EMU AQIP
Action Project Application Form

Instructions: Please complete each of the following sections and submit an electronic copy of your application by November 9, 2007. Use the back of the sheets if needed and attach any supplemental material you think the review team should consider. If you have questions or need help, please contact Ann Rentfrow at 487-8288 or at ann.rentfrow@emich.edu.

Application Submitted by: Karen V. Busch, Director, Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center (FDC)
Date: Nov. 9, 2007 Department/Unit: Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center, Academic Affairs
Project Title: Empowering Students to Become Active, Engaged and Responsible Learners

AQIP category: Helping Students Learn (primary), Valuing People (secondary). A problem has already been identified. This project focuses on the D,E and A components of the IDEA model.

1. Describe the proposed project. What do you propose to do? (100 words or less)
   (Identify) Student retention has been identified as a key goal at EMU. Research indicates that students who actively take responsibility for their learning are more likely to remain in school.
   (Develop & Implement) Develop a pilot program to train faculty/staff in strategies that empower students to become active, engaged, responsible learners. Then faculty/staff implement these strategies as they communicate with students. Initial strategies will utilize the well-researched “On Course” materials. However, as strategies are implemented, a rich “catalogue” of varied strategies will result.
   (Evaluation) Measures provide data on student retention, student learning, and faculty/staff implementation.
   (Action) Pending effectiveness of pilot, recommendations for additional programming will result.

2. Based on your own criteria, how would you describe the urgency of the project? Explain.
   _____ Low _____ Medium  X High

Retention is a key problem at EMU. A new General Education program is also requiring faculty and students to address new or revised specific learning outcomes. The strategies that would be created by and provided to faculty and
staff in this pilot program will be of direct use in achieving the goals of both the Retention Council and the learning outcomes in the General Education Program. The strategies will initially start with the provision of the well-researched “On Course” materials. As defined in the On Course materials, the purpose of On Course is to “provide educators with…
1) learner-centered structures for helping students learn more deeply, and
2) strategies that empower students to become active, responsible learners who can prosper in a learner-centered environment. The desired outcome of the On Course approach is improved student academic success and retention.”

The On Course Workshop I for faculty/advisors or others who are in daily contact with students includes multiple exercises, teaching strategies and active learning techniques for the following areas:
1. **Getting On Course**: inner qualities of successful students, outer behaviors of successful students, commitments for success, writing effective goals, etc.
2. **Personal Responsibility**: choices and language of victims vs. creators, inner voices, wise choice process
3. **Self motivation**: extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivators, affirmations and ways to use them
4. **Self management tools**: graduation game, calendar, next actions list, tracking forms, adaptation of self management tools
5. **Interdependence**: success team meetings, using meetings and others to build community
6. **Self-awareness**: puzzles, scripts, changing habits, 32 day commitment
7. **Life long learning**: silent Socratic dialogue, and guided pair conversation
8. **Emotional intelligence**: case study with role plays, five components of emotional intelligence, strategies for helping students manage stressful emotions
9. **Self-esteem**: explanatory styles and inner critics

During the three days of the On Course I workshop, the faculty actively participate in all of the exercises. While the exercises are designed specifically for students, they are useful strategies for everyone. At the end of each exercise, a short debriefing is held to discuss how to use this in various disciplinary courses. Many of the exercises may be modified to fit specific disciplines. For example, one of our business school faculty modified a “late paper” case study that examines who is responsible for a late paper. She changed it into a case on a late proposal for a corporation. She was able to convey the same concepts of taking self responsibility and planning ahead, but tied it into the subject matter she was teaching. In her class, this led to a further discussion of how students can practice these skills now, in order to be prepared when they enter the business world.

**Relationship of On Course to Learning**: As for learning, research on studies skills courses indicates that, for many students, they are insufficient in and of themselves to provide a transition to college life. This course focuses on
changing students’ outer behaviors and inner critics to begin to take responsibility for their own decisions and their own learning. Empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning is a powerful, life-long skill. I have attached a brief summary of some of the research on On Course. More information is available at the web site: [www.OnCourseWorkshop.com/Data.htm](http://www.OnCourseWorkshop.com/Data.htm)

As the program progresses, it will be important for all participants to create discipline-specific strategies, revise the On Course strategies, and expand their strategy repertoire into competencies that are important in their disciplines and/or other learning settings where they engage and communicate with students.

Program Methods: Most universities and community colleges have selected one of 3 methods for teaching On Course to students:
A) A separate 3 credit course in which the On Course principles and strategies are taught over one semester.
B) Incorporating the exercises into first and second year disciplinary courses, or
C) Having students take the 3 credit On Course class while at the same time, having the principles and strategies reinforced in their disciplinary courses.

At this time, we are currently planning to use methods B and C.

Method B: General Education Faculty will be invited to train, and asked to implement these strategies in their disciplinary courses, tracking which strategies they use and when.

Method C: With the cooperation of the UNIV and FIG instructors, we will incorporate On Course into at least two or more UNIV courses, working with the faculty who are linked via the FIGs and Gen Ed so that at least two (hopefully three or four) cohorts of students will receive the full three credit-course plus reinforcement of the strategies in at least one additional disciplinary course.

The faculty will receive weekly follow-along from the graduate student, who will collect and record data as to which strategies each teacher used, when, why, and with what results. The faculty trainer will conduct classroom observations throughout the term. Additionally, she will facilitate monthly learning community meetings in which those who are teaching discuss their teaching strategies and assessment techniques.

This project has the endorsement of both the Retention Council and the General Education Program.

3. What are the desired/expected outcomes of the project? (list several)
For the participants in the project and their students:
a. Increased student retention by 2% points between their sophomore and junior year.
b. More active, engaged responsible learners.
c. Effective implementation of strategies by 20 faculty and staff.
d. A 5% increase in effective learning outcomes in the General Education
courses taken by students whose instructors have been trained.
e. Increased “work/teaching/learning” satisfaction by faculty, staff and students.

1 “Participants and their students” will be defined as any participant who has been engaged in
communicating with a student over at least one semester—either in a course, an advising situation,
or some other semester-long activity, such as a community project, club, sports team, etc. These
strategies are designed to be life-long, therefore, it is expected that exposure to just one of these
strategies or exposure only once will most likely not lead to lifelong learning. Several exposures to
multiple strategies, and reinforcement by more than one teacher over at least one semester are, at
best, the minimum.

2 Retention: To date, research at other colleges on On Course outcomes has primarily followed
students by grades and/or retention rates for one semester. Because of the EMU policy to permit
students to stay in school on probation through the end of their second year, we propose an overall
2% points increase in the rate of retention for those students in Method C (combo course and
reinforcement in other classes). This rate would be measured between the end of their 2nd year and
the beginning of the third year. [The current EMU rate of retention decreases from 68% points at the
end of 2nd year to 59% points beginning of 3rd year, according to Retention Council data.] We
propose that students in Method C will be at 61% points retention.] There has been no research to
date on Method B. However, we posit that there will be an increase in average GPA of ½ a grade by
the end of the first year, and maintained at that level through the end of the 2nd year. This would be
viewed as a target goal for all students in Method B. There is also the possibility that faculty who
practice these techniques in their courses are more willing to remain as teachers to 1st and 2nd year
students. (We will NOT be setting goals around this however!)

3 More active, engaged and responsible learners: Each of these terms has multiple definitions. It is
one reason why we want to involve the faculty in defining these terms within their own disciplines
and at a level appropriate to the classes they are teaching. Perhaps Bowen’s definition assists us
best by using his four types of engagement:

- Engagement with the learning process is similar to active learning.
- Engagement with the object of study is similar to experiential learning.
- Engagement with contexts generally is similar to multidisciplinary learning.
- Engagement with social and civic contexts is similar to service learning.
(http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-wi05/pr-wi05feature1.cfm)

Eckert, Goldman and Wenger’s work defines active learning as a “shared enterprise, participation,
engagement, contribution, connection, experiment, inquiry, reflection, identity.” p. 4. They also
http://www.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/SasCEL.pdf.

Responsible learning has been defined as meeting deadlines, taking individual responsibility for
one’s own learning, coming to class on time, and participating in class. It can also mean that when
things happen outside the students’ control, that students take responsibility for assuring that work
is made up, the proper authorities are aware of what happened, etc.

Again, it will be important for the faculty and the advising teams to more carefully define what will be
meant by each of these terms in both in-class and out-of-class settings.

Outcomes for the larger EMU community:
a. A web-based “catalogue” of discipline-specific and general strategies that
faculty, department heads, advisors and other staff have utilized to engage
learners in becoming empowered, responsible learners.
b. The creation of a process to identify a problem in student learning, and relate it
to faculty/staff development, in order to engage all of the responsible
participants and develop linkages between the various components of the AQIP process.
c. If the pilot is effective, the entire university will benefit from further development of this program.

4. How can these outcomes be measured?

Plan for Assessment

A group of approximately 600 freshmen will be monitored over a two year period of time, as well the twenty faculty who participate in the training. Funds permitting, a second group of 600 freshmen will be monitored beginning winter term, 2009. Assessment will be conducted through a multi-tiered plan. At the macro level, students are given the NSSE, which tracks their overall engagement in school. The General Education program results will also be monitored, using the General Education assessment already developed through AQIP. At the class level, student course grades will be monitored. Where it is possible to obtain grades for specific assignments, data on those assignments will also be collected. The On Course materials have a pre-and post self assessment instrument that will be given to all students in any class where the teacher is using On Course materials. Retention, and the reasons for dropping out will also be monitored. A satisfaction index will also be developed to be used with faculty, staff and students taking the program.

We will also ask the faculty to keep a brief daily journal that highlights any instances where they viewed the behaviors and social skills that are taught in the program. Finally, the faculty themselves will define measures of active learning, responsibility and engagement, that are appropriate to their discipline. Measures will be designed and administered by the graduate student and the faculty trainer, with oversight review by the advisors and team selected by AQIP.

Outcomes assessment for the program itself:

a. Increased student retention by 2% points: Long term tracking of student progress through the university.
b. More active, engaged responsible learners: Pre- and post On Course self assessment surveys, NSSE data, faculty-designed measures within courses.
c. Effective implementation of strategies by 20 faculty and staff: Pre-and post surveys, observations, and journaling.
d. A 5% increase in effective learning outcomes in the General Education courses taken by students of trained participants: Use of the General Education assessment measures previously developed through an AQIP project, and the Gen Ed. program.
e. Increased “work/teaching/learning” satisfaction by faculty, staff and students. Pre-and post surveys.
For the university:

a. A web-based “catalogue” of discipline-specific and general strategies that faculty, department heads, advisors and other staff have utilized to engage learners in becoming empowered, responsible learners. Tracking of web site “hits” and the development of an online survey instrument in which users of the web site can provide feedback and comments.

b. The creation of a process to identify a problem in student learning, and relate it to faculty/staff development, in order to engage all of the responsible participants and develop linkages between the various components of the AQIP process. Careful tracking of the process throughout the period, and the creation of a written report at the end.

c. If the pilot is effective, the entire university will benefit from further development of this program. A recommendation that the program be incorporated into larger venues. See expansion plan.

Expansion Plan

We have already identified a tenured professor, Martha Baiyee, COE, who has taken On Course I. This term, she is serving as a Faculty Development Fellow. Through the FDC, she is being sent to On Course II in March. After that training, she will be able to conduct all of the follow-up training with faculty who have received the initial three-day workshop. Our plan would be to use some of the AQIP funding to send her to an online and weekend graduate course in the fall of 2008. The graduate course is designed specifically to certify her as an On Course trainer. She will become EMU’s identified “trainer” for On Course. This will permit us to conduct monthly meetings with the faculty who have been trained and to assure more consistent follow-up. Dr. Baiyee will also be responsible for reviewing and evaluating additional exercises and strategies that faculty create for their courses in order to create a web site of strategies that will be open to all.

In the spring of 2009, we plan to train one additional cohort of 25 faculty in a three day workshop. It will be necessary to bring in an On Course trainer to team-teach along with Dr. Baiyee for that workshop. After that period, provided Dr. Baiyee continues to receive a ¼ time release, it will be possible for her to sustain the training and follow-up activities. Our goal would eventually be to have everyone who is in teaching/advising contact with freshmen and sophomore students trained.

Additionally, due to the high cost of the training program, we have been partnering with Washtenaw Community College to split the number of faculty and the training costs in half. This has proved to be extremely beneficial in terms of faculty from both schools reaching out to each other, forming smaller learning communities in their disciplines, and in general, getting to know each other. The faculty surveys from the last training program mentioned this collaboration as one of the key benefits of the training. As we move forward, we plan to expand these invitations to other surrounding community colleges, and local universities.
5. How much money do you think it will cost to accomplish this project? (If possible, detail expenses.)
At a minimum: $120,000
- One Faculty Trainer: ¼ time release for two years, including summer. (app. $25,000). The Faculty trainer will be responsible for the overall supervision of the faculty attached to the project, and for the graduate student. She will observe faculty as they implement techniques, assist faculty in revising and redesigning On Course materials to fit their disciplines, create and monitor all evaluation/assessment measures and monitor their results. She will conduct monthly meetings with the faculty to provide support and feedback to them as they progress.

- One Graduate Assistant for two calendar years: app. $35,000. The GA will collect and record weekly, monthly and term data from the faculty, and analyze that data according to the plan developed. The GA will also be responsible for entering materials into the web site—once decisions have been made about the structure of the site. Furthermore, if individual faculty need research on a particular topic related to the revision or creation of new On Course strategies, the GA will be trained to assist faculty. (This project could serve as a very good masters or doctoral thesis.)

- Honoraria of $500 per semester for faculty and or staff that actively participate and provide all research data required. 20 participants for 4 semesters of $2,000 = $40,000.
- SS&M: app. $20,000

Details of the SS&M:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One additional On Course Workshop: for 25 faculty, spring 2009 (Cost of workshop is approx. $12,000 for 50 participants. We have been conducting this workshop in conjunction with WCC. Therefore, this cost will be split with other community colleges and/or universities who will be invited to participate.)</td>
<td>$6000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books for students for first and second semesters only: 20 instructors X 30 students per term X 2 terms= 1200 books @ $40 per book</td>
<td>$4800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laptop computers for faculty trainer and 1 graduate student, software and two video cameras: app. $2000 ea. X 2</td>
<td>$4000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate course for Dr. Baiyee (includes airfare, hotels and course fees):</td>
<td>$4200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>$1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL minimum cost for first year: (most SS&amp;M expenses will NOT be repeated 2nd year.)</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
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6. What human resources do you anticipate needing? What sort of time commitment will be expected of the participants?

See above. The Faculty Development Center will provide oversight and initial development of the project and the training materials. Survey instrument development will also be the responsibility of the FDC. However, evaluation measures will be developed in conjunction with various offices across campus, including institutional assessment, General Education Assessment and the
Retention Council. This will require time and support from many others across campus. Where possible, they will use existing survey instruments such as the NSSE.

The participants will be expected to attend a three day training program, participate in the collection of all research data, and attend regular monthly meetings throughout the process. They must also give permission to be observed, at least once per semester while they are implementing one of these strategies. (This could be in a classroom—but could just as easily include advising sessions, or other learning settings such as a laboratory, studio, club, community, etc.)

7. Explain how the project will support Eastern Michigan University’s mission (provided below).

Eastern Michigan University is committed to excellence in teaching, the extension of knowledge through basic and applied research, and creative and artistic expression. Building on a proud tradition of national leadership in the preparation of teachers, we maximize educational opportunities and personal and professional growth for students from diverse backgrounds through an array of baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral programs. We provide a student-focused learning environment that positively affects the lives of students and the community. We extend our commitment beyond the campus boundaries to the wider community through service initiatives and partnerships of mutual interest addressing local, regional, national and international opportunities and challenges.

“Empowering Students” speaks directly to all parts of EMU’s mission. The pilot program will provide faculty with new strategies, many of which have been already proven to promote excellence in teaching. The program is an applied research project that will provide faculty and staff with individual research projects as well as the results from the overall project. The program emphasizes personal and professional growth, and the empowerment of students over their own learning. It is all about a student focused learning environment, and assisting students to become responsible for their own learning. New partnerships across the wider EMU community will be formed as both faculty and staff engage in this process of focusing on student empowerment. This program is currently being implemented at Washtenaw Community College as well. Faculty from both institutions are already meeting together to collaborate on ways to teach the strategies.

8. Who will take primary responsibility for managing the project? (Name and title)

Karen V. Busch, Director, Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center

9. Who else will be involved in the project? Are those people aware of the project at this time? (Names and titles)

● Chris Foreman, Director, General Education Program (Yes)
● Lynette Findley, Asst. Vice Pres., Retention and Student Success, Office of Retention (Yes)
• Bette Warren, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Programming (Yes)
• Robert K. Neely, Associate Provost and Vice President for Research (Yes)
• Joseph Scazzero, Associate Director of Research, FDC (Yes)
• Potential participants will include: Faculty, lecturers, advisors, advising staff, department heads, and anyone else in a full time position who is directly engaged in student learning. (No)
• Martha Baiyee, A tenured professor in Teacher Education. She will become the faculty trainer who has been through all of the On Course training programs. (Yes)
• Various faculty/administrators who are engaged in measuring student satisfaction and student learning (e.g., NSSE) (No)

10. List the divisions, colleges or schools that will be affected by this project? How will each be impacted?
Participation in this project will be open to anyone who is engaged full-time in some form of student learning and/or advising. (This will be defined broadly.) Where there are more applicants than the program can handle from a specific area, a determination will be made to assure equal representation from all areas of campus. An abbreviated form of the project will be provided to others who are interested. Therefore, this project will be of value across the entire campus. See above for results of the project.

11. How long will it take to accomplish the project?
___ 6 months ___ 1 year ___ 1-2 years ___ 2-3 years

12. What criteria will the team use to determine when the project has concluded? (How will you know when it’s done?)
The project will be concluded when two year’s worth of data from participants and students have been analyzed and a final report submitted.

14. What criteria will be used to measure the success of the project?
We view this AQIP proposal as an opportunity to provide a systematic program for faculty that tracks the long term results of students in their classes. In other words, is it possible to 1) provide faculty with training, support, and feedback, and then 2) actively engage them in creating their own training materials and their own assessment measures to analyze their students’ results in order to 3) make a difference with student grades and retention?

Ultimately, the question is: does mentoring faculty in an intense support program make a difference in student grades and student retention? Evidence from the action research literature indicates that such results are possible, yet most studies have been done over short periods of time. We have provided below our current plan to measure outcomes and the success of the program; however, we
view this very much as an action research project. We welcome and encourage participation and revisions by all involved in order to continuously improve this project over time.

For the actual program itself.
At this time, it is too difficult to set highly specific numbers for a set of criteria. (A part of the pilot will be to develop the specific evaluation instruments.) Therefore, after the initial training has been provided to the participants, the participants will be asked to set initial “benchmark criteria” in each of the areas below—both for the overall program, and for themselves individually. Improvement in these goals, across the two year period, will be the major determiner of success. A creation of a set of benchmarks for the program will also be one determiner of success.

Outcomes measures for the participants in the project:
a. Increase by 2% points student retention between second and third year for those students with whom participants have worked with over at least one semester.
b. More active, engaged responsible learners. (To be operationally defined by faculty for each course.)
c. Effective use of strategies by 20 faculty and staff.
d. A 5% increase in effective learning outcomes in the General Education courses taken by students whose instructors have been trained.
e. Increased “work/teaching/learning” satisfaction by faculty, staff and students.

A second determiner of success will be the production of the two products noted below and a recommendation that the program be enlarged or continued as an effective way to engage students in becoming active, responsible learners.

Outcomes for the larger EMU community:
a. A web-based “catalogue” of discipline-specific and general strategies that faculty, department heads, advisors and other staff have utilized to engage learners in becoming empowered, responsible learners.
b. The creation of a process to identify a problem in student learning, and relate it to faculty/staff development, in order to engage all of the responsible participants.
c. If the pilot is effective, the entire university will benefit from further development of this program, as well as increased retention rate.