Project Details

Title Internationalization of the Missouri Western Student Population
Status ACTIVE

Category 1-Helping Students Learn

Timeline

Planned Project Kickoff
09-01-2012

Target Completion
08-31-2015

Updated

 Reviewed

 Created 08-24-2012

 Last Modified 08-24-2012

1: Describe this Action Project’s goal in 100 words or fewer:

A: The purpose of the Internationalization of the Missouri Western Student Population AQIP Action Project is to create an international experience for Missouri Western State University students. Living in an increasingly global society, it is essential that Western’s students have the opportunity to develop strong cross-cultural competencies and familiarity with others quite different from themselves. Increasing both the numbers of international students and faculty that come to Missouri Western and increasing the numbers of students studying abroad is essential to accomplish this goal. International students enrich the lives of our students, staff, faculty and the community and they broaden the perspectives of the people with whom they are in contact. Students who return from study abroad also enrich the lives of those at Missouri Western as they share their experiences from their time in other countries.

2: Describe briefly your institution’s reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

A: The internationalization of the Missouri Western State University campus is still in its infancy. Missouri Western has traditionally seen itself as a regional university with its mission and resources focused on the needs of the northwest Missouri area.

Over the past few years a concerted effort has been made to begin the process of enlarging the vision of the Missouri Western and to begin the process of truly seeing the importance of students having an international experience. Courses such as the Craig School of Business GBA 370 - Global Viewpoint have taken students around the world; biology classes have traveled to Belize; nursing students have worked in Honduras and physical therapy students traveled to India.

At the same time, exchange programs brought students to Missouri Western from France, Germany and Mexico under J visas. During this time the number of international students coming to Missouri Western to study under a regular student visa (F-1) has increased.
It has now become an institutional priority to focus on the goal of enhancing the international experience of Missouri Western students. Graduates today will find themselves in a global marketplace. They may work for international firms, be asked to travel abroad for business, and work side-by-side with a very diverse workforce.

Missouri Western has the opportunity to prepare graduates for this world. An AQIP Action Project focused on bringing increased numbers of international students to Missouri Western and also sending increased numbers of Missouri Western students abroad, can advance the internationalization of Missouri Western. In addition, the AQIP Action Project will include a greater exchange of faculty with institutions of higher education around the world.

Currently, Missouri Western has developed a small number of agreements with international institutions. These include a variety of models at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Over the next few years, the numbers of students and faculty participating in these programs will increase.

3: List the organizational areas -- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

A: The Missouri Western State University Division of Student Affairs will take the lead in the AQIP Action Project in collaboration with the Division of Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Student Affairs will oversee this project and the International Student Services Director will coordinate the recruitment and retention process for international students. An International Advisory Council will provide important support for the program. The Division of Academic Affairs coordinates the Study Abroad programs and will take the lead in enhancing this area. Other critical units are: Admissions, Residence Life, Student Success, Student Life and Leadership and English language support programs. Also critical to the success of the project are both international faculty and community supporters.

4: Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

A: The Internationalization of the Missouri Western Student Population AQIP Action Project will provide the impetus for the International Student Services office to update its strategic plan and clearly outline its recruitment objectives, budgets, programming for new students, housing challenges, health issues and other areas. In addition, plans for enhancing the Study Away program will be updated and goals and targets set to increase the numbers of students participating. Key units include financial aid, academic advisement, and cross-cultural counseling (both pre-travel and post-travel abroad).
5: Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

A:

Internationalization of the Missouri Western Student Population is designed as a three-year AQIP Action Project. During the first year of the project it will be critical to ensure that there is a solid foundation including appropriate updating of policies and procedures, developing the infrastructure to support international students, developing a reasonable and attainable marketing and recruitment plan and a communications plan. Also critical during this first year will be the development of solid relationships with universities around the world who are good candidates for exchange agreements as well as for the successful recruitment of students to come to study at Missouri Western.

Once that solid foundation is laid, the second and third years will begin to build on that. Increasing numbers of agreements will be signed and increasing numbers of students will come to Missouri Western from around the world. During this time it will be essential that a solid retention program is formed that will carry through for the next years to ensure student success. This will necessitate increased programming for students, clear academic and career counseling, opportunities for students to experience applied learning opportunities and participate in undergraduate and graduate research with Missouri Western faculty.

The goal of this AQIP Action Project is to double the numbers of international students within this three-year time frame.

6: Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

A:

As part of the updated international strategic plan, action plans will be developed that will have measurable goals and timeframes that will provide important ongoing tracking of the success and progress of this AQIP Action Project. The International Advisory Council (IAC) will be a critical support for the program as well. The IAC, which is made up of faculty, staff, administrators, community members and students, provides Missouri Western with significant input. Programs will be developed, assessed and researched to demonstrate the success of the project. There will be reports provided twice a year to the IAC, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, the President’s Cabinet and Missouri Western State University Board of Governors.

7: Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

A:
The overall measure that will indicate success or failure of this AQIP Action Project include:

- Increased numbers of international students attending Missouri Western
- Increased numbers of formal partnerships developed with international institutions
- Increased visibility of international students in the St. Joseph community
- Increased opportunities for Missouri Western students to interact with international students both academically and socially
- Increased numbers of Missouri Western students participating in both long-term and short-term study abroad experiences
- Increased opportunities for students who return from Study Abroad to share their experiences with those at Missouri Western (faculty/staff/students) as well as in the regional community