

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Des Moines Area Community College

Project Details		
<b>Title</b>	Guided Pathways for Liberal Arts & Sciences Project	<b>Status</b> ACTIVE
<b>Category</b>	2 - Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs	<b>Updated</b>
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 09-01-2015	<b>Created</b> 10-27-2015
	<b>Target Completion</b> 07-01-2017	<b>Version</b> 1

### 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

**A:** The Guided Pathways Action Project focuses on creating more directed pathways for liberal arts and sciences students many of whom without clear direction, often flounder and consequently never graduate or transfer. Successful student engagement involves student services, faculty, students and administration. This Action Project is designed to assess DMAACC's current academic structures for AA and AS students and design new and more structured processes for helping students better identify and complete their goals.

### 2: PROJECT RATIONALE

**A:** While DMAACC uses data in decision making and planning on a daily basis, it was not clearly documented in DMAACC's most recent Systems Portfolio. Category One Strategic Issues feedback indicated a need for more documented evidence 'of processes that it uses data for interpretation in its decision-making and planning for future improvements.'

DMAACC's standing Completion Task Force, with representation from faculty, associate deans, student services staff, outreach program administrators, and led by the Chief Academic Officer meets regularly to focus on student retention, completion and success. Data on retention, persistence and completion are analyzed by program of study, campus, age groups, intent, and demographics. As approximately 39% of DMAACC's enrollments each fall are liberal arts AA or AS and the percentage of those who are undecided is growing each year (currently 56.3% for AA and 34.5% for AS in Fall 2015) a Pathways Task Force was formed and using Guided Pathways literature the task force is assigned to design an educational experience for Liberal Arts and Sciences students that promotes student success by focusing on academic planning, completion and efficient transfer.

### 3: PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

**A:** The over-arching project goals are:

1. Build guided pathways to completion in AA and AS degree programs to help students choose a career pathway soon after beginning college, focusing on program completion and increased efficiency of transfer.
2. Improve integration of academic and student support services to keep students on a guided pathway, to expand student engagement within a program of study, and to increase student completion.

This Action project is focusing on building guided pathways to completion in AA and AS degree programs. The goals are aligned with 'plan and do'. The iterative four step model of continuous improvement: plan, do, check, adjust is the underlying frame for this Action Project.

- Fact-finding meeting with the district faculty and administration CLIC/LINC group- October 2015
- Develop AA pathway with Liberal Arts areas of focus- June 2016
- Develop AS pathway with STEM areas of focus- June 2016
- Vet with faculty and student services for consensus July 2016
- Develop handouts for advising- August 2016
- Pilot- Fall term 2016
- Debrief Advising and Registration for adjustments- October 2016
- Collect initial data on pilot students regarding participation, retention and persistence to spring semester- May 2017

### 4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

**A:** The Pathways Taskforce membership is strategically connecting faculty, Student services and Administration around a common goal. Membership includes Liberal Arts District Chairs, Associate Deans, Liberal Arts Faculty, the Executive Dean of Student Services, Registrar, Continuing Ed Director, Advisors, and Student Services support staff. The Taskforce meets monthly.

Initial fact-finding will utilize the resources of DMAACC's CLIC/LINC group consisting of faculty and administration leaders from the district.

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## **5: PROJECT CONTROL**

**A:** The CAO meets regularly with the head of the Pathways Taskforce. Debriefing and evaluation of steps will be conducted by the CAO and Pathways Taskforce leader on a monthly basis during development.

The Completion Task Force will monitor and assess the activities of the Pathways Taskforce and serve as a resource for support as needed.

As this project is focused on the programming development, the measures that will be monitored are the goals set in #3. Each stage of development will raise logistic issues that cannot be predefined at this writing.

## **6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS**

**A:** One challenge may be in aligning and integrating each of the pathways with Degree Works software which DMAACC uses to track student progress to graduation. This will not derail the project, but could affect our timelines in resolving logistics issues. This project is focusing on the development of new directions in advising, enrollment and programming for DMAACC. It is anticipated that this will touch all departments and divisions of the College. To that end, feedback, inputs, and flexibility must be addressed at each stage of development in order to continue moving this forward.

## **7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**A:** When the framework is established and piloted it will become much easier to set data goals and benchmarks from which to measure effectiveness and move forward with the check and adjust components of plan, do, check, and adjust. The project is being structured for over one year in the initial phase so that we can both structure and assess the effectiveness of piloted programming.