



Virginia Student Success Leadership Institute

Final Action Plan

Final Action Plan Template

Based on what you have learned in Action Plan 1 and 2, as well as your own study in the past year, what have you identified as the most important things needing change at your college? Using the template below as a quick summary, fill in what the initiative is, what area of the Loss Momentum Framework it addresses, etc.

	Description of Proposed Action	Framework Area (Connection, Entry, Progress, Completion)	Timeframe (as specific as necessary for your needs)	Potential Costs	Impacted Stakeholder Group(s)	Anticipated Impact
Initiative 1	The College will leverage technology to help ensure that students who express interest in Thomas Nelson receive regular and targeted communications	Connection	Investigation Phase: Spring 2016 Build Phase: Summer/Fall 2016 Implementation phase: Spring 2017	\$40,000 per year (The College has purchased Hobson's Radius to facilitate this action)	Prospective students Student Affairs, Institutional Advancement, and Information Technology staff	The number of fall semester applications received by the College will be increased (Baseline = 6,646, Target = 7,444)
Initiative 2	The College will leverage technology to help ensure that students who apply to the college experience a user-friendly and informative on-boarding process and are prepared to make informed academic and career decisions at the onset of	Entry	Investigation Phase: Spring 2016 Build Phase: Summer 2016 Implementation phase: Summer/Fall 2016	\$86,000 per year (the College has purchased EAB Navigate to facilitate this action)	Newly admitted students Student Affairs, Finance and Administration, and Information Technology staff	The rate at which fall applicants to the College enroll in their term of application will be increased (Baseline = 42.6%, Target = 52.6%)

	their studies at the College		for new students and Spring 2017 for continuing students			
Initiative 3	The College will implement its new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) advising program, <i>Advising: Plan Now. Succeed Now</i> . This new advising model provides each student with a discipline-specific support network to help ensure that they define their academic and career goals early and stay on track to achieve those goals throughout their enrollment at the College.	Progress / Completion	Advising identified as the focus of the QEP: 2013 College-wide planning: 2014 and 2015 SACSCOC reaffirmation visit and acceptance of QEP: November 2015 to June 2016 Phase in: Fall 2016	The overall College investment in the QEP will be approximately \$6.7 million over the next five years. Approximately \$1.1 million will be in the form of new assets, and the remainder will come from existing/repurposed assets EAB Navigate will also support the new advising model and its goals/outcomes. Costs for that platform are indicated under Initiative 2	All students All faculty, staff, and administrators at the College	The rate at which new full-time students are retained from their entering fall to the subsequent spring (Baseline = 84.2%, Target = 88.0%) The rate at which new full-time students are retained from their entering fall to the subsequent fall (Baseline = 56.8%, Target = 65.0%) The rate at which students graduate from the College and/or transfer within two years of entering will be increased (Baseline = 14.9%, Target = 20.0%) Students will be able to demonstrate achievement of three primary

						learning outcomes (outlined fully in the QEP)
Initiative 4	The College will revise its delivery of developmental mathematics (increase and enhance support for students in those classes)	Entry / Progress	Initial changes to developmental math course offerings: Academic Year 2015-2016 Modifications to math emporium model: Academic Year 2015-2016 Final changes to developmental math course offerings: Academic Year 2016-2017	At this time, all funding has been incurred or encumbered for the support personnel, faculty and resources.	Developmental mathematics students Developmental mathematics faculty and support staff	The rate at which fall term students successfully complete developmental mathematics courses will increase (Baseline = 35.8%, Target = 70.0%) The rate at which new full-time students complete all of their required developmental mathematics modules in their first year will increase (Baseline = 28.6%, Target = 40.0%)

Step 2: For each of the initiative, use Kotter’s change framework to identify the process of change.

***NOTE: Given the inter-connected nature of our first three initiatives, we have addressed them as a combined whole under each of the Kotter change framework questions below.**

Initiatives 1-3

Create a Sense of Urgency

How will you create urgency regarding the initiative on campus?

The initiative of overhauling academic advising came about through a systematic process of stakeholder meetings and survey results during 2013 and 2014. As the College approached its SACSCOC reaffirmation visit, these meetings and surveys helped us identify the major issue effecting student success at Thomas Nelson Community College. The result is a reorganized advising structure that is decentralized, with each academic division having its own advising area. The concept is called Plan Now. Succeed Now. Students are assigned to their advising area based on their program of study. The professional advisors become subject matter experts in their particular areas, and every attempt is made for students to see the same advisor throughout their enrollment at the College. Faculty assume a mentoring role under this model, and new student orientation, as well as a certain number of advising meetings will be mandatory. The College collectively sees no greater challenge to student success than poor academic advising.

Late in the spring, the Advising Areas were physically moved to their new locations. The new Director of Advising was hired and she started working at the College in March. Lead Professional Advisors have been selected and are now in place. Next steps include the development of the mandatory orientation and ongoing efforts to communicate to students where their advising area is located, how to get there, and what they can expect out of the new advising model: Plan Now. Succeed Now.

Build a Guiding Coalition

Who at your college needs to be at the table for guiding these changes? Why?

The effort to identify the QEP started at the staff level. Certain mid-level leaders were identified who conducted a series of constituency group meetings including classified staff, mid-level managers, faculty, and administrators. A series of issues effecting the College was narrowed down to five. The five were re-written and combined into two, and the college community voted on the issue they believed had the highest needs. Academic advising was that issue. The college community has been involved from the onset of the discussion and continues to be involved as implementation begins this fall and spring.

Now that we are moving through the early stages of implementation, the challenge is to keep the QEP uppermost in the collective minds of the faculty and staff. The Vice Presidents for Academic and Student Affairs together must ensure that the goal of providing effective advising for students does not get lost now that the SACSCOC reaffirmation visit is over. The President has stated that the QEP is critical to the strategic plan for the future of the organization.

Form a Strategic Vision & Initiatives

After you have made these changes and they are successful, what will be different at your college? Why?

Students who express interest in Thomas Nelson will receive encouraging, engaging, and regular communication from the college to help them take the next step. Once a student has actively made the decision to apply to the College, they are provided a customized, user-friendly interface that gives them options to explore the job market in real time, explore their career interests, plan their

schedules around their other responsibilities and see where they are in the process at all times. Students will receive a meaningful and valuable orientation, and meet at least three times with an advisor to ensure progress toward completion. Having received this assistance at the critical connection and entry points in their educational journey, they are more likely to complete in a timely manner.

As students are able to progress through these steps with less difficulty, this reduces stress on the staff who must deal with the by-products of a poor onboarding and advising system. Students have been frequently upset, anxious, and frustrated. By addressing these issues through the selected initiatives, students should experience a much more pleasant and supportive environment at the College, with reductions in student complaints and fewer problems that interfere with progression.

What short term actions will help you to achieve this strategic vision? What long term action will help you to achieve this strategic vision? What changes do you anticipate will result from the initiative?

The Plan Now. Succeed Now. initiative has been strategically planned from the outset. Short term actions included stakeholder meetings and the investigation of technology supports. The long term action is the actual roll out of an entirely new advising model. We anticipate more engaged, informed, valued, and successful students who progress through their programs with a minimum of disruption and difficulty. Over the next five years, additional advisors will be hired to support the vision. There is also a career component that, should funding be available, the College would like to add to the model so that students can get career and academic advising in the same area whenever appropriate for their goals.

With regard to Radius, the immediate change will be that as soon as a student expresses interest in Thomas Nelson, they receive immediate contact that is friendly, encouraging and supportive. Presently, the students receive one letter from the College.

With regard to Navigate, PeopleSoft is not a user-friendly or intuitive interface. Navigate is very easy to use and also provides information at every step along the way. Students will no longer be presented with a confusing screen with tiny font and no logical way to guess how to effectively use it.

With regard to the advising model, we anticipate a richer student experience and a decrease in the number of students who are misadvised and lose momentum in their progression.

Enlist a Volunteer Army

For each initiative, who at your campus will lead the charge? Are they on the guiding committee? How will you get others to participate?

The Vice Presidents for Student and Academic Affairs have led this effort from the beginning. The integration of the advising areas into the academic division spaces required an enormous and unprecedented degree of cooperation. Given the charge from the Vice

Presidents, the various Deans and Directors operationalized and set about identifying and attaining short term goals. Because the initiative came from the college community, participation has been widespread. They are both on the guiding committee and they are both committed to the success of this vision.

For each initiative, who at your college will you need to be in the volunteer ranks? Why are they the best ones to support the change? Will they have a continuing role or will they be needed at key moments?

The front line staff at the entry point is where most of these initiatives are communicated. The staff's belief in and ability to communicate about Navigate and the new advising model will be critical eventual success. If students are not properly guided right from the beginning, it doesn't matter how good the advising is if the students can't find it, or are frustrated getting there. Thomas Nelson has a good track record of listening to the feedback of front line staff and using it to improve processes. The front line staff will have a continuing and critical role.

Enable Action by Removing Barriers

For each initiative, what barriers do you currently foresee in enabling action to change? What actions need to be taken to address these barriers? Which actions should be addressed by the college? Which actions might be addressed by the System?

Since Thomas Nelson is beginning to implement, many of the barriers have been addressed. Articulating a clear message about the new Advising Model would appear to be a large barrier, but the QEP Implementation Committee did strong work in crafting a college-wide message. As the plan and message emerged, the College President gathered and addressed the campus community to show his belief in and support for the initiative.

Physical space was a barrier for de-centralizing the advising areas, but in support of this college-wide effort, the Vice President for Finance and Administration worked diligently to support building changes and renovations where possible. The academic deans identified space for the advisors and assisted in their transition into the office suites. Plant Services bore the brunt of relocating dozens of staff and Information Technology made sure all the phones, copiers, and computers were in place and operational. Physical space will continue to be a problem as additional advising staff comes on board, but every directorate in the college has been involved in some way to provide support.

The system office has been supportive of our efforts to pilot EAB Navigate and also the implementation of Radius, the Client Relations Management tool we will be implementing.

Generate Short-term Wins

In considering your actions, which ones do you think will provide your college with positive results in the next year? Why?

All of the initiatives are in various stages of implementation for 2016/2017. A short-term win was the successful pilot of the advising module within Navigate. Another was the completion of the staff relocations. Another was finalizing the contract with Hobson's for Radius, since we were the first college in the system to purchase it.

These large-scale implementations will be fully implemented beginning in Spring of 2017. They are coming on now in limited populations, but complete implementation is still a semester away. We expect positive results in student experiences immediately this spring, and we expect to see increases in students progressing from contact to entry by Fall of 2017.

Sustain Acceleration

What is your plan for building momentum toward your strategic vision? How will you budget for the initiative? What potential changes in revenue do you foresee as a result of the changes? How will you address any negative implications?

If your college had a change in leadership, how would your guiding committee continue to move toward your strategic vision?

Due to the high level of administrative support from the outset, the college budgeted for the QEP. Where the budget was unavailable, existing physical resources were either repurposed or renovated with existing funds. A few positions that were vacated were repurposed to support the new advising model. There is also a career-advising component in the advising model that is currently unfunded. Workforce Development is currently exploring options for repurposing their staff to support the model.

The College has, in fact, experienced a significant leadership change. The vice presidents for academic and student affairs are leaving the college effective July 1. Two interim vice presidents have been identified who were integral to the planning from the beginning and their message from the President has been that the QEP will move forward and reach its goals of providing an active community of support that empowers students to achieve their goals. And further, that students will have the opportunity to explore possible careers within their Academic Division and work with a team of faculty and professional advisors to support those goals, all related to the discipline and program of study.

Initiative 4

Create a Sense of Urgency

How will you create urgency regarding the initiative on campus?

We have formed a developmental math team that is fully engaged in this initiative. No additional urgency is needed given they have scheduled the requisite changes through Spring 2017.

Build a Guiding Coalition

Who at your college needs to be at the table for guiding these changes? Why?

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, Developmental Math Managers, Developmental Math Advisor, Division Advisors Team and Math Faculty are necessary for our success. The unified goal and understanding of the support needed to bring this change to the College has the full support of Academic Affairs. The College Cabinet has been briefed due to the implications to enrollment and facilities needs. The Cabinet gives its full support to the developmental math modifications, which is important because the over-enrollment in MTT courses (due to unsuccessful students) reduces FTES by approximately 100 per semester.

Form a Strategic Vision & Initiatives

After you have made these changes and they are successful, what will be different at your college? Why?

What short term actions will help you to achieve this strategic vision? What long term action will help you to achieve this strategic vision? What changes do you anticipate will result from the initiative?

The developmental math department has set a target goal of achieving at least a 70% success rate in all developmental math sections (a 27.9% improvement) by 2018. This would put developmental math courses at a minimum acceptable success rate as all other mathematics courses. We desire to get students through their developmental math requirements within their first year of enrollment so that they can progress in their programs to help the overall strategic goal of completing programs within their 150%. We expect to lead the VCCS in developmental math success rates through our shift in MTE courses, redeployment of our Math Emporium, and developmental math advising and boot camps.

Enlist a Volunteer Army

For each initiative, who at your campus will lead the charge? Are they on the guiding committee? How will you get others to participate?

For each initiative, who at your college will you need to be in the volunteer ranks? Why are they the best ones to support the change? Will they have a continuing role or will they be needed at key moments?

We have everyone we need for our volunteer army – dedicated developmental math faculty, developmental math managers, and a developmental math advisor. Due to our new advising strategy which has placed advisors within the division, we are adding more developmental advising capacity and depth to our team. An unintended consequence of faculty credentials review has led us to having full-time and adjunct faculty who are restricted to developmental math instruction. We are leveraging this to raise the professional standards of this group, rather than be a detracting issue from overall math instruction.

Enable Action by Removing Barriers

For each initiative, what barriers do you currently foresee in enabling action to change? What actions need to be taken to address these barriers? Which actions should be addressed by the college? Which actions might be addressed by the System?

Our actions to-date have removed all local barriers. The current guided pathways and mathematics pathway changes represent a potential risk to our program by bringing distractions to our plan. However, since we have identified this potential issue, we are working to stay involved with the math pathways advisory committee to minimize unexpected changes or impacts to our developmental faculty.

Generate Short-term Wins

In considering your actions, which ones do you think will provide your college with positive results in the next year? Why?

We have just completed our first round of modifications to the developmental math program. Our success rate in all developmental math sections rose from 33.3% (SP 2015) to 53.0% (FA 2015) to 54.7% (SP 2016). These results were from Phase I of the plan and represent a 64.3% improvement. The short-term wins raised morale and excitement levels among our team members. A similar strategy is planned for Phase II and we believe that statistically we have an achievable goal of 70%.

Sustain Acceleration

What is your plan for building momentum toward your strategic vision? How will you budget for the initiative? What potential changes in revenue do you foresee as a result of the changes? How will you address any negative implications?

If your college had a change in leadership, how would your guiding committee continue to move toward your strategic vision?

We have already addressed the enrollment downside with our Cabinet and we have their support. With the upcoming changes in financial aid auditing, we would expect to have some enrollment losses anyway. Our developmental math plan is about doing the right thing for our students and community, so there is no going back. Our financial requirements for these changes have already been absorbed; however, if we had to make changes due to the additional advising or reassigned time commitments we are prepared for realignment. The start-up costs for the math emporium have been completed and we have returned that space and its resources to classroom utilization. We are in the midst of some leadership changes in Academic Affairs and we have not changed our course or vision because of it.