

# Initiative Template

## Public

**Providing Department:** Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**Initiative Number:** This number will correspond with the priority you place on this department initiative. Please use a number and a short three to four digit department identifier code. For example, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness' number one department initiative would have the following number: 1-OIE. Our number two priority initiative would be 2-OIE and so on.

**Initiative Title:** A brief title of this department initiative. For department initiatives that are specific to locations other than the S&D campus, please label them as such. For example: "Staff Professional Development - RM" or "Staff Professional Development - DTC."

**Initiative Description:** A department initiative...

- Is a goal for the department/unit
- Should follow the S.M.A.R.T. principles (Specific, Measureable, Assignable, Realistic, Time-related)
- Reflects growth or change, not a continuation of department's function
- Focuses the department on where it is headed
- Helps accomplish AMP and SEM goals and ultimately the strategic priorities and VMV of the college
- Has gone through the ii process

A department initiative is not...

- A need (e.g., hire a program advisor, increase a supply budget)
- A continuation of what the department does (e.g., continue to register students at both campuses)

Department initiatives help us answer the questions:

- Where are we headed as a department?
- How do we want to grow and or change?
- How do our department's initiatives help accomplish the strategic goals and VMV of the college?

And a few final parameters for initiatives:

- Try to limit the number of initiatives to reflect your department's highest priorities for the coming year(s), and to what can actually be accomplished.
- Ideally, limit the number of initiatives to 3-5

**Related Needs:** Related needs can include resources from another department on campus- "in order to inform this department initiative, we need data from the Office of Research and Planning." It could also include the need to develop a new partnership with a high school or high school district.

**ii process step selection:** Please indicate which step of the ii process this department initiative is currently in. The "instruction bubbles" next to each step below provide a guide for determining what each step entails. Once you have determined the step and selected it here, provide supporting information that describes your ii process related to this department initiative in the corresponding space below (e.g. if you selected ii process step 2 here, fill in your supporting information in "ii step 2- Research Issue and Identify Options" space below.)

**ii process step 1: Identify a Need or Ask a Question:** The first step is to identify a situation that demands or invites action. It could be a problem that you notice, a thought you have about how some process might be improved, or a question you have. Because informed improvement uses critical inquiry to fuel a process of continual

assessment and revision, it's important to be able to clearly articulate a research question (or several) about the need you've identified. For example:

Is process X really the most efficient and effective way to do this?

How could we help students in course Y better master the competencies?

Can we change something to help students persist and complete?

If a unit is in the "Identify a Need or Ask a Question" phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are having conversations about how student success is defined in their unit, how student success is measured (or could be measured) in their unit, benchmarks, goals, and/or outcomes the unit has related to student success, what variables impact student success in their unit, what questions they have regarding variables related to student success in their unit, and what they need to know in order to improve student success in their unit.

If a unit has completed the "Identify a Need or Ask a Question" phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are able to clearly articulate measurable student success outcomes for the unit, metrics for each of the unit's student success outcomes, variables that impact student success in the unit, and the question (or questions) the unit most needs the answer(s) to in order to improve student success.

ii process step 2: **Research Issue and Identify Options:** This step and the next are often skipped or cut short in decision-making processes based on hunch or assumption, but they're central to informed improvement. We don't want to jump straight from identifying a need to taking action. We want to take the time to do the research necessary to identify an intervention that has an excellent chance of producing the desired outcomes. That means being able to identify clearly what those desired outcomes are. What would success look like? What measures would tell us we had accomplished it? Has anyone else had success addressing this issue? Why did it work for them? Do we have evidence that it would work for us? There's a lot of work to be done at this stage, both in understanding what others in similar situations have done, and in understanding the causes of the situation being addressed.

If a unit is in the "Research Issue and Identify Options" phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are having conversations about what evidence is needed to help the unit answer the question(s) it has, whether the needed evidence already exists, where the evidence is located (if it exists), and how to obtain the evidence (if it does not exist). Locating existing evidence that will aid in answering the unit's question(s) about student success, developing instruments to collect evidence that does not currently exist, collecting evidence that does not currently exist, and analyzing the evidence that has been collected.

If a unit has completed the “Research Issue and Identify Options” phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are able to provide a summary of the evidence that was collected to answer the unit’s question(s), analysis of the evidence (i.e. how the evidence answers the question(s)), and implications of the analysis (i.e. what course of action is suggested by the evidence?)

**ii process step 3:  
Decide on Action  
and Plan for  
Implementation:**

Before we rush into action, we should examine what our research suggests and make a clear decision upon what actions to take. The impulse to act quickly can be strong, and in the past we've sometimes given in to that sense of urgency before all of the pieces necessary for success were in place. This is why so many initiatives get off to rocky starts. Successful planning might mean figuring out how to adapt some other college's successful strategy into our own processes. It might require consulting with other departments. And it might involve more research. It might require training ahead of implementation, or new equipment, or other advance preparation. Whatever else is involved, part of every intervention plan should include planning to measure the impact of the action. If you can identify what the evidence of success would look like, you should be able to figure out how to measure it.

If a unit is in the “Decide on Action and Plan for Implementation” phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are having conversations about what course of action is most likely to yield the best results (based upon the analysis of evidence), implementation of the best course of action, and how the unit will measure the effectiveness of the implemented change. Designing an implementation plan for the decided upon course of action and designing an assessment plan for the implemented change. If a unit has completed the “Decide on Action and Plan for implementation” phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are able to provide a justification of the decided upon course of action, detailed implementation plan, and detailed assessment plan.

**ii process step 4:  
Take Action and  
Measure Impact:**

This step sounds simple, but this is, of course, the critical stage. It's where you want your careful planning to pay off, where things move from the ideal to the real, where the work that has come before starts to make a difference. Consistent execution is critical, as it allows for the collection of valid data about the impact of the intervention. It's understandable to want to assess the effect of action quickly, but it's important to allow enough time to work out the kinks and for meaningful data to accumulate before you can move to the next stage.

If a unit is in the “Take Action and Measure Impact” phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are implementing the decided upon action,, ensuring that relevant and reliable effectiveness measures are in place during implementation, collecting evidence that will enable the unit to assess the impact of the implemented action... If a unit has completed the “Take Action and Measure Impact” phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are able to provide a summary of the evidence collected to assess the impact of the implemented change.

**ii process step 5: Analyze Data and Assess Impact:** With sufficient relevant data in hand, it's possible to start analyzing the effect that the action has had. It's not easy to separate out causation from correlation, and the data that you've collected about the impact of your intervention might be most useful in combination with other data. Consultation with the informed improvement team and MCC's Office of Research and Planning can help you to sort out the implications of your data.

If a unit is in the "Analyze Data and Assess Impact" phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are analyzing the evidence that has been collected, determining the impact of the implemented change, and having conversations about what worked well, what needs improvement, and what else should be measured during the next iteration of the ii cycle.

If a unit has completed the "Analyze Data and Assess Impact" phase of the ii cycle, then...

Unit members are able to provide a summary of the evidence that was collected to assess the impact of the implemented change, analysis of the evidence (i.e. did the change produce the desired results?), and implications of the analysis, including answers to the following:

Has the original question been answered?

If so, what answers were found?

If not, what will be done differently in the next iteration of the ii cycle to answer the question?

What new questions have been raised?

**ii process: Continuous Improvement:** This process is meant to be a continuous cycle, where the assessment of impact leads back to more research and analysis, revising the action plan, continued action, assessment, research, revising the plan, and so on. The goal is to consistently use evidence to improve student learning and success, and to help MCC to run more efficiently and effectively.

Select this phase if your initiative has gone through all five steps of the ii process and is now starting back through the process for another cycle.

**Start:** 7/1/2016

**End:** 6/30/2017

**Progress:** Options include: Ongoing, completed, On Schedule, Overdue, Delayed, Canceled

**Factors Related to Progress Status:** Use this field to provide context related to the progress status for this initiative.

**Responsible Roles:** No Roles Selected