

USING THE BALDRIGE CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND IMPROVEMENT

Both academic and administrative units at other universities have successfully used the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria for self-assessment, planning, and improvement. On Friday, November 17, Ann Dodd, Senior Consultant, Center for Quality and Planning, will lead a Quality Advocate's Network discussion on the potential for using the Baldrige Criteria as an organizational effectiveness tool within Penn State units. Ann is a member of the 2000 Board of Examiners for the Baldrige National Quality Award.

To participate in the November 17 meeting, please RSVP by Thursday, November 16 to the Center for Quality and Planning at 814-863-8721 or psucqp@psu.edu. The session will be held from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in 404 Old Main on the University Park campus, and if other Penn State sites would like to participate via Pic Tel, please contact the Center for Quality and Planning.

The Quality Advocates' Network is an informal bi-monthly gathering of those at Penn State interested in improvement and change, providing an opportunity to exchange information and experiences. All are welcome.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email psucqp@psu.edu.

QUALITY EXPO 2001

Penn State University's commitment to quality improvement is highlighted annually at the Quality Expo. Over the last eight years, dozens of teams and hundreds of visitors from Penn State and other universities have come together to celebrate continuous quality improvement. The Center for Quality and Planning would like to invite exhibitors to participate in the 9th annual Quality Expo on April 12, 2001, in the Nittany Lion Inn on Penn State's University Park Campus in State College.

Faculty, staff, students and administrators are encouraged to share their experiences with using quality improvement principles and tools in their daily work. Teams do not need to have completed an initiative in order to exhibit; a unique aspect of their effort, such as benchmarking, the use of student teams in the classroom, or inter-unit collaboration could be featured.

If you would like to register as an exhibitor for Quality Expo 2001, visit the Center for Quality and Planning's Web site at <http://www.psu.edu/president/cqi/expo2001>. Please submit your registration by January 31, 2001. There is no charge for exhibitors, but exhibitor space is limited, so please register early. The Quality Expo is free to visitors and open to the public.



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INITIATIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: 1991 - PRESENT

It has been nearly ten years since Penn State's University Council on Continuous Quality Improvement (UCCQI) was charged to study total quality concepts and their use in higher education and to develop strategies for the University's practice of CQI. This newsletter takes a look back at some of the initiatives of the Council and the CQI teams resulting from those efforts.

The Council identified five academic and seven academic-support "core processes" and appointed core process teams to study issues and suggest initiatives. Below are highlights of team activity and summaries of Council activity between 1991 and 2000 occurring within each of these processes.

One caveat: we know that there have been numerous quality improvement initiatives in the Penn State colleges and administrative units mentioned below; the numbers we cite reflect the activities on file in the Center's database. To date, 383 teams have registered with the Center.

ACADEMIC PROCESSES

UCCQI identified five academic core processes: teaching/learning; research/scholarship; enrollment management; faculty recruitment; development and retention; and service and outreach.

Teaching/Learning

The Center's records indicate that 30 quality improvement teams have been charged under the category of teaching/learning, including areas as diverse as the teaching of physics to engineering undergraduates, freshman orientation in the Smeal College, and Penn State Fayette's team to develop a systematic process for scheduling course offerings, to the Center for Excellence in Learning & Teaching's efforts to improve the quality of instruction in large classes, Penn State Harrisburg's Masters in Public Administration student recruitment and retention team, and a recent team in the School of Information Sciences & Technology that developed courses via the WWW.

UCCQI has addressed the teaching/learning core process in many of its meetings over the last nine years. Discussions included topics such as academic climate and efforts to improve the learning environment, student recruitment, the First-Year Testing, Counseling and Advising Program, orientation, class attendance, dorms and housing, and judicial affairs. The Council authorized a PULSE survey to determine class attendance patterns and charged a New Student Orientation Team.

Research/Scholarship

Our database indicates that nine quality improvement teams have been charged over the past several years in the area of research and scholarship, including a team in the College of Engineering to develop tools to facilitate submission of successful research proposals, and a team in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences that improved the research proposal award process. Council action during this time included a review of the Office of Sponsored Programs' Financial Information Tool (FIT) Web project and the Electronic Research Administration project. The latter includes the Strategic Information Management System (SIMS), the Grants and Applications Management System (GAMS), and the Federal Demonstration Partnership.

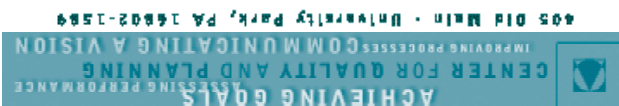
Enrollment Management

Sixty-one process improvement teams that dealt with issues of enrollment management were reported as having been launched in the 1990's. Some of these included teams that reduced lines in the Bursar's office; focused on academic reasons for student attrition at Penn State Berks; improved the recruitment of Philadelphia area high school graduates to Penn State campuses; decentralized graduate admissions and developed an electronic graduate student application form; integrated registration, student aid, and bursar processes at the start of each semester; and provided academic and course descriptions on the Web.

The Council appointed a Central Enrollment Management Core Process Team and charged two Recruitment and Retention CQI Teams in 1994, which led, in the following year, to the formation of a Central Enrollment Management Group (CEMG) to monitor on-going issues of recruitment and retention. In 1999, "change of assignment" targets for each campus were developed and budget incentives were provided for increasing upper level undergraduate student enrollments at the campuses.

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This is a bi-monthly publication, distributed to Penn State administrators and CQI team members. If you have any comments about what you read here, or if you would like to suggest items for future newsletters, please contact Louise Sandmeyer, executive director of the Center for Quality and Planning, or Carol Everett, associate director, at 814-863-8721 or psucqp@psu.edu. To subscribe or to read past issues, see the Center's website at <http://www.psu.edu/jp/resident/cqi>.



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Faculty Recruitment, Development and Retention

Five process improvement teams were initiated in the area of faculty recruitment, development, and retention, including a team in the College of Engineering that reviewed the implementation of University promotion and tenure procedures, and a team in the College of Education that streamlined the college's supplemental appointment process. To address this core process, UCCQI monitored the activities of the Master Teacher Team (a component of the 1992-1997 IBM Total Quality Management grant) and assisted in establishing an exit interview system for faculty.

Service and Outreach

The Center's records indicate that 32 quality initiatives have been undertaken in the area of service and outreach during the last nine years. They ranged from the Conferences and Institutes' team that sought to improve their monthly financial reporting to the colleges, to the team in Finance and Business that focused on the handling of cash received for parking at the Bryce Jordan Center to the Outreach team that examined the processes for registration and payment of bills for distance education and the world campus. Other teams affecting the core process of service and outreach enhanced the Penn State Outreach Magazine, improved hospitality at the Nittany Lion Inn and the Penn Stater, streamlined equipment training in Housing and Food Services, and designed a Web site for Pennsylvania dairy farmers. The Council charged a Customer Communications and Expectations Team (which compiled best practices in customer surveys at Penn State) and reviewed new technologies being developed around interactive video, the World Campus, and Web-based information for distance education.

ACADEMIC-SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Council identified seven academic-support processes: strategic planning; financial planning and budgeting; facilities planning and management; alumni and university relations and development; information technology; student services; and staff recruitment, development and retention.

Strategic Planning

In 1994, benchmarking plans were required of each unit as part of their strategic plan updates; benchmarking is now firmly established at Penn State as integral to strategic planning and assessment processes. In 1997-98, university-level performance measures for the five goals of the university-wide strategic plan were developed and strategic plan updates included strategic indicators in 1998-99 and 1999-00. In the future, university data stewards will collect performance measures data annually and report it bi-annually. A team to develop an Integrated Planning Model was appointed by the Council in 1999 to coordinate academic planning, enrollment planning, budget planning and facilities planning at Penn State in the five campus colleges.

Financial Planning and Budgeting

In the area of financial planning and budgeting, the Center's database indicates that improvement initiatives have been undertaken by 18 teams and, in Finance and Business, 15 "task forces for innovation." One of the most successful of these groups, in terms of results, is the Purchasing Card Team, which developed a procurement card system that streamlines the process for acquiring low-dollar purchases and has saved the University nearly \$700,000 to date. Other teams improved the IBIS system in the College of the Liberal Arts and the Eberly College of Science; invoice processing in the University Libraries; purchasing in University Health Services; inter-office charge slip procedures in the Nittany Lion Inn; student customer service in Penn State Altoona's Finance Office; and editing and proofing in Document Services.

Facilities Planning and Management

Within the core process that focuses on the management and planning of university facilities, the Center's records show 50 quality improvement teams have been initiated. Of these, 38 were in the Office of Physical Plant and dealt with areas such as preventative maintenance, service calls, one-way signage, litter pickup, office and classroom cleaning, inspection of construction projects, and parts acquisition. Another team that dealt with facilities planning and management included the Real Estate and Property Team in Finance and Business; this team eliminated duplicative processes in real estate and property management in the Corporate Controller's Office, OPP and the Treasurer's Office. The University Libraries Shake, Rattle and Roll Team coordinated the Paterno Library remodeling project with the Pennsylvania Building Council. The Finance and Business Chemical Management Team improved control of chemicals, from acquisition to storage, distribution and safe disposal.

In 1998-99, UCCQI focused on a review of facilities planning and management, which included the work of the Instructional Space Committee and the Research Task Force. The Council discussed capacity analysis, campus business plans, and "straw capital plans" developed for the University through 2003-04; these discussions created the seeds for Integrated Planning (see section on Strategic Planning).

Alumni and University Relations and Development

During the past decade, over a dozen quality improvement initiatives were undertaken that related to alumni and university relations and development, including a team that coordinated services and events offered jointly by Alumni Relations and Undergraduate Programs in the College of the Liberal Arts, and a team that improved the acquisition of addresses for international alumni for use by the Alumni Association and the Office of Development.

Information Technology/Infrastructure

One of the areas with the most quality improvement activity—our database indicates 46 quality initiatives—is information technology. These activities range from developing computer systems for on-line testing in a computer lab, to providing computer training for staff assistants at Penn State Altoona; from refining the Penn State Enterprise Information System (EIS), to improving customer service in the Center for Academic Computing. Multiple teams using information technology daily improve the efficiency and effectiveness of financial business processes in the University Libraries.

UCCQI charged several core process teams to improve information technology processes in 1995. These were the Information and Learning Technology Customer Team, the Information and Learning Technology Benchmarking Team, the Information Infrastructure Team, and the Administrative Information Support Processes Team. In 1999 the Council focused on an examination of university-wide information technology issues, including the Enterprise Information System, ORACLE, the Imaging Initiative, the Teaching and Learning Technology Support Survey, staff information technology training, and the Financial Information Tool Web project and Electronic Research Administration. The E-Education Council was charged to function under the auspices of the Teaching Learning Consortium.

Student Services

By far the greatest number of quality improvement teams on record is in the area of student services, where 91 quality initiatives were charged between 1991 and 2000. Some of these were the University Health Services team that improved the process for providing verification of illness for students; the Judicial Affairs and Health Promotion and Education team that collaborated to formulate a treatment for first-time alcohol offenders; the team in the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) that developed a group practicum for doctoral students in Counseling Psychology; the Career Development and Placement Services (CDPS) team that developed a council to plan and coordinate high school career fairs; and the Residence Life team that improved the safety and security of occupants in residence halls.

In 1997, the Council appointed a New Student Orientation Team, which in the following year, initiated the President's Convocation for New Students.

Staff Recruitment, Development and Retention

The Center's records indicate that 34 quality improvement teams that dealt with processes within the area of staff recruitment, development and retention were charged during this time. Several examples include the team in Human Resources that developed an electronic staff vacancy

announcement system; the team in Auxiliary Services that initiated a staff rewards and recognition program; the team in the College of Communications that worked to improve staff morale; and the team in the Office of Human Resources that developed a Web-based system for benefits enrollment.

During the 1990's, many of the discussions and initiatives in UCCQI were focused on staff issues. In 1993, the Council participated in the development of the Staff Review and Development Plan (and helped to revise the document in 1999); in 1994, a study group was charged by the Council to evaluate staff rewards and recognition programs; the next year UCCQI provided oversight for the 1995 Faculty/Staff Survey, and in 1996 and 1997, the Council monitored improvements initiated as a result of the survey, particularly in the areas of communication, training and development, and staff participation in decision-making. The Council supported the Office of Human Resources' appointment of a team to develop a Leadership Management curriculum, and in 1999-2000, provided input for a second Faculty Staff Survey and a follow-up unit-level survey.

Future Directions of UCCQI

The structure and membership of UCCQI remained relatively unchanged for nine years. Approximately twenty-five senior administrators and faculty met at least six times a year to develop guiding principles for the practice of CQI, identify critical processes for study, establish pilot teams, break down barriers and remove roadblocks to progress, strengthen intra-organizational communication and monitor progress.

During the past nine years, CQI principles and practices have been institutionalized in many of the university's operations. Penn State is seen as a benchmark university for the practice of CQI. The annual Quality Expo attracts hundreds of Penn State faculty and staff as well as visitors and exhibitors from other Big Ten institutions.

In July 2000, Provost Rodney Erickson believed the time had come to re-examine the purpose and structure of the Council. Maintaining the same commitment to assessment and improvement, UCCQI was reconfigured to include a smaller Council of ten members who meet twice a year. Early in September, the re-configured Council identified ten critical university processes that span organizational boundaries and that could be addressed using improvement tools and practices. The list was narrowed to two or three top priorities. Stakeholders and "those who own the process" will be identified by the Council and intra-organizational teams will be charged. UCCQI will meet a second time at the end of the academic year to give guidance to the teams and monitor progress.