Please submit only one response per team.

1. Institution:
   **Answer:** Woodbury University

2. Describe 2 to 3 main accomplishments since the Summer Academy. How have you been able to achieve these accomplishments?

   **Answer:**
   Our chief accomplishment has been solidifying institutional support for and integration of the BEAMS project on campus. We have done this in several ways:
   - Membership of the team has expanded to include five additional members from the faculty, allowing us to gain creditability and deepen our initial project focus of enhancing educational experiences for students within an overall goal of creating an ideal university.
   - Our BEAMS team has become central to the re-accreditation process in that the expanded BEAMS team is now the Student Success Task Force on our
campus. Using the results from NSSE and our BEAMS project proposal, we have been able to get the authorization of the Faculty Senate and the Academic Vice President to act as a vital group in making academic recommendations.

- The task force will use the results of our BEAMS project as an integral part of the re-accreditation process as well as a foundation for the review of the general education curriculum. Both the Dean of the Faculty and the Director of Transdisciplinary Studies (who oversees general education) were part of the team that went to Puerto Rico and their roles have been firmly tied to membership on the team. The team leader, who also went to Puerto Rico, will assume the position of Associate Vice President for Student Development and Academic Support, a position which holds a seat on the President’s Cabinet and oversees all co-curricular and curricular support areas for students.
- Our use of learning communities of students, staff and faculty in lieu of the traditional committee structure has been embraced as part of an overall strategy of asking the people of our university how they learn best as the path for developing enhanced educational experiences which we hope will result in increased student success and retention. It is the promise of results in these last areas that has resulted in greater community buy-in.

3. Describe 1 to 3 major obstacles your team faced following the Academy. How is your group working to overcome these?

**Answer:**

The two biggest obstacles for our team are time and funding:

- The team is already stretched with day-to-day responsibilities; this project just has been another added to our overloaded schedules. We have been fortunate that two faculty members have reduced workloads this year that allow them to participate in this project.
- In order to stay within our timeframe of implementing the project, soliciting outside funding is not a possibility. We have had to look at our own operational budgets to provide materials for team members, stipends for participants, and other project related costs.

4. What practices has your team encountered in this early stage of planning and implementation that have helped in gaining buy-in and/or overcoming obstacles? Please detail these practices. How can these practices be replicated to aid others in your cohort?

**Answer:** Two practices have been key, facilitation and regularly scheduled meetings:

- The team uses group facilitation as a model for processing information, discussing issues, and decision-making. Our team is fortunate that we have at least three-trained group facilitators. From the very beginning, we have kept to our group norms and assumptions so that new members could be acclimated to the team fairly easily. We are also able to challenge each other because of the safe environment that has been created and teams members’ willingness to abide by confidentiality. We also committed to regularly scheduled meetings that allowed us to keep focused and as well as maintain the momentum from Academy. Although it has been a hard to find a “best time” for all of us to attend team meetings, for the most part meetings have been well attended. We have found it most helpful when meetings are scheduled around a meal (breakfast or lunch) that the team provides out of the departmental budgets of its administrative members.

5. How is your team using the 2005 NSSE results, or other data, in preparation for your plan implementation? If you are using other data besides the NSSE please specify what they are and what purpose they are serving in your implementation.
Answer: From the very beginning we used NSSE along with our in-house surveys, focus groups and interviews. It has allowed us to triangulate the NSSE data and make some sound conclusions and assumptions. For example, Student Affairs had results from a student involvement survey that confirmed what was revealed in our NSSE data. Those conclusions have helped us find other non-traditional ways to get students involved.

6. Which departments or offices on campus have seen an increase in use of data since BEAMS was initiated at your institution?

Answer: At this point in time, we have not seen an increase of the use of NSSE. This will change though once the results of our project will be made known to the campus community. In general, our upcoming re-accreditation has generated an increased use of data across the campus.

7. Which NSSE administration are you planning to participate in as your second NSSE administration for the BEAMS project? Explain how you made this decision based on when you expect to see results from your implemented action plan.

Answer: We have planned on Spring 2008 depending on the results of our project. The decision was made based on how fast we will be able to implement the results and be a part of a NSSE administration. The team would also be flexible in delaying the NSSE administration until 2009 in order to get an accurate picture of student responses.

8. Is your team planning to collaborate with other institutions in your cohort or past cohorts as you begin implementation? If so, in what ways will your team like to connect with other campuses?

Answer: The team is anticipating sharing our results at the end of the process through our own academic and student affairs affiliations. Although collaborating with other institutions was not build into our initial implementation plan nor was it suggested at the Academy, we would certainly like to see how others are creating programs to respond to NSSE, especially in creating enhanced educational experiences, and how successful, they are in implementing them.

9. How can project staff and your campus consultant best support your team's implementation over the next year?

Answer: We came away from the summer academy with the impression that our proposal was unique and challenging. We received good advice about clarity and gaining buy-in that as served us well. Continuing to check our progress and provide timely advice and challenges from the consultant and keeping us on track to our schedule will benefit us greatly.

10. The BEAMS Mid Year Meeting is scheduled for March 1-3, 2007. Please specify 2 to 3 topics concerning plan implementation that you want to see covered during this time.

Answer: There are two areas that we are interested in are how to communicate our progress in an effective manner internally, as well as externally to university stakeholders and how to manage the data and work overload.

11. Project staff are currently planning a final BEAMS report for dissemination among participating campuses, Institute stakeholders, and others interested in your work. We are also planning practice briefs focused on specific topics related to BEAMS findings. How might your team contribute to this work?
Answer: The way our team could contribute to this work is by sharing how we used learning communities as our methodology in exploring our topic. We are not using the traditional learning community model from Washington State, but we have adapted the Faculty Learning Community model from Florida State University to use in our project. While these kinds of learning communities are traditionally used with faculty, we will be using this facilitated small discussion group model also with students and staff. Our hypothesis is that with research based on the community itself regarding best practices for learning outside the classroom, we will gain greater buy-in for proposed reforms for enhancing educational experiences that will result in increased student retention and success. We will have recommendation from our process by June 2007, with implementation of the co-curricular elements scheduled for fall 2007 and curricular elements by spring 2008.

12. Project staff are also considering options to continue the work begun through BEAMS. These are some preliminary questions to probe your interest in future work together. Is your campus interested in participating in future projects related to data-driven change and student success? If so, in what ways? Would you be interested in mentoring other campuses as a lead institution or continuing as a participating campus?

Answer: It is too early for us to give a complete answer to these questions. We are certainly interested in sharing our findings and leaning from others about both data-driven change and student success. How exactly that interest can be shared would be in large part be based on the success of our project, but we would be open to considering a role as a lead or participating campus in the future.

13. Provide an updated list of the members of your BEAMS working group. Include name, title, mailing address, phone and email address, noting current project contact.

Answer:
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