

ASF Special Initiative Award Report  
UCR Lean Process Improvement on Communication/Information Flow

Maggie McDermott  
Theresa Waterbury

**RATIONALE:**

In AY 2006, a new collaborative initiative between the Winona State University Rochester campus, Rochester Community and Technical College and the University of Minnesota-Rochester campus was formed to identify and remove barriers for student success and to reduce non-value activities. Members of the steering committee include: Dick Westerlund (UMR Program Director), Kendra Webber (WMR Director of Student Services), Mike Begett (RCTC VP Teaching and Learning), Troy Tynsky (RCTC Director of Admissions), Christine Quinn (WSU AVPAA) and Jan Stephenson (WSU Assistant Director). The steering committee has been meeting on a regular basis and is crafting a vision and mission for the initiative.

After the steering committee formulated the vision and mission, a number of cross- functional, multi-school workgroups were created. In the past 12 months the UCR Student Life Cycle team, facilitated by Ann MacDonald and Theresa Waterbury, began to study a seamless, student lifecycle which includes excellent communication channels to help the students stay connected throughout their chosen path and to receive accurate, consistent advising between the three schools. Specifically, the team reviewed the pre-inquiry, inquiry, applicant, enrolled, and the currently enrolled processes.

The UCR Student Life Cycle group (phase 1) identified short-term and long-term recommendations. The next step in this process involved more detailed workgroups on particular areas. We have been asked to lead the communication/information flow workgroups which consisted of the academic and business process flows (phase 2). This project focused on both the paper and electronic communications between and within each of the institutions.

**BACKGROUND WORK:**

As we began to identify participants for phase 2, it became apparent that an overall organizational structure was necessary to further clarify and outline the purpose and tasks of the UCR Student Life Cycle group. In the past months several workgroups had been formed at UCR often with overlapping missions. After several meetings with administration and staff from UCR, we (Theresa and Maggie) developed and proposed an overall committee structure for the many cross-institutional committees that have formed in the past six months. This structure is presented in Appendix A.

The steering committee (as referred to in our proposal) has now been re-named the Learning Alliance. There are three divisions under the Learning Alliance: student services, academic and marketing. Our original task was to work on the student business flow, which falls under the student services division. After we consulted with administration, it was determined that all workgroups under the student services division would be matrix groups. Matrix group are comprised of different people based on the nature of the issue. These groups gather to brainstorm and solve the issue and then disband. We then developed and presented administration with this structure and worked to identify guidelines for the matrix groups.

The student services matrix group will work on a student services issue each month. Each group will include a member from the Learning Alliance as well as members from RCTC and WSU-R. These members will work on a student services issue either previously identified or brought to the attention of the Learning Alliance. The matrix workgroups will strive to develop and implement solutions within a 30 day time frame.

In addition to the chart which outlines the organizational structure of the groups, we also needed to develop implementation plans for each of the student matrix workgroups. We developed a template that the student services matrix group can use to identify, track and document their projects, as presented in Appendix B. We also developed a SharePoint worksite to aid in project management, see Appendix C.

### **BI-DIRECTIONAL FLOW PROJECT:**

After we completed the overall organizational structure, we began to work on the proposed issue of student communication flow. In the identification stage, DARS and transcript information surfaced as major communication issues that impact staff and students.

### **DARS PROJECT**

In the examination phase it was determined that the current practice of hand entering DARS information for RCTC students who transfer to WSU-R was a non-value added activity for staff. Given that RCTC transcript information is stored in ISRS tables, it was determined that the most efficient way to input this information in would be to utilize technology. This would require MnSCU to assist in creating a way for the RCTC ISRS tables to interact with the WSU ISRS tables.

In the development phase it was determined that a joint letter from Don Supalla, President of RCTC, and Dr. Ramaley, President of WSU, addressed to MnSCU would bring this technology need to the attention of those at MnSCU. A draft of this letter is attached in Appendix D.

### **TRANSCRIPT PROJECT**

In the examination phase it was determined that currently students who transfer from RCTC to WSU-R need to request an official transcript from RCTC when they apply to WSU and then again when enroll. Given the cost and inconvenience for students it was determined that alternatives to this practice existed.

In the development phase, it was determined that WSU would accept an unofficial transcript from RCTC along with any other transcripts that had been submitted to RCTC from other institutions. A memorandum of agreement was written and reviewed by the WSU legal affairs department and is attached in Appendix E.

These projects will benefit WSU students who attend the Rochester campus by providing a seamless transition as the students move between two or more of the schools. It will reduce the number of problems students frequently encounter when transferring from RCTC to WSU and provide better communication throughout the students' time at University Center Rochester. The project will benefit WSU and the MnSCU system by the schools working collaboratively to remove barriers that students face each day when transferring between the institutions.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ◆ 90% of the participants will report that they feel the model has focused the workgroup on the issues.
- ◆ 85% of the participants will report that the model can be used to help them solve problems within their own department.
- ◆ 90% of the participants will report satisfaction with the outcomes from the model.
- ◆ 100 % of each of the phases will be complete.

**ASSESSMENT PLAN:**

Given the additional time that was spent on the background work, a formal assessment plan is in progress. The timeframe for this project was altered drastically based on the many complex factors that needed to be sorted out before our work could begin.

Based on the feedback we have from Christine Quinn (WSU Vice President) and Stan Cram (RCTC Vice President) the objectives outlined above have been met.

**AWARD:**

Maggie McDermott: \$3,000

Theresa Waterbury: \$3,000

### Learning Alliance

Mission: The learning alliance promotes diverse and integrated learning experiences that drive individual and region vitality

Vision: The learning alliance will be the leading enterprise for engaged and innovative learning

### Student Matrix Group

Mission:

Vision:

### Academic Programming

Mission:

Vision:

### Marketing/Branding

Mission:

Vision:

### Bi-Directional Flow Project

8/2007

Purpose: Draft letter for presidents regarding dars information sharing

### Common Application Project

9/2007

Purpose: Develop a common application for on-line application for RCTC and WSU-R

Course Substitutions Project  
10/2007

Purpose: Develop standardized communication for course substitutions

Course Information Project  
11/2007

Purpose: Develop a standardized process for informing RCTC and WSU about changes in course information

2 + 2 Project  
12/2007

Purpose: evaluate use of 2 + 2 language and placement in literature

Project  
1/2008

Purpose:

Project  
2/2008

Purpose:

Project  
3/2008

Purpose:

Project  
4/2008

Purpose:

## Student Matrix Group Bi-Directional Flow

<b>Purpose</b>	To create bi-directional flow of student information between RCTC and WSU
<b>Student Impact</b>	We want to remove the barriers and delays both for students and for staff that would allow a seamless transfer of information between schools.
<b>Members</b>	Craig Johnson, Jan Stephenson, Julie Beckel, Nancy, Carl Stange, Glen Peterson
<b>Learning Alliance Representative</b>	Craig Johnson
<b>Core Issue</b>	<p>Currently both campuses have to receive a paper transcript and manually repopulate the same information in ISRS data screens to assist the student in transferring their courses.</p> <p>As a result there is a time delay for the student due to the extra time it takes to re-key the same information.</p>
<b>Solution 1</b>	Bring forward a proposal to direct MnSCU IT to develop the technology so that RCTC's course data can be electronically transmitted to WSU for the primary use of better use the DARS system to assist the student to understand the transferability of courses advising for degree completion programs.
<b>Solution 2</b>	Create agreement between RCTC and WSU for transcript process

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Needed Information</b>	<b>Party Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Deadline Met</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Draft of Letter for RCTC and WSU Presidents to submit to MnSCU		Maggie McDermott & Theresa Waterbury	8/10/2007 to Judith and Don	8/17/07	
	Number of students per semester that transfer from RCTC to WSU	Carl/Jan	8/3/2007	8/8/07	
	Cost of current process Time required Salary	Carl	8/3/2007	8/15/07	
	Current progress of data sharing at MNSCU	Glen	8/3/2007	8/7/07	
Draft of transcript agreement		Carl & Nancy	8/5/2007	8/8/07	
	Send to legal affairs	Maggie		8/15/07	

# Appendix C

Home - Student Services Matrix Group - Windows Internet Explorer

http://mywsu.winona.edu/committees/leadershipalliance/matrixgroup/default.aspx

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Home - Student Services Matrix Group

Home Documents and Lists Create Site Settings Help

Up to Leadership Alliance

Student Services Matrix Group

Home

Modify Shared Page

**Documents**

- Shared Documents

**Pictures**

**Lists**

- Contacts
- Tasks
- Bi-Directional Project

**Discussions**

- General Discussion

**Surveys**

**Announcements**

**Welcome** 8/16/2007 10:48 AM  
by McDermott, Maggie L  
Welcome to the Student Services Matrix Project Worksite.  
We will use this site to store documents and create a database of process improvements.

[Add new announcement](#)

**Events**

8/1/2007 12:00 AM [Bi-Directional Flow Workgroup](#)  
The bi-directions workgroup will meet in August. This group will look specifically at how DARS information could be shared between RCTC and WSU.

9/1/2007 12:00 AM [Common Application Project](#)  
The common application workgroup will meet in September. The group will examine if and how a common application could be developed for RCTC and WSU-R.

[Add new event](#)

**Error**

**Web Part Error:** One of the properties of the Web Part has an incorrect format. Windows SharePoint Services cannot deserialize the Web Part. Check the format of the properties and try again.

**Links**

There are currently no favorite links to display. To add a new link, click "Add new link" below.

[Add new link](#)

Local intranet 100%

start | Inbox - Microsoft Out... | Special Initiative repo... | Home - Student Servi... | Search Desktop | 8:56 PM



### Student Services Matrix Group

## Bi-Directional Project

- Select a View
- All Tasks
  - My Tasks
  - Due Today
  - Active Tasks
  - By Assigned To

[New Item](#) | [Filter](#) | [Edit in Datasheet](#)

Title	Assigned To	Status	Priority	Due Date	% Complete
Draft of Letter for Dr. Ramaley and Supalla	McDermott, Maggie L	In Progress	(1) High	8/17/2007 12:00 AM	90%
Draft of Transcript Letter	Stange, Carl T	Completed	(1) High	8/10/2007 12:00 AM	

- Actions
- Add to My Links
  - Alert me
  - Export to spreadsheet
  - Modify settings and columns

**TO:** MNSCU  
**FROM:** DR. JUDITH RAMALEY, DON SUPALLA  
**SUBJECT:** DATA SHARING  
**DATE:** AUGUST 15, 2007

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As Winona State University & Rochester Technical and Community College prepares themselves for life and work in the 21st Century, we have realized that we must learn to work together differently, both within our own organization and in our partnerships with other institutions with which we share similar goals. We must learn how to share our own resources. We must learn to address, analyze, and solve problems in a collaborative manner that engages the passion and energy of the entire university and that taps the knowledge and experience of our partners. We must also implement the needed solutions in a timely and cost-effective manner that fosters accountability and results.

Both Winona State and RCTC are in a unique position as they are co-located at the University Rochester Center Campus. Given this, there is fertile ground for process improvement in seamless transfer. In a recent workgroup involving student services representatives from both Rochester Community and Technical College and Winona State; several opportunities for improvement were identified to improve student satisfaction, increase efficiency. One solution centered around the hand entry of course information into DARS.

Currently, students who wish to transfer from RCTC to WSU fill out an application and submit official transcripts. These transcripts are then hand entered in DARS by WSU Admissions staff. Students can then view their degree audit to determine how their classes from RCTC will fit into the WSU curriculum. This current practice applies to all students who transfer from RCTC to WSU, data on the number of students who transfer is listed below.

Academic Year	RCTC transfer to WSU
2004-2005	146
2005-2006	159
2006-2007	170

Given that both RCTC and WSU use the ISRS database, we are requesting that programming is done which would allow DARS to automatically update course information between the two institutions. This would significantly reduce the investment of staff time and allow students' access to information quicker. Based on data collected, WSU staff currently spends 10 minutes per student hand entering DARS information from RCTC to WSU. At an average salary of \$32.00 an hour, this current practice costs WSU financially and utilizes scarce staffing resources.

Programming at the system level would better serve students as they would instantly be able to view how courses from RCTC would transfer to WSU. Additionally, staff time would be freed up to work on value added processes. This could also serve as a pilot project for other MnSCU schools. After evaluation of the process, the programming used between RCTC and WSU ISRS tables could be expanded for use between all MnSCU schools. This has the potential to create a huge savings when applied across the system.

We look forward to discussing with you how MnSCU IT solutions can help better serve the students at the Rochester Center.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
FOR SHARED COLLEGE TRANSCRIPTS  
BETWEEN  
ROCHESTER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
AND  
WINONA STATE UNIVERSITY.**

1. This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) and Winona State University (WSU) in the interest of fostering greater cooperation between our institutions, and to better serve the natural transfer of student from RCTC-WSU OR WSU-RCTC, and to ensure transfer ability to both institutions.

The purpose of this Agreement is to allow acceptance of an unofficial transcript to be submitted by students seeking to transfer from RCTC to WSU or from WSU to RCTC to the respective institution's Office of Admissions.

2. The following articles delineate the understanding between RCTC and WSU:

A: This agreement applies to students who make application to transfer from RCTC to WSU or from WSU to RCTC. The student must meet all RCTC or WSU admission requirements.

B: This agreement assumes that the student seeking to transfer will pursue and complete an associate or baccalaureate degree at the respective institution. The transferring student when filling out a request for transcript form must identify in the appropriate box that they are willing to share their academic record with the respective institution.

C. The registrar of the institution from which the student is seeking to transfer will copy the transferring student's transcript, including all other original college transcripts of the transferring student in the student's file, and place the institution's school seal and signature on each of the copied transcripts to identify that they have been copied from the original source. A signed data privacy statement will be required of all students.

D. RCTC and WSU agree to jointly market this program and inform potential students about it through variety of means, including but not limited to, developing and distributing a joint procedure.

E. Both institutions agree to monitor the progress of this program, evaluate its effectiveness, and make suggestions and/or changes to further strengthen this agreement.

**Rochester Community and Technical College**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Admissions and Records  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President Academic Affairs  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

**Winona State University**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Admissions  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President Academic Affairs  
Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Date\_\_\_\_\_