



Building Power BI Dashboards to Support Planning at Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Unlocking Insights, Centering Students, and Sustaining Momentum

Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) is a comprehensive two-year institution located in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Established in 1966, KVCC serves the educational needs of the community by providing a wide range of academic programs and workforce training opportunities. The college is committed to offering accessible and affordable education, catering to a diverse student population. KVCC emphasizes a student-centered approach, with a focus on academic excellence, community engagement, and preparing students for successful careers or further academic pursuits.

Building Capacity to Make Improvements

KVCC recognized the need to be able to share comprehensive data with colleagues across the campus. The chief business officer (CBO) and his colleagues working on the front line of student engagement and retention wanted to provide relevant data linked to areas of influence for people who play a role in student success. As KVCC worked to strengthen its data infrastructure, it used the Power BI templates included in the Financial Impact Analysis toolkit to accelerate the development of dashboards, parallel to other work underway to improve the use of data to inform decisions.

By focusing on several different areas of opportunity to make progress and leverage different subject matter experts across campus, the CBO was able to advance several initiatives simultaneously.



Improvement Project

Develop Formal, Institution-Wide
Data Governance



Toolkit Used

Financial Impact Analysis



Results

- Power BI dashboards, customized to meet the specific needs of KVCC, have been developed. The institution's data analyst began with the templates provided in the Financial Impact Analysis Toolkit, modified fields as needed, and linked the templates to proprietary data sources at the institution.
- By starting with foundational resources, KVCC's team generated dashboards more quickly and efficiently. This work established a foundation for future revisions as the college matures in its use of data to inform decisions.



“I have seen people change their thinking about the role of the CBO as we’ve had more conversations about what they need to help them make decisions. They no longer just see my role as ‘bean counter’. Instead, they understand that, *working together, we can make decisions more transparently and collaboratively.*”

.....

Brian Lueth,

Vice President for Finance and Business

Accelerating the Work

KVCC leveraged the Financial Impact Analysis toolkit to accelerate the development of dashboards that institutional stakeholders can access and use. After working to advance their data maturity using other resources available in the NACUBO Student Success Hub, the CBO and his colleagues determined they had made enough progress to begin to leverage the toolkit dashboards.

The institution has a talented data analyst who reviewed the resources available in the toolkit and then made rapid progress modifying the Power BI templates provided to meet KVCC’s needs. The analyst elected to link the templates directly to Access databases and other data sources already developed at KVCC, bypassing the need to populate the Excel Data Table Templates provided. The data analyst also customized fields and modified views to reflect KVCC’s lexicon.

Leveraging Dashboards to Improve Student Outcomes

As dashboards are refined and aligned with institutional objectives, the CBO continues to work very collaboratively with leaders whose primary responsibilities are linked directly to supporting and achieving improved student outcomes. This team of diverse subject matter experts has identified and will continue to identify mechanisms to move from analysis to action.

The next phase of work will involve engaging colleagues across campus in conversations and professional development activities that can reinforce using the dashboards and data to inform decisions and actions. The goal is to help people become more proactive than reactive by providing access to data that can answer questions about what a future state that improves student outcomes should look like and what resources are needed to achieve that future state.

Sustaining Momentum

KVCC will maintain its momentum by using the NACUBO Student Success Hub toolkits generated by this assessment process. By focusing on optimizing the talented people working at the institution and ensuring that people’s time and institutional dollars are applied where they can best benefit students, the CBO and his colleagues hope to continuously improve their work to leverage data and their capacity to serve students.