

Goal: #4 – Improve Student Career Preparation

Date: 06/25/2013

Prepared By: Dawna Perez, Chuck Phair, Ashley Bragger

Strategic Goal Progress Summary- Year 2

Progress Report Key

	Completed
	Progressing as Expected
	Progressing with Challenges
	No Report Yet

Goal Initiative	Brief Description	Comments	Status
Review and analysis of current career preparation services in place at NECC	Collection of pertinent operational/strategic plan elements from all divisions of college, plus other ongoing career prep activities across the college	Merrimack College Fellow, Ashley Bragger, utilized the NECC website, phone contact and face-to-face conversations to determine our current implementation of career preparation activities across the college. It was determined that there was a disconnect on several occasions between what our website said we offer and what we actually offer. Departments should review and update services listed on our website.	
Develop NECC Career Prep “map”	Living document showing current/proposed career preparation activities, and back-up information as to what, where, who and how.	Document is posted on Strategic Planning webpage under Goal 4 documents. A visual map depicts where in the college career prep activities take place, and a substantial spreadsheet behind the map lists every unit and department, contact person, contact information and comments on each of the career prep activities. This information shows a need for coordination of career prep efforts and a more efficient and accessible way for students to know how to receive	

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<p>Interview key Advisory Board members to gain employer perspectives on what prospective employees need in terms of career readiness.</p>	<p>Ashley interviewed 9 Advisory Board members representing different industries with questions developed by Team.</p>	<p>Interviews are completed and Dawna and Ashley coded them on 11/21 and pulled important trends and information from the data. These trends and interview highlights are posted to the Strategic Plan website. The interviews documented some very important and relevant information from local employers that continue to be very valuable to our team as structure suggestions for how the college can better prepare its students for their careers. Additionally, these interviews were an excellent way to engage our advisory board members and to explore an appropriate level of commitment they are willing to provide to help us in this effort. Furthermore, it is crucial to involve employers in this conversation so that we can optimize how the college is preparing our students for their careers and what employers expect students to have as baseline skills.</p>	
<p>Best Practice research to help understand what other schools and institutions are doing to prepare their students for their careers</p>	<p>A subgroup of the team attended a luncheon discussion with the superintendent at Whittier Vocational; Deborah Regan and Ashley Bragger researched best practices in terms of MA colleges, particularly focusing on website design.</p>	<p>On December 6, 2012 the team coordinated a meeting with Whittier to ask pointed questions about how the school prepares its students for their careers. The group gathered additional information about best practices, strengthened the bond between NECC and local technical schools, and gained perspectives on creating mutually beneficial relationships with employers and community members who are helping with the career preparation of our students. In conjunction with developing a central website for career services at the college, Deborah and Ashley looked at the websites and practices of other MA community colleges, state schools, and private institutions in order to gain recommendations for our website development team. Our goal is to make the website as user friendly and as relevant as possible.</p>	
<p>Career Services Website</p>	<p>Our team has formed a subcommittee designed to</p>	<p>The team was originally looking into using Sandbox funds to implement ning, an interactive social media site. However, as an</p>	

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	<p>build off of and to enhance the NECC career services website based on best practices. The team has recommended that there be a central place on the NECC website for students to access career preparation information, quick links, job resources, career interests by major, and workshop information.</p>	<p>institution we have decided to view the Career Services website as a centralized hub of all career preparation activities. This hub will have a landing page designed to direct particular users, including students, faculty, alumni, employers, and parents, to specific career tools pertinent to them. One of the projects we are also looking to begin is an Alumni profile, which will demonstrate alumni who are making an impact in either their communities or in their careers. A proposal has been made to the team and a list of potential alumni is being compiled, however, the team is still looking for additional candidates. The team has also thoroughly explored comprehensive web-hosted recruiting systems that will allow employers to post jobs and internships, students to build resumes and portfolios, alumni to serve as mentors, and career counselors to more easily coordinate events. Our research on these systems has included demos, pricing proposals, discussions with other colleges about their user experience, and a survey and focus group to advisory board members for employers' perspectives. With the focus group, we gathered great information about the employer's potential use of NACElink, their desire to connect with the school in creating options for our students, and we also gathered their opinions on other Goal 4 initiatives such as portfolios and career assessment tools. Our goal was to have as much information as possible to make the most informed decision for the college. We have proposed funding for this initiative. Additionally, we are working collaboratively with many different areas of the college to gather and update resources for the new website which is set to roll out in March of 2014.</p>	
<p>National Career Readiness Certificate</p>	<p>A business plan was developed for review by the Steering Committee which addressed the logistics of how this credential would work at</p>	<p>In her research, Ashley found information regarding the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and its potential to help ensure that our students are career-ready certified. After careful review of the credential's offerings and a cost benefit analysis, the team has decided not to proceed with this option.</p>	

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	NECC.		
Met with directors of internship and co-op programs; reviewed literature; reviewed college and university websites	Sue met with directors at NU, Merrimack College, UMASS Lowell, and UNH to discuss how they handled internships and co-ops	Sue has provided the team with her research findings and the list of connections who are interested in helping with the school's internship and co-op efforts.	
Researched interactive social website providers to find one that we can use as the cornerstone for the proposed Center for Community-Based Learning which will encompass career prep activities such as internships, co-ops, mentoring, shadowing, etc.	Sue looked at a variety of site-development companies. She contacted CUNY where they use a company called ning for the terrific site that supports their Virtual Entrepreneurship program. Based on their recommendations, she began working with ning.	The college has decided not to proceed with ning. The team is instead looking for a more comprehensive web-hosted system that will allow for more functionality. Additionally, the funding we were expecting from the Sandbox is no longer available and thus we will have to request funding from the Steering Committee.	
Designed and proposed a Center for Community-Based Learning	Sue spoke with Center directors and others across the country to learn what factors make centers successful.	The team has decided that it is too premature to propose a center. Although this is the hoped for direction of the Strategic Plan, we must focus on developing a solid plan, while enhancing and redesigning the career preparation activities we have in place.	
Establish real, mutually beneficial partnerships with employers and community members. Met with the director of the Coca Cola Seacoast distributing company.	Sue met with the director of the Coca Cola Seacoast distributing company to discuss spring internships and how to best develop a partnership between the company and the college.	These initial contacts and programs are the first of many meeting with local employers and community members. The college needs to establish real partnerships that are mutually beneficial if we are to get the full benefit of their business of industry needs – and they are to get the full benefit of our capacity to help students learn the information and skills they need to be successfully employed. Ashley has been actively engaging the college's advisory board members all	

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	<p>Ashley implemented a pilot Career Bridge Outreach Program with New Balance to help prepare students for success in their future careers. The team is continuously working to strengthen bonds with the community, particularly with our advisory board members.</p>	<p>year. First with the interviews, then the survey and focus group, and also by presenting at the Occupational Advisory Board meeting. The advisory board members, particularly the OAB are receptive to becoming involved with career preparation activities and would like the college to more heavily utilize them. Ashley has also supplied the college with the Career Bridge Outreach Program’s proposal with recommendations for future improvements. Bill Heineman is connecting with Coca Cola Seacoast, and Dawna is maintaining contact with another very interested partner, Eastern Bank.</p>	
<p>Career Services workshop offerings</p>	<p>Our team has formed a subcommittee designed to consolidate, revise, and enhance career services workshop offerings and curriculum.</p>	<p>The subcommittee is working collaboratively with Career Planning and Advising, Student Leadership Development, the Student Success Center, and Learning Accommodations in an effort to look at all workshop offerings, to consolidate repeated offerings, and to make the curriculum consistent. As a collaborative team, all parties have agreed to make sure that all career workshops with the exception of a few to specifically-targeted audiences will be available to all students. All parties have met to discuss how to share workshops, how to utilize employers and community members as guest lecturers, and how to gain a wider audience. Additionally, our subcommittee has been working with Nora and Mike to design a workshop series for CPAC. This series will progress from one semester to the next in a logical order, beginning with career exploration and culminating in a Job Day where students can interact with employers and experience mock interviews. As a result of our meeting, all fall career workshops have been planned and collaboratively schedule, with rooms booked. Now, we are working with Andrea from Marketing on how the workshops will be housed on the website, including how to handle online registration and data collection of workshop attendance. Andrea has a few options for the team and will meet with all stakeholders on July 22nd to present them. Once decisions have been</p>	

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		made, depending on the option chosen, Marketing will roll out the workshops on the website in either August or September.	
Portfolio Development to enhance the career preparation of our students	The Goal Team will begin to explore how portfolio development can be used to enhance the career preparation of our students and how it would fit into program curriculum.	We are at the very beginning phases of looking at this recommendation for the college. Much work will need to be done in how it would be designed and implemented into the college's academic programs.	
Full Time Staff Associate – Career Connections	A position has been proposed to the budget and planning committees for a new pilot one-year, full time position designed to continue the work and momentum of the goal.	The team has recommended that the college hire someone full time to continue the work momentum that has happened this past year. This position will facilitate the new Career Services website design and implementation, continue to streamline and assess workshop offerings and effectiveness, and will serve as a liaison between different areas of the college as well as between the college and local employers and community members. This one-year, temporary position has been proposed and is awaiting budget approval.	
Community Engagement subcommittee	The Goal Team has welcomed many new members this year, some of whom are interested in solidifying the experiential learning, service learning, and community service opportunities for our students.	Goal Team 4 recognizes that all students, including those going out into our communities to do service learning, community service and volunteering, also require the same preparation and soft skills as those seeking jobs and internships. Much like career prep activities, community service, volunteerism and service learning happen in different pockets across the college with little to no intercommunication or coordination. It has become clear that this is confusing to our community partners, and counterproductive to NECC being able to track participation, impact on students and our impact in the community. This subcommittee will bring all areas of the college involved with these efforts into the same room. Paula Richards, Service Learning Coordinator and Silvia Serrano, Director of Community Relations in Lawrence will co-lead this group and report progress to Goal 4, while ensuring any systems configured are aligned with Goal 4's work.	

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