1: Project Goal

A: Our goal is to determine optimum enrollment for Southeastern Community College (SCC), taking into account our mission and strategic plan, desired student demographics, program demand and capacity, facilities, and other variables. This initiative is a part of the college's Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan.

2: Reasons For Project

A: Based on input from the Systems Appraisal, Strategic Planning, the College's Key Performance Indicators and other data sources, SCC's President announced in 2011 that SCC would focus on three major initiatives: Assessment of Student Learning, First Year Experience, and Strategic Enrollment Management.

In the fall of 2011, a team of six SCC employees attended the Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Strategic Enrollment Management Conference. Team members represented a cross section of the college:

- President
- Dean of Transitional Studies and the Keokuk campus
- Psychology faculty member
- Agriculture faculty member
- Enrollment Services Coordinator
- Vice President of Student Services

With knowledge gained from the conference, the team worked for several months to create a plan. They conducted an intensive review of SCC's mission, goals, and strategic plan and an audit of existing practices, institutional data, and informal survey results from students and employees. The resulting plan addresses four overarching focus areas: (1) Connection, (2) Entry, (3) Progress, and (4) Completion. However, the members recognized that they had not yet addressed a crucial core concept of strategic enrollment management: determining the institution's optimum enrollment. To successfully implement the SEM plan, this information must be obtained.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: The Teaching & Learning Division will be most affected by this Action Project since the faculty will need to provide much of the information regarding course capacity and other variables. Other organizational areas such as enrollment services, institutional research, and administrative services (facilities) will also be involved with providing information to help determine SCC's optimum enrollment.

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: This project will provide crucial information needed to finalize and implement all aspects of the Strategic Enrollment Management plan. SCC's SEM plan will affect student enrollment, retention, and completion through multiple initiatives.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale
The SEM committee is committed to completing this project in six months or less so that the members can incorporate the information gained into the SEM plan.

Project Success Monitoring

The committee plans to have the project completed by the end of May, 2013. The AQIP Liaison will work with the committee members to ensure that the project is progressing.

Project Outcome Measures

The outcome of this project will be determining the optimum enrollment number for Southeastern Community College. If that number is determined, the project will be a success. As the needs of the college evolve over time, our optimum enrollment will also be reevaluated and updated as needed.

Project Update

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: Project Status: Suspended
   Original Project Start Date: September, 2012
   Projected End Date: October, 2014
   The project to define SCC's optimum enrollment started as a part of a larger Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) initiative. When this project was declared, SCC was in the process of launching the SEM plan.

   As described in our September 2013 update, SCC changed its focus from determining optimum enrollment to defining program capacities when we determined that our faculty didn't have a consistent and reliable method for defining the capacities of their programs. This has been accomplished. In April 2014, the Career, Technical, and Health Education division assistant sent an email to all faculty members, asking them the questions about their program capacity and providing them with guidelines for their responses:
   1. Currently, what is your reasonable program capacity based on the equipment, space and instructors that you now have?
   2. If you have equipment, space and instructor needs, what are they?
   3. If your equipment, space and instructor needs were met, what would your program capacity be?

   After receiving input from all faculty, the assistant entered it into a spreadsheet. Input is also available for Arts and Sciences courses, based primarily on room size / number of seats.

   As described below, SCC has decided to suspend the original project, defining optimum enrollment, for a variety of reasons.

2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: Only one goal was listed in our original project declaration: “Our goal is to determine optimum enrollment for Southeastern Community College (SCC), taking into account our mission and strategic plan, desired student demographics, program demand and capacity, facilities, and other variables. This initiative is a part of the college’s Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan.” No metrics were specified in the Declaration.

3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: Please see question #1. SCC now has program capacities defined for each career, technical, and health program based upon the same variables for each program: equipment, space, and instructor capacities. In the past, program capacities were defined by each instructor based on his or her understanding of what the capacity should represent. Capacities for Arts & Sciences courses were also defined by reviewing room size and instructor's preferences for number of students.

   As reported in our 2013 update, defining program capacities was a crucial step towards defining optimum enrollment. Although this interim step has been completed, SCC has decided not to expend more resources defining our optimum enrollment, which was a part
of the College's overall Strategic Enrollment Management plan. SCC has experienced administrative turnover in the past few years:

- The College has a new President who started in the fall of 2012.
- We have had two interim Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs in the past three years; we now have a permanent VPAA in place.
- For approximately one year, we had no deans. We now have an interim Career, Technical, and Health Education Dean. The Arts & Sciences dean position remains open.

As a result of the vacancies, the Strategic Enrollment Management project did not move forward as we had originally intended. We needed these positions in place to support both optimum enrollment and Strategic Enrollment Management. After the positions were filled, the new administration had different priorities, so defining optimum enrollment has been put on hold. Instead, the College has assigned pieces of the SEM plan to various committees. The RISE committee (Road to Increased Student Enrollment) is exploring and implementing strategies to increase enrollment. The Completions committee is working on initiatives to increase retention and completions, and Marketing has added two people to its department.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: All Career, Technical, and Health faculty participated in this phase of the action project. As described above, they defined the capacity for each of their programs using the criteria provided to them.

5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A: Defining program capacities will be helpful for many reasons. Currently the college is in a period of declining enrollment. Having the capacities for each program will help us better quantify which programs are in need of additional resources to help boost enrollment.

This project has also clearly shown SCC the problems inherent in adopting a project without completely researching the time and talent that it will require to successfully implement. Without administrators in place, the larger project, SEM, did not move forward. When the administrative positions were filled, the new leadership had different priorities which did not directly include the need to define optimum enrollment as a part of SEM.

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: The challenges to this project were significant and deterred project success. The interim step, defining program capacities, was completed. The initial project, defining optimum enrollment for SCC, has been tabled for the immediate future.

7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

A: This project will be closed. SCC is not planning to move forward with defining optimum enrollment at this time.

8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: N/A

Update Review

1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: The initial action project has been suspended due to challenges identifying reliable means of defining program capacities. The frame of reference for the action project has been modified based on the following questions:

1. Currently, what is your reasonable program capacity based on the equipment, space and instructors that you now have?
2. If you have equipment, space and instructor needs, what are they?
3. If your equipment, space and instructor needs were met, what would your program capacity be?
### 2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

**A:** The initial goal is a critical variable for Southeastern Community College as it plans for its future. If the college has not done so already, it may find value in resources available through the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO).

### 3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

**A:** Southeastern revisioned how it could define program capacities using the questions cited in #1 above questions. Although the college was not able to complete the action project based on the initial declaration deliverable, it demonstrated flexibility by focusing on information that is available and provides consistency across programs. During this time, the college has seen leadership changes in areas impacted by the action project. Moreover, through the RISE committee, the college is implementing strategies aimed to increase enrollment, the Completions committee is working on retention and completions initiatives and Marketing is gearing up through the addition of two staff members. While the college is better poised through staffing and committees that are driving enrollment, retention, and completion initiatives, it appears that some of the core concerns may remain unresolved. In particular, the core need to identify optimum enrollments is still primarily based on faculty numbers, seat availability, and room configurations. As such, Southeastern may benefit by researching best practices used by other institutions as well as resources made available by organizations such as NACUBO.

### 4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

**A:** Faculty played a key role in defining the capacity of their programs. Broader representation including individuals who manage room scheduling and facilities may also inform the process.

### 5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

**A:** Southeastern may benefit by reaching out to consultants or peer institutions, including higher education organizations such as NACUBO and AACRAO (including state or regional entities related to AACRAO) for guidance regarding enrollment management.

### 6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

**A:** Southeastern successfully revisioned the project deliverable by reframing how program capacities would be identified. That said, the college may benefit by reaching out to organizations that have resources as stated previously.

### 7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIME LINE

**A:** Although Southeastern is closing this action project, there is still an opportunity for the college to seek out resources that can help define optimum enrollment.

### 8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

**A:** It takes a lot of courage to admit when a project isn’t going quite as planned! Southeastern was able to rally around an alternative that provides quantifiable data that were not available previously.