

Enhancing Data Governance at Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Establishing Data Structures and Systems to Improve Student Success

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, fostering a supportive learning environment with dedicated faculty and staff. With a focus on academic excellence, community engagement, and preparing students for successful careers or further academic pursuits, Kalamazoo Valley Community College plays a vital role in the educational landscape of the region.

Identifying Challenges and Setting Strategic Goals

Despite its strong educational mission, KVCC recognized its inefficiencies around data governance and management. The institution identified the importance of building trust in data and adopting a formalized approach to data governance. With a strategic goal focused on forecasting and preparing for future students, KVCC's chief business officer (CBO) created a campus initiative, forming a dedicated data governance team to leverage various tools to aid the institution in achieving its strategic goals.

Implementing Data Governance Solutions

KVCC embarked on its data governance journey by utilizing several tools tailored to their needs. The Data Ecosystem Assessment tool was the starting point, helping to identify areas requiring attention and emphasizing the importance of data governance. This assessment tool not only highlighted needs but also fostered conversations that built shared understanding among stakeholders.



Improvement Project

Develop Formal, Institution-Wide Data Governance



Toolkit Used

Data Ecosystem Assessment
Data and Systems Governance Guide



Results

- Strengthened data knowledge across Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), enhancing understanding and utilization of data across the institution.
- Fostered a transformative cultural shift towards data-informed decision-making, promoting transparency, interactions, and a holistic focus on student success.
- Accelerated adoption of data tools and techniques, empowering KVCC to make informed decisions and support institutional needs effectively.



“One of our strategic goals is to be able to forecast and prepare for future learners, and to holistically support their educational goals. And when we identified targets for the goal, we realized that we really need to have data governance in place to be able to assess that.”

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Brian Lueth,

Vice President for Finance and Business

Moving forward, KVCC’s CBO and Data Governance team employed the Data and Systems Governance Guide to prioritize tasks and reinforce the importance of data literacy. Specifically, the institution used the resource to evaluate their data governance charter, strengthen information architecture, develop data literacy training opportunities, and create a data dictionary. Both tools played a pivotal role in strengthening stakeholder knowledge and understanding, accelerating the institution’s adoption of data governance.

Impact on Institutional Roles and Culture

Participation in the data governance project had a transformative impact on KVCC’s institutional roles and culture. The process and tools helped shift the CBO’s perspective from a strict cost-benefit analysis to a more holistic view focused on student success. The initiative served as a catalyst for change, promoting transparency, and fostering interactions across the institution. Moreover, the cultural shift towards data-informed decision-making extended beyond individual roles.

Ongoing Efforts and Future Directions

As KVCC continues its data governance journey guided by institutional needs and its mission, the CBO remains a champion for this initiative. The institution recognizes that the use of data for decision-making is a continuous improvement process, shaped by changes in the educational landscape and workforce development needs. With a stronger foundation in data literacy and utilization, KVCC aims to enhance financial decision-making, resource allocation, and overall institutional effectiveness in the evolving educational ecosystem.