INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN

September 2012

RAMAPO
COLLEGE
OF NEW JERSEY

Introduction

The purpose of an Institutional Effectiveness Plan is to articulate a systemized process for assessing the effectiveness of the college towards achieving its mission, its strategic and its annual institutional goals.   To be effective as an institution the college must identify clear, measureable outcomes, develop a set of assessment measures, provide opportunities for assessment, and use the results to inform strategic planning.   A well-designed and fully implemented assessment process ensures that resources are used efficiently and effectively to support student learning at the college.[1]   Ramapo College has been building a strong infrastructure to accommodate strategic planning and institutional effectiveness for the past six years. The national climate and the steady decline in state support has forced Ramapo as well as other institutions to examine all aspects of operation.

Context

In September 2005 the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, also known as the Spellings Commission, was charged with recommending a national strategy for reforming post-secondary education, with a particular focus on how well colleges and universities are preparing students for the 21st-century workplaces, as well as a secondary focus on how well high schools are preparing the students for post-secondary education. The published report was titled *A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education*. It proposed several solutions to the problems facing higher education today, corresponding to the four primary concerns of the commission: access, affordability, quality and accountability.

Since the Spellings Report higher education has been besieged with demands for accountability. Demands for accountability that go all the way to the White House, in President Obama's 2012 State of the Union Address he states "We can't just keep subsidizing skyrocketing tuition; we'll run out of money. States need to do their part, by making higher education a higher priority in their budgets. And colleges and universities have to do their part by working to keep costs down. Recently, I spoke with a group of college presidents who've done just that. Some schools redesign courses to help students finish more quickly. Some use better technology. The point is, it's possible. So let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down".

It follows that accountability has become a key component of all Ramapo College activities under President Mercer's tenure. Higher education is being called upon to develop working processes and policies that demonstrate: 1) strategic planning and its effectiveness, 2) the value of a college education through student learning outcomes, and 3) the efficiencies of

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[1] Excelsior College. (2012). *Institutional Effectiveness Plan.* Albany NY: Excelsior College.

administrative operations. It became apparent we too needed to "do much more with much less" and the only way to succeed involved many changes in all operations.
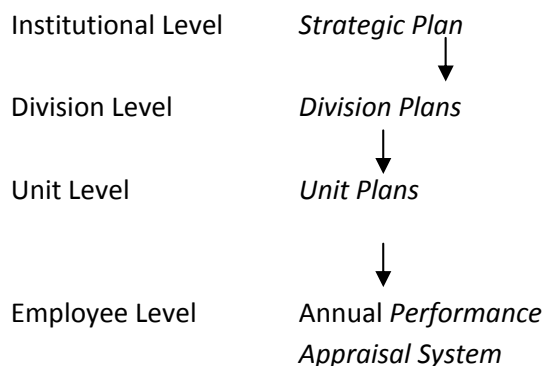
Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Effectiveness is about accountability – to students, employers, accrediting agencies, government bodies, and funding sources. Institutions are being asked to justify the vast amount of time, effort, and money invested by students, taxpayers, local communities, and society in general.
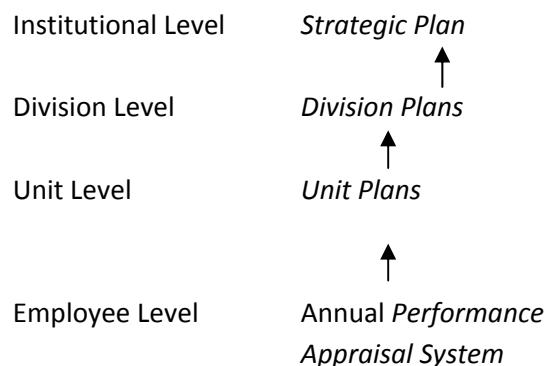
The terms Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness are often confused. It is important to distinguish between the two. *Strategic Planning is process oriented.   What actions should we take to implement our purpose and our goals? Institutional Effectiveness is outcomes oriented. How well are our students learning and administrative services functioning?*[2] Effectiveness is a continual process of monitoring and assessing performance in order to enhance and reform the operations of the College. It is also the process that identifies how well the institution is realizing strategic planning goals.

Relationship between strategic planning and institutional effectiveness

Diagram 1. –
Strategic Planning – Process Oriented

Institutional Level	*Strategic Plan*
Division Level	*Division Plans*
Unit Level	*Unit Plans*
Employee Level	Annual *Performance Appraisal System*

Diagram 2. –
Institutional Effectiveness –
Outcomes Oriented

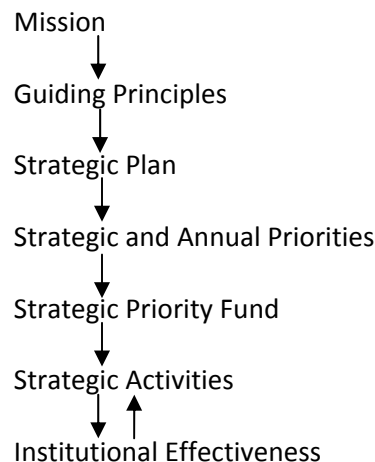| Institutional Level | *Strategic Plan* |
Division Level	*Division Plans*
Unit Level	*Unit Plans*
Employee Level	Annual *Performance Appraisal System*

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[2] James O. Nichols and Karen W. Nichols. *The Department Head's Guide to Assessment Implementation in Administrative and Educational Support Units.* New York: Agathon Press.

The process of monitoring requires some conceptualization of the organization. Most colleges are made up of individual units operating independently of one another. Each area has its own responsibilities and competes with other areas for its share of resources. In order to successfully implement strategic planning and ultimately measure institutional effectiveness all areas must be interconnected and to some extent dependent upon one another. This is where the challenge arises. A mechanism connecting all unit activities must be created and adhered to. The institutional effectiveness plan must be guided by the college's strategic plan. Ramapo has developed an effectiveness implementation plan to integrate strategic planning processes and effectiveness planning processes into the fabric of the institution. Effective assessment doesn't just happen. It emerges overtime as an outcome of thoughtful planning, and in the spirit of continuous improvement, it evolves as reflection on the processes of implementing and sustaining assessment suggests modifications.[3]

Below is the first of the diagrams outlining the conceptual hierarchical relationship between mission, guiding principles, strategic planning and institutional effectiveness.

Diagram 3.

Mission

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Guiding Principles

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Strategic Plan

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Strategic and Annual Priorities

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Strategic Priority Fund

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Strategic Activities

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Institutional Effectiveness

<u>Implementing the Planning Process</u>
Ramapo College is currently in Phase 3 of implementation.

Phase 1 – COMPLETED (September 2006 to December 2007)

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[3] Trudy W. Banta, Elizabeth A. Jones and Karen E. Black. *Designing Effective Assessment*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass.

- Changed division head nomenclature from Vice President Administration and Finance to Chief Planning Officer with budget reporting through planning.
- Refreshed existing Strategic Plan to a shorter more realistic version.
- Established a Planning Map

Phase 2 – COMPLETED (January 2008 to January 2011)
- Provided training to units to establish understanding of the critical components of planning and assessment.
- Provided training to units to establish and understanding of data entry for 3-year planning documents using WEAVE software.
- Incorporated the use of the WEAVE Detailed Assessment Report (DAR) to report annual unit strategic planning outcomes.
- Created a document repository in WEAVE to collect institutional assessment data reports.
- Established the Position Review Committee (PRC), the Budget Committee, and the Space Committee, to monitor institutional resources.

Phase 3 – (IN PROGRESS) April 2012 to January 2014
- To support the expanded scope of work designate former AVP Effectiveness, Research and Planning to AVP Effectiveness and Planning only.
- Fully implement the Institutional Effectiveness Calendar.
- Fully integrate Budget and Capital Budget
- Fully integrate Budget and Planning

Effectiveness Planning Cycle – Attachment 1

Activities in Support of Institutional Effectiveness

Ramapo's commitment to institutional assessment processes is also supported with annual student-learning assessments and annual administrative unit 3-year plans. Academic program reviews and administrative program reviews occur on a continual basis. Service quality across the institution is assessed annually. The results of each survey are reflected upon by the community, and acted upon by college leadership. Unit managers are directed to address any areas of concern identified in the survey results by developing action plans and resources (fully articulated in WEAVE), if any, needed to effect the desired change.

In addition to student learning and 3-year planning assessments and program reviews, many units further demonstrate Ramapo's commitment to assessing institutional effectiveness by producing annual reports that monitor student enrollment profiles, fiscal health, and administrative operations . (Attachment 2)   The datum generated with each of these essential reports is information that can be included among key performance indicators commonly used in higher education institutions to monitor both operational performance and strategic goal attainment.

Lastly, unit managers are able to request Strategic Priority Incentive Funds (SPIF), set aside annually, through the unit planning process. The SPIF fund was established solely for the purpose of providing financial resources for strategic priorities.

Institutional Effectiveness Committee
The Institutional Effectiveness Committee's charge is to monitor the quality of assessment across the institution, ensure assessment results are used to improve program quality, student services, and administrative functions, and to conduct institutional audits to determine what assessment is underway.

Ramapo College has four resource committees whose combined membership makes up the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The Position Review Committee's (PRC) charge is to conduct a thorough analysis of current and future staff positions in order to facilitate institutional staffing decisions based on qualitative and quantitative data. The Budget Committee's charge is to assess how effectively the institution is linking planning and budgeting. The Administrative Program Review Committee's (APR) charge is to advance self-examination, quality improvement, strategic thinking, mission aligned planning and assessment for the continued pursuit of excellence. And the Space Committee's whose charge is to conduct a thorough analysis of current and future facilities in order to facilitate institutional use of space based on qualitative and quantitative data. The membership of all four sub-committees makes up the larger body known as the Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

Strategic Planning Process
Ramapo College's Strategic Planning document is monitored for progress annually and is reviewed every five years. Fiscal Year 2012-2013 will usher in a new Strategic Plan that will serve as our institutional roadmap through 2017.   As Ramapo has moved through planning processes we have learned and adapted our activities to better ensure more positive outcomes for our initiatives. Sanaghan states "within higher education, strategic planning falls short of its potential or simply fails for one main reason: The internal stakeholders feel no connection to the plan and therefore are not committed to its implementation. Often, people feel as if the plan is something done to or for them but not with them. They do not believe their ideas were heard

because no one really attempted to solicit their opinions or discuss their concerns and hopes. Rarely do they receive strategic information to review; including the financial implications of proposed decision."

Based on the above, Ramapo College's strategic planning process has been redesigned to include more input from the community. The original 2007 Strategic Planning Steering Committee membership consisted of 12 members. Membership was increased from 12 members in 2007 to 25 members in 2012 to expand representativeness. The current membership consists of one or more constituency group members.

Additionally, during September and October the community is invited to participate in Strategic Planning Open Forums to discuss the existing or proposed strategic plan in relationship to opportunities and/or threats to the institution. Participation from all members of the college is welcomed, sought and strongly encouraged.

The ideas and suggestions identified in the Strategic Planning Forums are collected and reviewed by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and then forwarded to the President's Cabinet (late October) for review prior to any decisions about annual adjustments being made to the Strategic Plan or Institutional Priorities.

Strategic Planning Cycle
The college operates on a fiscal year beginning July 1 of the current year and ending June 30 of the following year. The strategic planning cycle describes two overlapping processes – the implementation of the current annual institutional priorities and budget, and the planning and development of the following fiscal year's annual institutional priorities and budget. [4]

The cycle begins with unit year end reports. No later than August 31[st,] college units complete their WEAVE reports detailing the status of progress made on their 3-year plans for the prior FY. In September the Effectiveness Update Report is written and given to Ramapo's President. At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees (BOT) of the academic year (October) the President reports on progress made toward goal achievement to the Board.

Late in the second quarter (October, November, December) units begin reporting on the progress made toward current 3-year planning objectives (for the current fiscal year, Attachment 3) while formulating new 3-year plans based on new strategic priorities (as defined by division heads). Unit managers are able to request Strategic Priority Incentive Funds (SPIF) through the unit

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[4] Excelsior College. (2012). *Institutional Effectiveness Plan.* Albany NY: Excelsior College.

planning process. The SPIF fund was established solely for the purpose of providing financial resources for strategic priorities.

SPIF requests are reviewed in the third quarter (April, May, June) in relationship to roll forward and inflationary budgets. The institutional budget is approved in the third to fourth quarter (January through June) only after the Governor's announcement of state funding appropriations. In June, the College's operating budget for the next FY is provided to the BOT for approval.

During the third and fourth quarters units continue to work toward meeting their achievement targets as detailed in their 3-year plans. Then the cycle is repeated.

Using Results to Inform Strategic Planning

As stated at the beginning of this report, the purpose of an Institutional Effectiveness Plan is to articulate a systemized process for assessing the effectiveness of the college towards achieving its mission and its strategic and annual institutional goals. To be effective as an institution the college must identify clear, measureable outcomes, develop a set of assessment measures, provide opportunities for assessment, and use the results to inform strategic planning. A well-designed and fully implemented assessment process ensures that resources are used efficiently and effectively to support student learning at the college.[5] Phase 3 of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan is the last process Ramapo will implement in order to realize an infrastructure that fully supports assessment at all levels of the institution.

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[5] Excelsior College. (2012). *Institutional Effectiveness Plan.* Albany NY: Excelsior College.

References

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Middaugh, M. (2010). *Planning and Assessment in Higher Education: Demonstrating Institutional Effectiveness.* San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

Sanaghan, P. (2009). *Collaborative Strategic Planning in Higher Education.* Washington, D.C.: National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Taylor, B. & Meyerson, J. & Massy, W. (1993). *Strategic Indicators for Higher Education: Improving Performance.* Princeton, New Jersey: Peterson's Guides

EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING CYCLE

ACTION REQUIRED BY:	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
Steering Committee	Continues work on the Strategic Plan	Continues work on the Strategic Plan	Continues work on the Strategic Plan
Effectiveness Committee	Conduct Administrative Program Reviews (APR's)	Conduct Administrative Program Reviews (APR's)	Conduct Administrative Program Reviews (APR's)
			Submits Effectiveness Report to President.
			Provide Forum for college-wide conversations to inform the SP review
Managers	Close out prior year's cycle by completing the findings section within "measures/findings" category	Enter unit plan for next cycle and adjust for future cycles accordingly. Enter SPIF requests into "action plan" related to strategic initiative planned. **LAST DAY TO ADJUST WEAVE AUGUST 31, 2012**	Continue working on unit objectives in accordance with "annual goals" (detailed in WEAVE).
			Review unit expenditures against unit budget.
			Conduct personnel reviews to gauge progress made toward employees professional goals. Set performance and professional development goals (APAS) for next evaluation year.
Employees	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).
Academic Programs			Plans for student-learning assessment **DUE SEPTEMBER 15TH.**

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning   Attachment 1

EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING CYCLE

ACTION REQUIRED BY:	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Steering Committee	Finalize new Strategic Plan	Finalize new Strategic Plan	Finalize new Strategic Plan
Presidential	Reports to the BOT on progress made toward strategic priority goal attainment for prior year.		Seeks BOT approval for Institutional Priorities, KPI's and Strategic Plan.
Cabinet	Strategic Priorities and KPI's for next FY are discussed.	Strategic Priorities and KPI's for next FY are finalized. Reviews and approves any proposed changes to SP.	
Effectiveness Committee	Reviews results of college-wide conversations and proposed changes (if any) to the SP, forward to the Cabinet. KPI's are updated and given to the Cabinet.		
Division Heads			Approve all budget and SPIF requests for your unit.
Managers	Continue working on unit objectives in accordance with "annual goals" (detailed in WEAVE).	Review second quarter WEAVE reportsfor progress made toward meeting institutional goals utilizing pre-determined measures.	
Employees	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning   Attachment 1

EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING CYCLE

ACTION REQUIRED BY:	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Budget	Budget development is on-going and the budget is preliminarily prepared to support college operations and attainment of 5-year strategic goals.	Budget development is on-going and the budget is preliminarily prepared to support college operations and attainment of 5-year strategic goals.	Budget development is on-going and the budget is preliminarily prepared to support college operations and attainment of 5-year strategic goals.
Employees	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).

EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING CYCLE

ACTION REQUIRED BY:	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Budget	Budget is presented to the community at the "Open Forum." Preliminary budget sent to the BOT for approval.		
Presidential			Seeks BOT budget approval.
Effectiveness Committee			IEC reviews unit budgets in relationship to strategic initiatives
Managers	Review third quarter WEAVE reports for progress made toward meeting institutional goals utilizing pre-determined measures.	Based on progress made on 3-year plans, discuss plans for next FY's goals with supervisor Review unit expenditures against unit budget.	
Employees	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).	Continue working on position objectives for "evaluation year" goals (detailed in Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS).
Academic Program			Student learning reports are due. Program reviews and evaluations are due.

Assessment Document List	Responsible Area/Person		Assessment User's	
Internal Assessment	Unit	Contact	Unit	Contact
Administrative Unit Plan's (annual)	All Administrative Units	Head of Unit	BOT/Senior Administration/Effectiveness	Chief Planning Officer
Academic Program Reviews	All Academic Programs	Deans	Provost & Schools	Provost & Deans
Administrative Program Reviews	Effectiveness & Planning	Assistant VP	Administration & Finance	Chief Planning Officer
Curriculum Review	Provost's Office	Associate Provost	Provost & Schools	Provost & Deans
Effectiveness Report (annual/5-yr)	Effectiveness & Planning	Assistant VP	BOT/Senior Administration	Chief Planning Officer
Faculty Evaluations	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools Institutional Advancement	Provost, Deans, VP Advancement
Financial Statements	Budget & Planning	Associate V P	BOT/Senior Administration	Chief Planning Officer
Ombudsperson Reports	Ombudsperson Office	Ombudsperson	President	President
Proficiency Profile	Testing & Placement	Associate VP	Schools	Provost
Survey Alumni	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost & Deans
Survey Graduating Senior	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost & Deans
Survey Staff Satisfaction	Human Resources	Director	College	Chief Planning Officer

External Assessment	Responsible Area/Person		Assessment User's	
	Unit	Contact	Unit	Contact
ACUHO Survey	Residence Life	Director	Provost/Student Affairs	Provost
Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman Survey (CIRP)	Advisement	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost
HERI Faculty Survey	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost
Institutional Profile (State)	Institutional Research	Director	State of New Jersey	Provost
IPED's	Institutional Research	Director	National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)	Provost
Middle States Report	Institutional Research	Director	Middle States	Provost
National Study of Instructional Cost & Productivity (Delaware Survey)	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Institutional Research	Director	Provost & Schools	Provost
NJ Student & Parent Consumer Act	Institutional Research	Director	Potential students	Provost

Key Performance Indicators	Responsible Area/Person		Assessment User's	
	Unit	Contact	Unit	Contact
4-Year Graduation Rates	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
6-Year Graduation Rates	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
SAT Combined Scores	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
1st to 2nd Year Retention	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
Instructional Expenditures	Budget & Planning	Associate V P	College/BOT	Chief Planning Officer
Operating Expenditures	Budget & Planning	Associate V P	College/BOT	Chief Planning Officer
Student/Faculty Ratio	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
Class Size	Institutional Research	Director	College/BOT	Provost
Financial Ratios	Budget & Planning	Associate V P	College/BOT	Chief Planning Officer
PLANNED	**Responsible Area/Person**		**Assessment User's**	
	Unit	Contact	Unit	Contact
Effectiveness Dashboard	Effectiveness & Planning	Assistant VP	College/BOT	Chief Planning Officer
Enrollment Management Dashboard	Admissions	Director	College/BOT	Provost
Fiscal Dashboard	Budget & Planning	Associate V P	College/BOT	Chief Planning Officer

Format for **Annual Unit Assessment Plan**

Unit_____ Year_____

Director_____

Mission Statement:

Expected Outcomes (Achievement, end results, 3-5 ideal)	Measures (What factors, variables, elements used to measure success in reaching outcome)	Achievement Targets (For each measure, minimum result, target, benchmark, or value that will represent outcome success)	When will Assessment Be Conducted and Reviewed (How and when will results be collected and analyzed)	Use of Results (how results are used for planning, improvements, and decision making)