1: Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project:

A: This team has completed its work through Step 4 of the CQI process after presenting an improvement theory and recommendation to the President and Executive Cabinet. One major accomplishment of this team is the timely completion of its work. Despite the complicated nature of the early steps of the quality process—which included a detailed analysis of three years of student cohort data in developmental placement and persistence/retention—this team was the first Action Project team at MCC to complete within the time frame established in its charter. In addition, this team has been the primary user of MCC's Achieving the Dream (ATD) data set.

2: Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project:

A: The composition of this team was already balanced and representative of impacted areas of the college, including Developmental Education programs and relevant student services. Still, the team reached out to numerous individuals and stakeholder groups at the college by doing the following:

- Additional developmental faculty were consulted and engaged in team meetings when discipline-specific topics were considered
- The Dean of Enrollment Management and Retention, as well as the Registrar, made guest presentations to the group and answered relevant questions about advising and placement processes
- The team made multiple presentations to faculty at standing meetings
- Coordinated efforts with the Achieving the Dream Data Team and used that Team's findings as a centerpiece of its analysis in Step 3

Because this topic was by far the most pressing issue facing the MCC as determined by numerous surveys and stakeholder involvement activities, great care was taken to involve the entire college community in this issue.

3: Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project:

A: This team has presented its Step 4 recommendations to the President and Executive Cabinet. During the implementation phase (Step 5), complex issues surrounding program requirements, placement recommendations, advising and testing, as well as faculty governance will need to be addressed. The following is a brief summary of the team's recommendations:

- Formation of a Developmental Education Steering Committee
- Creation of a Developmental Education Coordinator (faculty reassignment)
- Establishment of pre-requisite reading grade-level for all college-level courses
- Each program/area of the college establish a reading grade-level comprehension necessary for success

Additional recommendations include process improvements in the areas placement, data handling, and IR analysis. The team is currently awaiting approval of its recommendations.
Describe any “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project:

A: A number of effective practices emerged from this team, among these were.

- Frequent communication with faculty through presentations
- Panel presentation to Executive Cabinet
- Making cut scores required for Accuplacer available to faculty
- Renaming the “Reading” discipline courses with the prefix “READ” instead of ENGL, which created confusion
- Changing the confusing “T/R” for “Tuesday/Thursday” to Tu and Th to avoid schedule confusion among students

Perhaps the most effective practice used by the group was increasing the frequency of its meetings to once per week in an effort to meet a deadline and produce a final recommendation prior to the retirement of one of the co-chairs.

What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project? This is an opportunity to get constructive, actionable feedback and advice from our review process. Use this question to specify where your blocks, gaps, sticking points, or problems are. If you have already fashioned strategies to deal with any challenge you face, share both the challenge and your strategy for meeting it. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help beyond the review process, explain your need(s) and tell us whom to contact and when:

A: Given the broad-based nature of the Team’s recommendations, the following issues are likely to be challenges as the Action Project moves into the implementation phase:

- A number of policy and governance process issues will arise, particularly as required reading levels and mandatory placement are enacted by programs and disciplines
- There is a potential impact on capacity for Developmental instructors and classrooms if these courses are made mandatory. Steps have already been undertaken to address this by hiring 2 new Reading faculty as of Fall 2011
- As an open admissions institution, the culture of MCC will need to adjust to the move toward mandatory placement
- Accurate advising will be key to a smooth transition to making Developmental courses mandatory for students who demonstrate a need for preparatory coursework
- A number of data handling and analysis issues will arise as greater coordination and information sharing among Developmental programs and faculty is established

The team has recommended that the specific provisions of its recommendation on mandatory placement be created by the Achieving the Dream (ATD) Core Team.