



Achieving the Dream™

2016 Annual Reflection & Leader College Application

Introduction

All Achieving the Dream institutions (except for the 2015 Cohort, which must submit an Implementation Plan) are required to submit an annual reflection. The annual reflection is an opportunity to consider your institution's student success work over the past year and to plan for the coming year with an emphasis on your success in system changes that will sustain and integrate your efforts into the student experience. Your institution's reflection helps inform Achieving the Dream's work as we collect data, identify common themes, and build our knowledge of the institutional change process.

Instructions

Completing the Annual Reflection

To complete the annual reflection, your institution should engage a representative group of stakeholders to review and discuss the institution's student success and equity work including progress made, challenges faced, current priorities, and goals for the coming academic year. Your institution should emphasize your efforts to achieve the scale and full adoption necessary for sustained success of the changes you seek to implement. To complete the annual reflection, your institution should engage a representative group of stakeholders to review and discuss the institution's student success and equity work including progress made, challenges faced, current priorities, and goals for the coming academic year.

Your team will complete the annual reflection by filling out this online form. **We encourage you to use the [Word document worksheet](#) to collaborate and draft your responses** to the annual reflection questions before completing the online form.

Completing the Leader College Application

Institutions submitting an annual reflection have the option of applying for initial Leader College status or Leader College recertification by completing the Leader College application at the end of the annual reflection. Leader College applicants must also submit student success outcomes data using the [ATD Data Template](#).

Coach Satisfaction Feedback

As with the annual reflection, we encourage you to use the Word document worksheet to collaborate and draft your responses to the Leader College application questions before completing the online form.

Institutions should complete this very short survey conducted by Achieving the Dream on their satisfaction with their assigned coaches. This feedback will help ATD provide better, more personalized coaching services. We encourage your institution to fill this survey out as a group so as to facilitate discussion about coach satisfaction, but multiple individual entries may be submitted. Survey responses are confidential and will only be seen by Achieving the Dream staff. The survey can be completed by visiting <http://bit.ly/ATDcss16>. You can download the list of questions [here](#) if you would like to collaborate with your team before completing the form.

Interventions Showcase

Each college should document their student success work by updating existing interventions or adding new interventions to the Interventions Showcase. This is an important aspect of participation in the Achieving the Dream Network and an important resource for other institutions. Interventions Showcase users can log into the Interventions Showcase at www.achievingthedream.org/user.

Questions

Please send an email to programandpolicy@achievingthedream.org or call (240) 450-0075 if you have any questions.

Annual Reflection

Note that the period covered by this Annual Reflection is June 2015 - May 2016. Please reflect on activities during this time

period throughout the narrative.

Mohawk Valley Community College

Is your institution applying for Leader College status (initial or recertification)?

Yes

No

Please write the email where you would like a summary of your responses sent.

jheintz@mvcc.edu

Contributors to the Annual Reflection

Please identify the stakeholders who contributed to the 2016 Annual Reflection by listing their name and title. (Ex: James Brown, Chief Academic Officer)

Randall VanWagoner, President
Stephanie Reynolds, Tri-chair & VP for Student Affairs
Maria Ramos, Tri-chair & Professor
Jill Heintz, Tri-chair & Executive Assistant to the President
Mark Radlowski, Data Chair & Director of Institutional Research and Analysis
Maryrose Eannace, VP for Learning and Academic Affairs
Tom Squires, VP for Administrative Services

Student Success Vision

Briefly outline your institution's current student success vision. Note that this vision should be your ideal for how students will experience your college. It should include overarching, achievable goals that will act as key milestones as your college moves towards your student success vision.

Suggested word count: 300-500 words

MVCC's vision for student success is to provide high-quality learning opportunities in a supportive environment by 1) encouraging students to become critical thinkers and lifelong learners, 2) guiding four-year degree-track students to successfully transfer to four-year institutions, 3) supporting career-bound students in finding meaningful employment related to their field of study, 4) improving the basic skills of all under-prepared students seeking the College's resources with an emphasis on pre-college outreach, dual credit (concurrent enrollment) coursework, and academic preparation to

Briefly describe your systemic change priorities that help your institution achieve its student success vision. We recommend you identify 2-3 priorities. Each priority is likely comprised of multiple student success efforts that work together to achieve systemic change.

Note: A student success effort is defined as a policy, practice, or procedure designed to reduce or eliminate barriers to students' progress and ultimate success in education and the labor market.

Suggested word count: 300-500 words

Priority One: Development of a stronger student gateway experience that includes academic planning and advisement and a redesigned orientation that will now be part of ED 100. Late registration has been discontinued to ensure students are receiving adequate support services before beginning classes.
Priority Two: An ongoing review to adapt policies, procedures and systems to the changing needs of students in order to promote a successful student learning experience. The college's review is currently focused upon grad certification, advising,

What key metric(s) are you using to measure progress on achieving your student success vision? Select all that apply.

Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence

Complete College America

National Community College Benchmarking Project

National Student Clearinghouse

Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework

State community college system data

Student Achievement Measure

Voluntary Framework of Accountability

Other (please specify):

Suggested word count: 300-500 words

As part of our research agreement with the National Student Clearinghouse, Achieving the Dream has access to your institution's NSC data and calculated outcomes. If you would like to share data from other sources, we encourage you to do so. There will be an opportunity to upload data at the end of the form.

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Leadership & Vision

The commitment and collaboration of the institution's leadership with respect to student success and the clarity of the vision for desired change.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

MVCC initially joined Achieving the Dream in hopes it would become the umbrella connecting multiple student success efforts at various levels of and locations within the college. The past year has shown great progress there, as the ATD goals became the foundation for the MVCC Title III grant project and other grants, including a Community Schools project to knit the college and community closer. Through the inclusion of annual plan markers into the strategic plan, and Board of Trustees focus on student success in budgetary and program decisions, the conversation on student success

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

MVCC has shown progress in implementing ATD at the top levels of college leadership and among the many administrators and faculty who have worked at the grass roots level to implement ATD and to use its principles as the foundation for change. That said, there remain pockets of resistance to change in the mid-level leadership that are slow to embrace ATD. Given the past year the trend line for overcoming these challenges is good, but the process takes time. Data-informed decision-making has been slow due to the limitations of the college's experience in the data gathering and designing of data

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

The most important goal remains the need to have all parts of the college fully and energetically embrace ATD. A prime secondary goal, one that relates to acceptance, is to increase the facility with which ATD supporters can use data to assist in decision making and can gather data to help show "doubters" that ATD is not simply a program, but a new operating system that brings vast rewards. A third goal is to align staff resources to fully align with all of the measures and sub-measures that are part of ATD, with the ideal long-term goal that for every piece of the overall student success effort.

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Data & Technology

The institution's capabilities to collect, access, analyze and use data to inform decisions, and to utilize and leverage technology to support student success.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

The College has always had the ability to collect data through multiple means of surveys, student tracking through our Learning Center, and login information through our Blackboard LMS as well as demographics through our Banner SIS. Our ATD Technology Initiative Team has collected information relating to student use and acceptance of technology in the classroom. This information was reported back to the college community during this year's data summit. In the past year the college has begun to address student success through the use of collected data and has begun to look at data

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

The challenges the College faces with the use of data and technology is college community wide use of data. Unfortunately, many of the data sets are not closely connected where it is easily understood for the general faculty or staff members to utilize. This disconnect between data sources makes it overwhelming for most to use data efficiently for early interventions.

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

The goals for Data and Technology are to pilot the use of Starfish retention systems (in alignment with the College's Title III efforts) for a cohort of the ATD Identified gateway courses as well as implement the Degree Works Planner which is a multi-term degree plan and schedule forecast. The Starfish system will serve as a data warehouse with several sets of data feeding into the system and a dashboard for students and faculty to communicate, schedule and outreach. Through both system implementations our students will have a deeper understanding of their schedule and connection to the

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

It would be helpful if ATD could facilitate an open source networking activity with other ATD colleges that utilize Starfish, Banner and Degreeworks such as a user community or a resource site to work with other colleges to create synergy in Student success.

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Equity

The commitment, capabilities, and experiences of an institution to equitably serve low-income students, students of color, and other at-risk student populations with respect to access, success, and campus climate.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

In the implementation plan year, the College has spent time developing action steps to move the needle on student success. While these efforts focus on student success it is very easy to have equity fall away because you assume that a focus on one area will automatically address another. It does not. Members of the Core Team have been very deliberate with efforts to keep equity at the forefront of what we do and challenging ourselves and our teams to always ask the question "what does this (plan, action step, idea) do in terms of making sure that the low income population, which

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Although the results of this survey will benefit more students than the target population, the culture at the college may be one of viewing this effort as limited to this specific population, therefore the challenge may be effectively informing the college population as to the benefits to all students as well as faculty and staff. With multiple efforts underway in the college to increase student success not limited to ATD, it will be difficult to determine which effort had the desired effect.

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

The major focus of work will be to disseminate the survey, gather the results, report on the results, determine action steps, take action, and then evaluate the results of the work. One of the most vital sub-goals is to communicate to the college population that the results will benefit other students beyond this specific population, as well as raise awareness among the college community including faculty and staff. When surveying the students determine which effort(s) aided them so we have data to support the efforts

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Teaching & Learning

The variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic and non-academic supports strategies designed to facilitate student learning and success

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

During the past year, we operationalized the goals of ATD as we have begun the implementation phase of the Title III grant we received, which was developed with the principles of ATD as its foundation. In the spring of 2015, ATD leadership developed the goal of interventions in the reading and technology areas. Because neither of the proposed interventions was derived from existing data, the teams exploring these interventions used significant time and resources to investigate these areas. Data mining and exhaustive research was useful in helping to reframe the issues devoid of

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Because reading is such a multi-faceted area, further investigation is necessary to determine not simply the competence of MVCC students to read the printed word, but to comprehend it in the context of often complex technical language. At a time when a survey of high school reading required of incoming students reveals a severe misalignment between the preparation provided to high school students and the rigor of college reading, the college needs to further investigate the gap before deciding upon a programmatic response. A further challenge is to ensure that key words in both areas

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

We expect to be piloting new toolkits that blend what we have learned in our ATD process with other college research from faculty and staff in the fall of 2016, taking that to scale in the spring of 2017. Likewise, standardized Blackboard templates will make their debut in the fall of 2016 and be scaled in 2017. A major area of work for 2016-17 will be increasing faculty awareness and faculty input so that as many perspectives as possible can be used to interpret data and provide programmatic alternatives.

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

The widest possible access to promising and best practices, could help all faculty better see how other colleges are addressing similar issues.

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Engagement & Communication

The process of enabling key external stakeholders, such as K-12, universities, employers and community-based organizations, and internal stakeholders across the institution to participate in the student success agenda and improvement of student outcomes.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Creating broad engagement has been MVCC's mission since the inception of the ATD effort. The result of this engagement has been an increasing and broad awareness of the focus of ATD and an increase in the understanding of how data can be used to support student success efforts. Multiple meetings, from the full college community to one-on-one sessions with stakeholders who had serious concerns, have shared the message of what ATD is doing at MVCC.

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

The past year was a time of planning while the early part of the coming year is a time when implementation is moving forward. The greatest challenge will be to continually share updates on the progress made in developing and implementing the interventions so that as the spring of 2017 approaches and interventions are being moved to scale, there is a broad awareness that what ATD and MVCC are doing is in fact increasing student success. As new pieces of MVCC's long-range strategy for implementing ATD principles come on line it will be vital to the outcome of the project that a strong

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

The goal of Year One's engagement was to increase awareness, so that stakeholders could view the project as addressing issues from the bottom up, not the top down. In moving from awareness to action, engagement will shift in the coming year with the addition of the increased efforts to develop a dialogue that moves from the grassroots to the project's leadership as well as the other way around. Because the coming year is a time of intensive action to operationalize items in the ATD plan, MVCC's communications strategy will intensify efforts to provide information college stakeholders

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Strategy & Planning

The alignment of the institution with the umbrella goal of student success and the institution's process for translating the desired future into defined goals and objectives and executing the actions to achieve them.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

One of the most vital actions to align strategy and planning with the overall goals of ATD and the college at large has been to create annual performance benchmarks in the annual plan that operates within the broader framework of the college's Strategic Plan. This coming year represents a breakthrough in terms of this alignment of the annual goals with the strategic plan and is a result of the high level of Board and administrative commitment to achieving the goals of ATD. Within this framework, the college decision to focus resources on increasing hiring diversity represents a major commitment that

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Moving forward on ATD comes at a time when the enrollment roller-coaster is in a trough, creating ripples across the college community including major fiscal implications that form the backdrop to many operational issues throughout the college community. Thus efforts to increase acceptance of ATD and push forward with the broad ATD agenda run through a college environment in which funding decisions and budgetary issues can pose distractions and static, as can the always-expected resistance to the academic redesign. With other issues staring the college community in the face, it

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

This past year has been a time of building college unity behind ATD. The major goal of efforts for the coming year will be to sustain that unity in a difficult environment while achieving the numerical targets proposed by the college.

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress in improving student success over the past academic year. Describe this progress for each area and consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution.

Policies & Practices

The institutional policies and practices that impact student success and the processes for examining and aligning policies and practices to remove barriers and foster student completion.

Is this area part of your strategic plan?

Yes

No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?

Yes

No

Progress

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Reviews were conducted by working groups in these three areas of policy and practice: 1) Student Advising; 2) Registration and Payment. 3) Graduation Certification
There was some progress in all three areas:
Student Advising: Priority Registration for current students was moved later in the semester to allow time after midterm grades are posted for students to meet with their advisors before they schedule for the next semester. This change was made in spring 2016.

Challenges

Suggested maximum word count: 300 words

Student Advising: Some faculty report struggling to find the time to meet with advisees, and note that students who need advising the most do not seek it out. The survey revealed that some faculty do not understand the current advisement system, or don't feel comfortable with the technical tools that support their advising. A proposal to add advisement days to the College calendar was rejected because of concerns about disrupting lab course hours. A proposal to use an advisement PIN system that would enforce mandatory advising for continuing students also did not move forward because

Do you have goals in this area for the 2016-2017 academic year?

Yes

No

Goals for 2016-2017 Academic Year

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

Suggested word count: 150-300 words

The Student Advisement Design Team plans to work with the Advisement Center to offer a series of faculty advising trainings and workshops, both for new and experienced faculty advisors. It is not clear whether the topic of requiring students to see their advisors, as a method of supporting student success toward completion, will be revisited. The committee on graduation practices is likely to make at least two recommendations:

- The Application for Graduation should be available in a such a format that it may be completed and submitted entirely online

What resources or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes

No

If you would like to upload data with your reflection, please do so here.

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