



March 21,2022

Mr. Clifton Smart
President
Missouri State University
901 S. National
Springfield, MO 65897

Dear President Smart,

This letter is accompanied by the Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) Review form completed by a peer review panel. Missouri State University's QIP is approved.

Within the QIP Review form, you will find comments from the panel for your consideration as you proceed with your Quality Initiative. The panel reviewed the QIP for four areas:

- Sufficiency of initiative's scope and significance
- Clarity of initiative's purpose
- Evidence of commitment to and capacity for accomplishing the initiative
- Appropriateness of the timeline for the initiative

If you have questions about the panel's review, please contact either Kathy Bijak (kbijak@hlcommission.org) or Pat Newton-Curran (pnewton@hlcommission.org). For any questions about your Quality Initiative, contact Dr. Karen Solomon at ksolomon@hlcommission.org.

The Higher Learning Commission

Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal Review Form

Date of Review: 3/4/22

Name of Institution: Missouri State University State: MO

Institutional ID: 1449

Reviewers (names, titles, institutions): Dr. Barbara Wharton, Denison College

Dr. Daniel Walther, Wartburg College

Review Categories and Findings

1. Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

- Potential for significant impact on the institution and its academic quality.
- Alignment with the institution's mission and vision.
- Connection with the institution's planning processes.
- Evidence of significance and relevance at this time.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates acceptable scope and significance.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate acceptable scope and significance.

Rationale and Comments: (Provide 2–3 statements justifying the finding and recommending minor modifications, if applicable. Provide any comments, such as highlighting strong points, raising minor concerns or cautions, or identifying questions.)

The QIP does demonstrate acceptable scope and significance. This project, the assessment of student learning at the graduate level, builds upon the success of the institution's May 2020 workshop. In 2018, the university has expanded its graduate enrollment, changed its Carnegie Classification to D/PU. Recently, State of Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved a change to the university's mission to include professional doctorates. This year, the university is submitting a change to HLC. Now it wants to ensure that meaningful assessment of student learning is occurring at the graduate level.

2. Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

- Clear purposes and goals reflective of the scope and significance of the initiative.
- Defined milestones and intended goals.

- Clear processes for evaluating progress.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates clarity of purpose.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate clarity of purpose.

Rationale and Comments:

The institution has clear purposes and goals for this project and has built clear processes into the project for evaluating its success. Specifically, it intends to develop (for new programs), refine (for existing programs), and improve (all programs) assessment at the graduate level. The goals are clearly articulated and attainable. The plan also includes clear measures to evaluate progress, to make adjustments, and to determine successes.

3. Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

- Commitment of senior leadership.
- Commitment and involvement of key people and groups.
- Sufficiency of the human, financial, technological, and other resources.
- Defined plan for integrating the initiative into the ongoing work of the institution and sustaining its results.
- Clear understanding of and capacity to address potential obstacles.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates evidence of commitment and capacity.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate evidence of commitment and capacity.

Rationale and Comments:

This QIP enjoys commitment at multiple levels and from various stakeholders. These include the Board of Governors, the Office of the Provost, the Academic Leadership Council (the deans), and the Assessment Council. Further, the initiative is led by individuals and offices in key positions (e.g., the provost, the assessment council, and the Graduate College). Primary work will be carried out by faculty and students from the different graduate programs – all of whom will receive a stipend (faculty) or a wage (students) in recognition of their commitment to the project. Their work will be supported by various administrators and support staff as well as through various technological resources (Zoom, SharePoint, institutional website, etc). Thus, it has sufficient resources to complete the project.

4. Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

- Consistency with intended purposes and goals.
- Alignment with the implementation of other institutional priorities.
- Reasonable implementation plan for the time period.

Finding:

- The Quality Initiative Proposal demonstrates an appropriate timeline.
- The Quality Initiative Proposal does not demonstrate an appropriate timeline.

Rationale and Comments:

The institution has developed a timeline that will meet the plan's objectives that will enable it to meet its stated end date. The timeline indicates three time periods that correspond to academic years, with each period having specific initiative details and requisite resources. Each new period builds upon the work of the previous time period.

General Observations and Recommended Modifications

Panel members may provide considerations and suggested modifications that the institution should note related to its proposed Quality Initiative.

Overall, this a well-articulated plan with clear and reasonable goals with sufficient support and resources that will enable it to be completed in the timeframe indicated.

Conclusion

- Approve the proposed Quality Initiative with or without recommended minor modifications. No further review required.
- Request resubmission of the proposed Quality Initiative.

Rationale and Expectations if Requesting Resubmission

Timeline and Process for Resubmission

(HLC staff will add this section if the recommendation is for resubmission.)