

History of the miami dade college (mdc) system business plans examples

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Business Plan: Student Services Area of Miami Dade College (MDC) – Hialeah Campus

Overview of Organization

The Miami Dade College (MDC) is the largest higher education institution in the United States (US), with an estimated total population of 175, 000 across all its eight campuses located within the metropolitan area of the city of Miami, Florida. A state-sponsored college, the MDC also has two educational centers and various centers for outreach activities alongside its eight campuses. Each MDC campus has its academic specializations, although the MDC system allows all of its students to take general education courses in all of its campuses for their convenience (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Standing by the mantra that “ anyone with a desire to get a college degree should be given that opportunity”, MDC first opened as Dade County Junior College in September 1960 to accommodate numerous refugees from Cuba. From a first batch of 1, 428 students occupying former chicken coop buildings, MDC rapidly grew in the mid-1960s to an estimated 15, 000 students and achieved the feat of becoming the largest higher education institution in Florida in 1967 (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

MDC prides itself for its legacy of diversity in its student population, with 66% of its students coming from minorities and 56% comprising of women in as early as the 1970s. Moreover, MDC grew to become a popular choice for several part-time students, helped by the fact that it offers flexible terms for its general education programs. The internationally-acclaimed Miami Book Fair International was a brainchild of the MDC academic community, having

started as the Books by the Bay in 1984 (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Towards the 21st century, MDC underwent several reformations in its various academic and non-academic offerings, including the expansion of its degree and certificate programs and improvement of its facilities. Service improvements followed through the establishment of the Virtual College, Honors College and the Emerging Technological Center of the Americas (ETCOTA). Moreover, the MDC took over the general management of the Miami International Film Festival (MIFF) - a move that deepened the involvement of the college in the cultural well-being of Florida (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Operations and Employment

MDC operates eight campuses and two educational centers located within the metropolitan area of the city of Miami, Florida - North Campus, Kendall Campus, Wolfson Campus, Medical Campus, Homestead Campus, InterAmerican Campus, Hialeah Campus, MDC-West, New World School of the Arts and the Carrie P. Meek Entrepreneurial Education Center (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

MDC harnesses all its employees to carry the organizational objective of helping all its students succeed. To motivate all employees towards realizing the foregoing objective, MDC grants several benefits through group insurance programs, which includes a benefits package comprising of group health, dental, life insurance and retirement benefits via the Florida Retirement System. Voluntary benefits are also available at the disposal of all MDC employees, such as income protection and group annuities, tax

shelter annuity plans and family protection insurance (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

All prospective and current employees of MDC have the guarantee of equal access and opportunity, as the college commits to federal and state legislation by not basing its employment qualifications on the grounds of race, gender, marital status, religion and age, among many similar others. The foregoing also applies to all the educational opportunities provided by MDC to all prospective and current students, particularly for admission, counseling and testing and financial assistance, among many similar others. Moreover, MDC commits to adjusting to the welfare of its students and employees alike with regard to physiological disorders that impair the completion of certain academic requirements, in line with the guidelines provided by the State Board of Education of Florida (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

The College Training and Development (CT&D) of MDC supports the needs of all employees of MDC – faculty, staff and administrators alike, for training and development towards the constant improvement of deliver of student services. CT&D recognizes the reality of differing institutional and individual needs in student services, hence its commitment to providing diverse content and delivery formats through more than 250 workshop offerings spanning professional development and technological skill-building. Workshops for professional development include matters on teaching effectiveness, leadership and management development, and skills-for-job development, while workshops for technological skill-building are provided in

fully-equipped laboratories and online modules - all of which are made available in all MDC campuses (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Campus Information – The MDC Hialeah Campus

The MDC Hialeah Campus is designated as the seventh campus under the MDC system. Located in the suburb of Hialeah in Miami-Dade County, Florida, the MDC Hialeah Campus rapidly grew from being an English language and citizenship studies learning center for Cuban and Haitian immigrants to one of the most prominent learning centers in northwest Miami Dade County. Morning, evening and Saturday classes are offered in the MDC Hialeah Campus, alongside comprehensive student support services on admissions and financial assistance, among many others (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Starting as an English language learning center for immigrants from Cuba and Haiti, the MDC Hialeah Campus currently offers a comprehensive English language learning program specifically catered to non-English speaking people and non-native English speakers alike. Associate, certificate and vocational programs focused on continuing education and professional development, early childhood education, criminal justice and technological development are among the degree programs offered in the MDC Hialeah Campus. The Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management is the flagship full-length degree offering of the MDC Hialeah Campus (Miami Dade College, n. d.).

Explanation of the Issue

The commitment of MDC to academic excellence firmly places its position in favor of the well-being of all its students. Therefore, MDC places itself at the forefront of enabling its student reach success by harnessing their employees through activities focused on training and development.

However, it is also important to note that the employees of MDC also seek to become well-placed professionals themselves - a goal that requires specific inclusions in the training and development programs provided to them.

Therefore, it is the goal of this presentation to address the issue of the need of MDC student service employees to receive targeted opportunities for professional growth as they improve student training for life via the Student Services Professional Development Plan (SSPDP), which focuses on the Hialeah Campus of the college.

Solutions to the Issue

The Student Services Professional Development Plan (SSPDP)

The SSPDP, presented by the Human Resources (HR) Office of MDC Hialeah Campus, seeks to fulfill the needs of student service employees of MDC Hialeah Campus for targeted opportunities shaping their professional growth, as they undertake their sworn duty for the college to train students for life.

The main design of all programs included under the SSPDP emphasizes on the provision of skill development and professional resources that stimulate personal and professional growth, and address staff needs, campus concerns and issues within the MDC Hialeah Campus. Moreover, the SSPDP seeks to improve services and employee retention within the student services area of

MDC Hialeah Campus, which includes the following departments (Miami Dade College, n. d.):

- Admissions and Registration

The Admissions and Registration department serves prospective and current students of MDC Hialeah Campus in terms of admission to the college and its various student programs. Services such as administering admission tests for prospective students of MDC Hialeah Campus, and qualification tests for scholarship and exchange student programs all fall under the responsibility of the Admissions and Registration department.

- Financial Aid

The Financial Aid department serves prospective and current students of MDC Hialeah Campus in terms of their need for acquiring financial aid for studying in the college. Working in conjunction with the Admissions and Registration and Testing departments in terms of evaluation, the Financial Aid department provides financial aid to all prospective and current students of MDC Hialeah Campus subject to available programs and qualifications

- Academic Advisement

The Academic Advisement department works closely with prospective and current students of MDC Hialeah Campus with regard to their needs for academic advisement, which covers concerns on information regarding the suitability of degree programs and courses to particular academic or professional targets disclosed by students.

- ACCESS (A Comprehensive Center for Exceptional Student Services), alternatively known as Disability Services

The ACCESS/Disability Services department ensures the learning

conduciveness of MDC Hialeah Campus by addressing the concerns of its students with regard to physical and learning disabilities. The provision and installation of mobility facilities for physically-disabled students and the maintenance and improvement of specialized learning amenities for students with learning disabilities all fall under the responsibilities of the ACCESS/Disability Services department.

The Student Life department is responsible for administering the needs of students with regard to their membership to accredited organizations within the MDC Hialeah Campus. Accreditation of organizations and management of arrangements pertaining to activities of accredited organizations within the MDC Hialeah Campus are among the responsibilities the Student Life department holds.

- Testing

The Testing department administers the creation and delivery of tests used by other student services area departments of MDC Hialeah Campus such as Admissions and Registration, Financial Aid and Recruitment. Extensive research and development help shape the efforts of the Testing department with regard to administering tests well-suited for intended evaluation objectives.

- Recruitment

The Recruitment department stands as the main channel of the MDC Hialeah Campus with regard to its needs to promote the college in different high school campuses to attract prospective students. Members of the Recruitment department visit different high school campuses to promote

MDC Hialeah Camps through seminars and presentations on its degree programs, course offerings, and non-academic activities and engagements.

Objectives and Programs of the SSPDP

Keeping in mind the importance of consolidating the student services area of MDC Hialeah Campus in terms of service improvement and employee retention and shaping the provision of professional opportunities for all employees of the college, the SSPDP outlines the following objectives (Johnston & Clark, 2005; Schuh et al., 2010):

- Provide a road map for learning forward – No successful journey could start without a plan; thus, the SSPDP envisions the creation of a learning road map accustomed to the learning needs of MDC Hialeah campus students and requiring suitable professional applications from the employees of the college.
- Expand knowledge and enhance skills – Prioritizing the success of MDC Hialeah Campus students, the SSPDP seeks to present viable channels for knowledge and skills expansion and enhancement.
- Increase employee retention – Employee retention stands at the core of the student services area of MDC Hialeah Campus, given the instrumentality of employees in delivering services to students. The SSPDP aims to increase employee retention by maintaining and improving the professional environment of MDC Hialeah Campus to favorable levels via incentive-driven measures and workshops.
- Develop staff trust and skills – The SSPDP aims to improve trust relationships among MDC Hialeah Campus employees, as it also seeks to

improve their professional skills, with both being achievable through activities such as team buildings, rapport-building activities, seminars and workshops, among many others.

- Increase effective thinking and approach - To bring the best out of MDC Hialeah Campus employees, the SSPDP holds the objective of increasing their thinking effectiveness and approaches through various programs aimed to develop them professionally.

- Build a working vision for the staff - The SSPDP seeks to aid MDC Hialeah Campus employees with regard to forming their consciousness towards professional growth through a working vision centered on the success of all students of the college.

- Propose a way for providing rewards and incentives - The SSPDP emphasizes on the importance of research and development initiatives with regard to forming the most effective rewards and incentive mechanisms for employees of MDC Hialeah Campus to maximize their capabilities to provide student services.

- Motivate the team to improve effectiveness and efficiency - The SSPDP recognizes the value of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of MDC Hialeah Campus employees with regard to working with teams, which are necessary to streamline all processes related to the delivery of student services.

- Help team stay focused on the work of student services - Any mechanism fine-tuned to improve the delivery of student services in MDC Hialeah Campus would not work without the requisite focus coming from employees of the college. Therefore, the SSPDP strives to provide mechanisms that

would help enhance the focus of MDC Hialeah Campus employees in serving the students of the college.

In fulfilling the foregoing objectives, the SSPDP includes the use of the following program areas (Johnston & Clark, 2005; Schuh et al., 2010):

- Career and Peer Mentoring - The SSPDP seeks to empower MDC Hialeah Campus employees through a series of career and peer mentoring sessions aimed at sharing insights and experiences, particularly from experienced employees and professionals from specific fields.
- Divisional Meetings - To engage the employees of MDC Hialeah Campus in a series of knowledge-sharing discussions, the SSPDP proposes to hold divisional meetings annually, complete with presentations of working and information papers covering a diverse range of topics related to professional improvement focused on delivering student services.
- Individual Development Plan - Professional development starts from individual initiative. In recognition of the foregoing, the SSPDP advocates the development of an individual development plan for every employee of MDC Hialeah Campus, subject to his/her specific professional development needs.
- In-service Training and Workshops - The SSPDP plans to train the employees of MDC Hialeah Campus to become better professionals through a comprehensive series of in-service training sessions and workshops.
- Professional Development Retreats - Professional development need not transpire in the workplace alone. The SSPDP seeks to provide employees of MDC Hialeah Campus with enriching professional development measures without workplace pressures through a series of retreats held in various

locations conducive for reflective learning.

- Team Buildings - The SSPDP envisions the promotion of camaraderie among employees of MDC Hialeah Campus through team buildings to enable them to become more motivated in delivering student services effectively and efficiently.

- Informing Professional Development and Job Offering Opportunities from the HR Office of MDC Hialeah Campus - Key to fulfilling the objectives of the SSPDP is the need to distribute information on its professional development and job offering programs effectively. The use of effective communication channels, particularly social media websites, by the HR Office of MDC Hialeah Campus in informing employees of the college on available professional opportunities for them would contribute to the cause.

Strategies for Solving the Issue

Research and Development

Realizing each of the objectives and program areas of the SSPDP requires the extensive utilization of research and development resources. Therefore, it is particularly important for the administration of MDC Hialeah Campus to support the cause for developing research and development initiatives and measures for the improvement of service delivery in the student services area of the college. Knowing more about the needs and motivation for the professional development of employees of MDC Hialeah Campus requires innovative measures that can effectively transpire from research and development; thus, the SSPDP advocates the intense usage of research and development resources to encourage its employees to become more

instrumental to the success of its students (Johnston & Clark, 2005; Schuh et al., 2010).

Budget and Sponsorship

The SSPDP prioritizes the constant improvement of all its program areas to enable employees of MDC Hialeah Campus to become more effective in terms of delivering services to students of the college. Therefore, funding comes in as a crucial consideration for the SSPDP, which in turn envisions the introduction of effective and efficient budget and sponsorship schemes as viable strategies. The administration of MDC Hialeah Campus, in conjunction with the HR Office of the college and the CT&D, must negotiate on valuable budgeting plans in tune with the requirements of each program area. At the same time, the SSPDP advocates the need to forge agreements with internal sponsors for organizing particular program areas that could not only provide valuable contributions to the resource pool of the student services area for its program areas, but also improve the image of MDC Hialeah Campus as an educational institution seeking for the best for all its students. Partnering with internal sponsors for program areas the SSPDP has specified could, in turn, widen career opportunities for students of MDC Hialeah Campus (Johnston & Clark, 2005; Schuh et al., 2010).

The breakdown of allocation per program area of the SSPDP is as follows, in descending order and reflective of the size and amount of resources needed per program area (note that all foregoing and following figures are estimates and does not represent/may not closely resemble real figures) (Miami Dade College, n. d.):

Breakdown of Allocation per Program Area of the SSPDP

Feedback Reports

Evaluating the effectiveness of program areas aimed at improving the professional development of MDC Hialeah Campus employees requires the use of feedback reports, which contains data from employees who participated in certain program areas. Feedback reports contribute to gathering information on the perceived successes and failures of program areas under the SSPDP coming from employees of MDC Hialeah Campus themselves who participated. Findings provided by feedback reports enable the administration of MDC Hialeah Campus and the HR Office of the college to introduce more improvements to their program areas (Johnston & Clark, 2005; Schuh et al., 2010).

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