College Action Project Update Form – Sept 2011
Grand Rapids Community College

NOTE: This project update will be provided to SLT members one week prior to SLT meeting where project is discussed.

Update Date: August 24, 2011
CAP #: 6.2.1
CAP Title: Pathway to Employment
Champion: Tina Hoxie, Dean of Student Affairs
Project Purpose: The goal of this project is the development of a proactive and relevant integrated and collaborative career and employment services model that meets the personalized needs of our students. These services would prepare and successfully assist students in preparing for, and finding, employment while pursuing and completing their educational goals at GRCC and beyond.

1. Describe recent accomplishments and the current status of activities related to this project. (Include an updated copy of the Project Worksheet and Timeline along with a narrative discussion of progress.)

A Career Development CAS self study was conducted by a cross college team to assess our present services and potential opportunities. The findings and recommendations from this process were reported out in a Deans Council work session and input was provided for project next steps.

From this information it was decided to utilize the methodology of a new innovative platform called the “Keller Future Center”. This model uses a well documented and successful innovation process, but infuses it with future tools and adapts it to big community issues in an open, collaborative format. A stakeholder design team for this process was formed and it included the college and larger community voice with the purpose to raise possibilities while driving reinvention of our present, and influence our possible future. The design team experience was an investment of 42 hours over 7 weeks to explore, innovate and resolve key issues and problems surrounding the project. The expected outcomes from this collaborative process included:

- A system map which visually depicts the complexity of the current system and student/client touch points. It was determined in this process that there is not one path. The journey is rarely direct. From the person’s view, progress can be difficult to see. Family, mentors and peers are largely positive influences, but can be negative or confusing as well. Self awareness has a significant impact on pace and outcome for career development. Our career readiness comes from formal and informal learning. http://cms.grcc.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/kfc_careerservices_personal%20journey%20final.pdf
- A new vision for Career and Employment Services at GRCC with supporting service model concepts that can be integrated into a comprehensive measurable service system.
- Documentation of primary and secondary research that establish the baseline measurements leading to new insights for system design.
- Creative recommendations leading to more sustainable solutions.
Five innovative career opportunity paths for the project were developed and over 125 ideas generated:

1) Whole U: An opportunity for the next generation of career services is to design a community/network of service providers available to provide personalized, holistic, counseling services (mind, body, spirit) to students through one reputable access point.

2) Get Up and Go: An opportunity for the next generation of career services is to create foundational experiences that build personal realistic awareness and confidence regarding capability, competency and one’s ability to create value and lead productive lives and motivate positive action within us.

3) Career Simulator: An opportunity for the next generation of career services is to create a scenario-building tool allowing students to create their own personalized career map by integrating employer skill/job requirements, life experience, academic requirements and user self-assessment data.

4) Career Doctor: An opportunity for the next generation of career services is to create a technology-enabled experience connecting families, student, businesses, and instructors that yield a “prescription” of customized career advice and long term check ups.

5) Hear Me Roar! An opportunity for the next generation of career services is to activate an open/internet platform for students to communicate and collaborate about their education and personal career journeys in order to allow people to share their experiences and insight with others (families, employers, schools) that will then, in turn, result in better support systems.

The work of this team was reported out with an open invitation to several campus groups to view and provide input on the work of the design team.

A smaller cross college core team was established following the innovation experience and is meeting regularly to advance the innovative work of the design team and drive the AQIP project purpose and expected outcomes.

A next step for the core team is to collect additional student input on the eight career pathway ideas:

1) Project Pool: This idea involves the design of project-based learning classes where I sign up to work on real projects from area companies. I can earn credit, gain real-life experience, build my resume, and get the chance to have my work observed and evaluated by area employers for future job opportunities.

2) School of Life: This idea involves the design of a workshop where I can create a new kind of resume – a visual resume – to better communicate the value of my school,
work, and life experiences to area employers. This resume also will be reviewed to see if my skills qualify for academic credit.

3) Map Your Future: This idea involves the design of an interactive visual map used as the first connection between me and career services. The map is a self-service tool designed to give me the power to better visualize and express my interests, experiences, and specific needs.

4) Better Than Farmville: This idea involves the design of an interactive game to learn how to navigate the challenges, obstacles, and skills standards that exist in today’s business environments. The game’s content is designed using real-life data provided by local and national employers.

5) Build Your Own Network: This idea involves the design of a tool that combines my social networks with an electronic career network, making it easy to talk about career opportunities and preparation requirements with my most trusted and admired contacts.

6) Big Blue Door: This idea involves the design of one point of contact at GRCC (i.e. a door, entry, access) where I can map my life situation (social, financial, persona and academic), and get connected with the right career and support services in my community.

7) Employer Dialogue Series: This idea involves the design of career events and discussion forums, modeled after the popular TED talks, but focusing on contemporary employers’ needs. Local employers share their needs and requirements for future jobs and workers.

8) Here for You – V Series: This idea involves the design of a self-service, electronic archive – like YouTube – of videos capturing real stories from those most influential in my life – family, friends, and mentors. It documents specific knowledge, skills, and abilities from their career journeys that might be relevant when pursuing a specific career path or trying to avoid others.

- Students are being asked to review the eight ideas and to select the three they believe would be most helpful to them. This is being accomplished with a traveling walk up project display rotated to five different locations around campus. A second approach for student feedback is using facilitated focus group sessions.

- A second Deans Council work session was conducted for feedback and additional idea generation for the project.

REVIEWER COMMENTS
2. **Describe the team involved in implementing this project as well as how the institution involved people in this work.**

The involvement in the project has included the Dean Council, student focus groups, social media sites for student and stakeholder Input, Community Stakeholder Innovation Design Team, and Cross College Core Team. While the Innovation process was being conducted a video was created weekly and viewable on the electronic publication GRCC Today keeping the campus community informed on the project and providing opportunity for input weekly. The Keller Future Center website was also used to document the process and provide a connection for input on the project from the larger community and GRCC. This can be viewed at [http://cms.grcc.edu/keller-future-center/projects/career-services](http://cms.grcc.edu/keller-future-center/projects/career-services).

**REVIEWER COMMENTS:**

3. **To what extent have the measureable criteria established for this project been met? (Prepare a table)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable Criteria</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The project champion would review and continue to update the project timeline actions plan with the team and other key stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide regular updates at appropriate campus-wide meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring presentations to Deans’ Council and College Leadership Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide regular updates at Department meetings</td>
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<tr>
<th>Outcome Measures</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will report if GRCC provided effective services to them so that they are ready to secure career-related employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will report the pathway to employment service system/model delivered through staff processes, resources and on-line tools, that are effective, simple and which supported their job search and successful job offers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We are able to document those students entering and re-enrolling at the college on whether they met their career and educational goal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We have improved and can document an increase in our community partnerships, connections with employers, and other non-profit employment support organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We can document the student utilization of the employment to pathway services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We can document the skills development and readiness of our students to compete for available jobs, and the specific services impacting these changes.</td>
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**REVIEWER COMMENTS:**
4. Describe the planned next steps for this project.
Next steps include regular project planning meetings by the core team, planned activities to gather additional student input from both college and HS stakeholders, selecting a career opportunity path and continue the innovation serviced planning and design, explore the feasibility of the ideas associated with the selected career opportunity path, assess existing campus and community resources available to support proposed career project ideas and improvements, explore community partnerships and resources, and develop a proposed plan for implementation.

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

5. What challenges, if any, are you facing in regards to this CAP project?

The challenges we face are narrowing down the ideas to explore and pursue for the project. It is challenging and important to keep a future vision in mind and how we might leverage both services and access for our students using this vision. The career and employment services are presently offered in multiple locations and keeping all the stakeholders engaged and informed in the improvement project is challenging.

REVIEWER COMMENTS: