Project Management to Support Academic and Student Success Innovation

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Webinar Speakers

**Sukhwant Jhaj**, Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success, Portland State University

**Negar Mansourian-Hadavi**, Director, Student Success Initiative Project Management, Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Tom Moss**, Associate Vice Provost, Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Hans VanDerSchaaf**, Senior Project Manager, Office of Academic Affairs, Portland State University

**Rebecca Villarreal**, Project Manager, Office of Urban Initiatives, APLU/USU
Presentation Context and Objectives

- **Context** - Transformational Planning Grant

- Share how project management can support innovation in higher education

- Provide ideas on how project management can easily be applied
Introduction to University of Illinois at Chicago

- Urban research institution located minutes from Downtown Chicago

- Among top most diverse campuses in the country, with no racial/ethnic majority

- Student Success Initiative
Introduction to Portland State University

- reTHINK PSU

- Provost’s Challenge

**Goal of reTHINK:** To deliver an education that serves more students with better outcomes, while containing costs through curricular innovation, community engagement and effective use of technology.
Why Execution Matters

- Innovation platforms
- Approach to problem-solving
- Value of project management
Conceptualizing Project Management

- **Project**
  - “A collection of tasks, involving multiple individuals, organized to deliver well-defined products (called “deliverables” in project parlance) within a defined period of time.”
    
    *Bare Bones Project Management, Bob Lewis, p. 3*

- **Project Management**
  - “The application of knowledge, skills and techniques to execute projects effectively and efficiently. It’s a strategic competency for organizations, enabling them to tie project results to business goals — and thus, better compete in their markets.”
    
    *Project Management Institute - pmi.org*
Mindsets and Values

Show Don't Tell

Human Centered

Culture of Prototyping

Bias Toward Action

Radical Collaboration
Visual Thinking and Synthesis
Co-Creation
How a Project Unfolds - Roles & Responsibilities

- Role of executive leaders in a project
- Project Manager role
How a Project Unfolds - Decision-Making

- Decisions, power and authority
  - RAPID Decision-Making Framework (example below)

- Communication and transparency

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<th>Project Lead</th>
<th>Project Manager</th>
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Scope and Deliverables

- Articulating a clear “Scope” and “Deliverables” statement

Examples for “Credit Accumulation Campaign” project:

**Not so clear**

**Clear**

**Scope & Project Deliverables**
Develop strategies to improve student success rate by encouraging to attend 15-credit hours per semester. Engage the stakeholders across campus to promote this campaign through marketing.

**Scope & Deliverables**
- Develop strategies to improve student success rate by encouraging to attend 15-credit hours per semester to finish in 4 years.

- Gather evidence to support credit accumulation campaign:
  - Current rate of credit accumulation
  - Differences by college, demography, transfer student or not.

- Develop and implement a strong marketing campaign to encourage “Finish in Four/Stay on Track.” Target audience:
  - Students
  - Faculty

- Plan advisor workshops to educate about benefits of credit accumulation campaign.
  - Connect with Undergraduate Advising Resource Center
  - Connect with “Collaborating in Advising” project
Project Phases (more traditional)

PMBOK® Project Management Process Groups

- Initiating
- Planning
- Executing
- Monitoring & Controlling
- Closing
Project Phases (more supportive of innovation)

1. **Empathy**
   - Learning about the audience for whom you are designing

2. **Define**
   - Redefining and focusing your question based on your insights from the empathy stage.

3. **Ideate**
   - Brainstorming and coming up with creative solutions.

4. **Prototype**
   - Building a representation of one or more of your ideas to show to others

5. **Test**
   - Returning to your original user group and testing your ideas for feedback.

CREATEEDU - http://createdu.org/
Examples: Application of Framework

● **Provost’s Challenge**
  o Faculty and staff reactions to project management
  o **Undergraduate Business Online Degree Completion programs**
    ▪ Project Management Plan example
    ▪ Project Plan example
  o **Last Five Miles: Coaching Students to Degree Completion**
  o **Cross-projects Status Reports**
  o **Project log**

● **reTHINK PSU**
  o Flexible Degrees Initiative
  o Business Model Analysis Project
  o Improving the Student Experience
  o Scale by building PM capacity
Checklist for Starting Off Project Management

- Engage an executive-level sponsor who is wholeheartedly committed to a project approach to innovation and change
- Where the need is for project management support?
- Identify resources - hire a project manager and support for this person
- Shape initiatives into projects
- Build or tailor a PM framework to unique institutional needs and culture (templates, tools, practices, etc.)
- Build a Gantt!
What We’re Learning

● Focused attention and energy yields positive results, and at scale

● Living the values underpinning project management work is crucial for project success

● An ethic and practice of service goes a long way

● What’s the right balance between structure and agility/flexibility?

● Transparent documentation and communication is important, but takes significant effort

● Building PM capacity across an organization leads to efficiency and effectiveness
Resources

- PSU Project Management Resources (http://www.pdx.edu/oai/project-management)
  - Project Management Practices Guide
  - ~12 templates
- Project Management Institute
- Books
  - Change by Design, by Tim Brown
  - Bare Bones Project Management, by Bob Lewis
  - Project Management Body of Knowledge
- dschool: Institute of Design at Stanford
  - Crash Course in Design Thinking
  - Bootcamp resources
- Lynda.com
Tools

- Project planning and scheduling - Smartsheet
- Task management and collaboration - Asana
- Collaboration and file-sharing - e.g. Google Docs, Dropbox
- Visualization - Whiteboards, post-its and sharpies
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Sukhwant Jhaj, Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success, Portland State University - (jhaj@pdx.edu)
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Tom Moss, Associate Vice Provost, University of Illinois at Chicago - (tommoss@uic.edu)
Hans VanDerSchaaf, Senior Project Manager, Portland State University - (hansv@pdx.edu)
Rebecca Villarreal, Project Manager, Office of Urban Initiatives, APLU/USU - (rvillarreal@aplu.org)

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