ONLINE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Background
The Online Strategy workgroup was chartered by the Leadership Council of Minnesota State and included appointees from each of our collective bargaining unions and student organizations. The workgroup convened from January 2017 through April 2018 and published a report titled Advancing Online Education in Minnesota State.

The report included a total of forty-two (42) action steps aligned with fifteen (15) distinct strategies that support four broad goals to (1) collaborate across institutions in ways that increase (2) access to and the (3) quality of online opportunities that remain (4) affordable for students compared to other higher education providers. The workgroup prioritized nine (9) action steps that Minnesota State should act on immediately and recommended four implementation teams form during the 2018-2019 academic year to identify the best way to implement each of the nine prioritized action steps.

The Online Strategy workgroup developed a quality improvement process (QIP) site as the way to implement the prioritized action steps that each team explored.

Transition Plan and Timeline
The remainder of the 2018-2019 academic year will be spent beta testing the Quality Improvement Process (QIP) site with up to five participating institutions. In 2019-2020, all institutions will be asked to complete the QIP; in addition, 2019-2020 will be a transitional year to allow institutions to prepare for changes to the faculty development opportunities and student support services coordinated through Minnesota State.

The workgroup affirmed that a few action items related to collaborative online academic programming and instructional design support required additional development and will not be ready for the 2019-2020 academic year.
2018-2019 Milestones

January 28  
**Leadership Council**
Review and affirm quality improvement process and transition plan

January/February  
**Meet-and-confer with MSCF, MSUAAF, and IFO**
Review and affirm quality improvement process and transition plan

February 22  
**Beta test Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) site with up to five institutions**

April 14  
**Webinar and Workshop RFP**
Solicit institutions to provide webinars and workshops for 2019-2020

May 14  
**Foundations of Teaching Online (FOTO) course content created**
Participating institutions will create course content for FOTO

May 21  
**MOQI/NED Coordinator and Minnesota Info Hub Contracts Amended**
Work responsibilities will be amended to reflect new opportunities

June 15  
**Foundations of Teaching Online course**
Supporting institution delivering the Foundations of Teaching Online is identified

Faculty and Instructional Development Opportunities Published
To support institutional planning, a calendar of faculty and instructional development opportunities provided through Minnesota State will be published

July 1  
**Quality Improvement Process Beta Test Complete**
Participating institutions meet to provide feedback on changes to the QIP site.
2019 – 2020 Academic Year

Remains the same | New Opportunities from Minnesota State | Expectations
--- | --- | ---
1. Institutions continue to pay their own affiliate subscription to Quality Matters (QM). | 1. Updated webinar options provided by institutions through MOQI/NED | 1. Beta institutions complete the Quality Improvement Process and receive financial incentives to provide feedback and refine the process
2. Minnesota State continues to subsidize institutional "affiliate" cost for QM course reviews/certifications. | 2. New workshop options provided by institutions through MOQI/NED | 2. Minnesota State will identify a replacement program for the QM Course Review/Certification option associated with faculty development Reflecting and Revising opportunities
3. STAR Symposium is hosted | 3. New Foundations of Online Teaching Course available | |

2019 – 2020 Academic Year

- Institutions should have completed their Quality Improvement Process and identified their supporting organization (Online Learning Consortium or Quality Matters). Minnesota State pays the subscription/membership to the supporting organization on behalf of each Minnesota State Institution.
- Minnesota State will identify a replacement program for the Quality Matters Course Review/Certification option to support Reflecting and Revising faculty development opportunities.
- The name Minnesota Online Quality Initiative (MOQI) will be renamed to Minnesota State Minnesota State Network for Educational Development (NED) to reflect the array of new faculty development opportunities coordinated across Minnesota State.
Quality Improvement Process (QIP)

The Quality Improvement Process (QIP) provides a common framework that can be used to advance the state of online education throughout Minnesota State. Attending to the items in the QIP will help retain enrolled students and improve student and faculty satisfaction. The complete QIP framework and action items can be found at https://mmscu.sharepoint.com/teams/ENTPR-QIP/ and includes the following sections:

Institutional Infrastructure
Administrative, financial, technical, and human resources are needed to support a quality online learning experience. Institutions can sustain this support and infrastructure by implementing policies that reflect a commitment to students, staffing, and technical assistance for those participating in online learning.
- Supporting national organization (funded for all institutions completing the QIP)
- Administrative and human resources
- Financial and technical services

Faculty Support
Faculty members are critical to ensuring high quality online learning. Institutions should encourage and support participation in professional development by integrating opportunities within their professional development plans (PDP) and professional development reviews (PDR). Faculty members are encouraged to utilize professional development opportunities offered by the Minnesota State Network for Educational Development (NED) program.

Student Support
Students learning at a distance expect to receive support services comparable to their on-campus peers. Colleges and universities should provide essential campus services regardless of student location. In addition to campus-provided services, prospective and current students have access to statewide student support services called Ask Us. Ask Us staff serve as personal navigators for those seeking information or assistance.

Course Design and Delivery
Achieving desired student learning outcomes requires a comprehensive approach that supports teaching and learning effectiveness. This comprehensive approach combines effective course design elements and effective course delivery practices. Faculty members should be encouraged to pursue a variety of course design and delivery methods including those provided by Minnesota State’s Network for Educational Development (NED) that are supported by evidenced-based research.

Continuous Improvement
A quality improvement process is effective when it is reviewed regularly and updated to ensure effectiveness of online learning efforts. This includes acting on student feedback, and providing evaluation opportunities for instructors through self-assessment, peer review, or mentoring. It
also means using assessment information, student performance, course evaluation, and feedback from peers and colleagues to improve courses and teaching.

Within the QIP site, each college or university will use this framework to articulate how it currently addresses each topic, identify where gaps exist, and draft a plan for improvement.

Campus Funding

One Time Funding

One-time funding from the financial assessment for online courses (media codes 03, 12, 13) is available to institutions that complete the Quality Improvement Process during FY 2020. A total of $645,000 is divided among institutions based on the percentage of the total average credits of online courses (media codes 03, 12, and 13) offered between FY16-FY18.

Annual Funding

Minnesota State utilizes funding from the financial assessment for online courses (media codes 03, 12, 13) to fund an operational budget that supports institutional quality improvement process efforts.

1. Supporting National Organization/QIP

Minnesota State will fund the institutional subscription to one of two national organizations (Online Learning Consortium or Quality Matters) provided that institutions update quality improvement process documentation annually and perform a full review every four years. This work will be completed in coordination with the identified responsible administrator(s) and quality improvement lead(s) from each institution.

2. Faculty Support / Minnesota State Network for Educational Development (NED) Programming

Minnesota State will fund faculty support opportunities through the Minnesota State Network for Educational Development (NED) program. Programming options will be reviewed with the responsible administrator(s) and quality improvement lead(s) on an annual basis. Minnesota State will contract with individual institutions to design and deliver selected webinars and workshops under the NED umbrella. In addition, NED will offer a facilitated Foundations of Online Teaching course open to all faculty.

3. Student Support / Ask Us Services

Minnesota State contracts with an institution and/or consortia of institutions to provide Ask Us services for students, faculty, and staff.
Online education is a delivery mode of instruction that provides access and scheduling flexibility. However, the requirements necessary to successfully implement a campus-wide effort are broader than simply acquiring technology tools and making them readily available. The institution must assess and modify policies, practices, and resource strategies for the successful effort to be fully realized.

A comprehensive approach mandates that campus leadership engage with faculty and students to articulate the vision and subsequent policies and practices required to bring a distance education plan to fruition. In addition, a leadership role is needed to define strategic objectives and the corresponding resourcing necessary for success, as well as to persuade others to contribute to this effort.¹

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**FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS**

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<tr>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Our online education strategy must ensure broad access to higher education across the state</th>
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<td>Our online courses, programs, and services must be of consistent high quality across colleges and universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Our online education strategy must draw on our collective strengths and resources</td>
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Quality Improvement Process (QIP)

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Institutional Infrastructure

1. Campus Infrastructure
   - Physical
   - Information Technology

2. Administrative and Financial Strategies

3. Research and Evaluative Methodologies

Faculty & Student Support

4. Faculty Support
   - Degree Completion
   - Faculty Development

5. Student Support
   - Mentoring
   - Support Services
   - Academic Advising
Transitions: 2018-2019

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Work in Progress: Collaboration

The workgroup affirmed that a few action items related to collaborative online academic programming and instructional design support required additional development and will not be ready for the 2019-2020 academic year.