

# **A New Role for Institutional Research: Institutional Quality Improvement**

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University of Missouri  
2013 AAUDE Annual Meeting  
Washington University  
St. Louis, MO





# Quality Improvement

- “A formal approach to the analysis of performance and systematic efforts to improve it.”<sup>1</sup>
- Quality improvement approaches in higher ed<sup>2</sup>
  - Process improvement
  - Continuous quality improvement
  - Student learning assessments
  - Preparation for accreditation
  - Baldrige

<sup>1</sup>[http://patientsafetyed.duhs.duke.edu/module\\_a/introduction/introduction.html](http://patientsafetyed.duhs.duke.edu/module_a/introduction/introduction.html)

<sup>2</sup>Rice GK and Taylor DC. Continuous-Improvement Strategies in Higher Education: A Progress Report, Center for Applied Research, Research Bulletin, Volume 2003, Issue 20.



# Core Concepts

- Most problems found in processes, not in people
- Improved process ~ improved quality
- Quality is relative
  - “All \_\_\_\_\_ forms will be processed within one week of receipt.”
  - “\_\_\_% of graduates will find employment within 6 months of graduation.”
  - “\_\_\_% of undergraduate students will find internships between their junior and senior years.”



# Core Concepts

- Must be able to assess
- Improvement efforts are most effective when they become a natural part of the way everyday work is done
- Teams and collaboration
  - Project sponsorship
  - Teamwork and collaboration
  - Frontline engagement



# University of Missouri

- Trends
  - Significant decreases in state funding
  - Increased scrutiny from the public, legislators
  - Growing enrollment
  - Several efforts to reduce expenditures, share services
  - A lot of band-aids



# University of Missouri

- QI: Provost Initiated
  - Could QI work at MU?
  - Hired QI associate director; began May 2012
  - Genuine benefits to IR and QI connection
  - MU IR&QI reports to Provost



# Quality Improvement @ Mizzou

- Higher Learning Commission: Accreditation
  - HLC piloting new accreditation model
  - Key component: A campus-wide QI initiative
    - Academic Program Review (APR)
  - QI presence in APR process
  - Access and opportunity in administrative *and* academic processes



# Approach at MU

- Improvement projects
  - Administrative – improving *processes* within administrative areas
  - Academic – improving *processes* that impact teaching, learning, research and service
    - Assist departments with achieving goals for improvement
    - Identify patterns frustrating many departments/units
    - Assessment of the Academic Program Reviews process – did it work as designed?





# QI Initiatives at MU

- Student Information System Request Management
- International Admissions Redesign
- Graduate School Admissions Optimization
- Department of Communication – Senior Exit Survey
- Department of Philosophy – Undergraduate Satisfaction Survey
- Parent-Student Communication Improvement Effort



# Quality Improvement @ Mizzou

- Challenges
  - Building capacity university-wide
  - Clarifying what QI is and is not
  - Quality improvement lexicon
  - Building credibility
    - Acceptance on academic side
  - Celebrating successes
  - Prioritizing



# Quality Improvement @ Mizzou

- Recommendations
  - Strong leadership support
  - Importance of early successes
    - Projects that touch key processes and multiple areas
  - Do not go uninvited
  - Report through academic organizational structure
  - Establish leadership advisory committee
  - Conduct self-assessment
  - Get involved nationally in QI - NCCI

# Questions?



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