A GUIDE TO ENROLLING AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADLEPHIA

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2003-2004 Leadership Institute
April 16, 2004

An overview of the project/proposal/goals
The enrollment process in a large institution like the Community College of Philadelphia can be a complex and frustrating experience for many students. Enrolling in College entails filling out a lot paper work, visiting many different departments and making a lot of decisions.

The goal of this project is to create a flow chart that depicts the step-by-step enrollment process for new students. The Enrollment Guide will be comprehensive and easy to follow, and it will give students information about where to receive additional information and help.

Many people are visual learners, and this guide will help map out the enrollment process into 4 steps: **(1) Apply for Admission, (2) Take Placement Test, (3) Register for Classes and (4) Pay Your Tuition Bill**. The Guide will help students navigate the college system, and also function as in an interoffice agreement among college employees about how to successfully direct students. This may help improve customer service.

An outline of steps taken to complete project
- 1/4/04 Team met to conceptualize the project and created a project timeline.
- 1/04 Team researched possible graphic styles, colors and system analysis. Researched information (i.e., catalog) for text
- 1/04 Team conducted interviews with CCP staff members to increase understanding of college enrollment system (Christopher Lewis, Student Assistance, Mike McGeady Coordinator of Assessment Center; Patti Savoni, Recruiter; Darryl Holmes, Technical Specialist in Assessment Center, CCP student). Team member met with Peter Barrata to discuss using information from *"Welcome to CCP 101",* 2002-2003 Leadership Institute Project.*"* Also, a team member conducted a phone interview with David Solove, Director of Enrollment Services, Lehigh Carbon Community College.
- 1/30/04 Team met with Eve Markman, Director of Communications to discuss the lay out and cost of producing the Guide. Markman was given draft of Guide for review for possibility of Guide being on website
- 2/04, the Team met with assigned mentor, Dr. Kathleen Anderson, Acting Vice President of Student Affairs. Dr. Anderson was supportive about the project and agreed students needed a simplified process when enrolling.
- On 3/19/04, the team conducted the first focus group with Leadership Institute members
- On 3/30/04 and 4/2/04 focus groups conducted with CCP students. Information collected was extremely valuable in shaping and polishing the Guide.
- 4/12/04 Team proofed and finalized text for Guide

For long-term projects, an outline of next steps and long-term goals
- Distribute Enrollment Guide to various Vice Presidents and Deans for consideration and buy in
- Make presentation to Task Force on Enrollment Management for more feedback
- Final copyediting (Eve Markman, Assistant Director of Communications)
- Secure commitment for financial support
- Distribute Enrollment Guide
- Create a version of Enrollment Guide for website
- Design signage of each step **(1) Apply for Admission, (2) Take Placement Test, (3) Register for Classes and (4) Pay Your Tuition Bill**. to be displayed in appropriate departments
- After successful implementation of this Guide, begin the process of updating Enrollment Guide to include Regional Centers

An overview of how the project has been or may be "institutionalized" or housed within the College, for continuity.
In addition to signage of each step in the process **(1) Apply for Admission, (2) Take Placement Test, (3) Register for Classes and (4) Pay Your Tuition Bill**, it is our hope that copies of the Guide to Enrollment will be available at key locations in the College, such as the Welcome Center, Enrollment Center, Assessment Center and Financial Aid. The Enrollment Guide would be a valuable tool for the recruitment staff which they could distribute to prospective students and high school staff. The Enrollment Guide could also be designed as a PowerPoint presentation that recruiters could use to inform prospective students, their parents and high school staff. It can also be used in the student orientation process. Finally, not just a stand alone document, the Guide's simplicity of the enrollment process can easily complement the Fish Philosophy Customer Service Training Project.

Assessment results or plans for assessment
The responses from the three focus groups conducted were extremely positive. 32 people participated in the focus group; 12 staff members, 20 students. This is a small sample of quotes from the three focus groups:
"It's great; it is simple."
"It looks easy, reminds me of a childhood game, 1,2,3,4.
"Color is eye catching."
"Four key questions are addressed. It is concise enough to get information. Who, What, How, and Why"
"Thought about a NY subway"

After we meet with Task Force on Enrollment Management at a later date, we will collect and assess their feedback about the Guide.

Explanation of how the project relates to this year's theme of "Fostering Student Engagement and Persistence"

The Guide to Enrolling at CCP is a tool that "fosters student engagement and persistence."   The Guide is a resource designed to support learner success. Enrolling in college is an overwhelming process for most students. Many students are the first members to enter college, so they may lack knowledge of what questions to ask and how to navigate the enrollment process. If the process is too confusing and intimidating, students may not make wise choices and miss important deadlines. As a result, they may register for inappropriate classes or register late, miss counseling appointments, and experience a delay of financial aid packets. A delay in funding may prevent them from purchasing needed textbooks and supplies, making them ill equipped to complete course assignments. These unfortunate events can be very unsettling and frustrating, and may influence students to drop courses or even worse not enroll at CCP. A poor enrollment experience may affect degree completion in a timely manner.

In addition, the process simplification of the Enrollment Guide supports the efforts of enrollment management which has been reconfirmed through our Middle states process.

Summary from each individual of what you learned by doing the project.
Suzanne Felix

"This experience has allowed me to get a better understanding of CCP's enrollment process. As someone who works with ABE non-credit students, I felt like an outsider of the system and was not quite sure of how the process worked after the application process. Gathering data about the enrollment process and then simplifying it into 4 simple steps, gave me great insight about the process. I am now more confident and willing to answer prospective students' questions about enrolling. Yet, there is still more to learn. I also gained valuable insight about the College from my team members **and** fellow Leadership Institute participants. The participants worked in different departments in the College so their feedback and experience increased my knowledge about the college. I no longer feel like an outsider of the system. In addition, working with my teammates was one of the best team experiences I have had in my career. Their individual talents and knowledge was the foundation of this project."

Eve Highstreet

"It is always valuable to know how to navigate this complex system so I can also help students navigate their way through the process. I learned how to look at the enrollment process in an intricate way. I had to break the process down in steps and it gave me clarity. By completing this project, I felt part of something greater than just the day to day. More importantly, I am doing something valuable for the CCP community."

Michael Stern
"I learned all great things! I really enjoyed doing the project tremendously. It gave me a strong sense of the college community. Collaborating and working with people outside my immediate discipline was very valuable. Frankly, I pushed some skills I didn't think I had, such as graphic design. Also, this was a good crash course of how the college operates and how decisions are made. I learned a lot of new information about the College, information I felt I should have known."