

Lean Processes in the Academic Division

In November 2013 Fleming received money from the Financial Health and Sustainability Grant (FHSG) to pilot using Lean processes to review programs in the School of Justice and Business Studies. In the past two years, Lean has been used to review processes in college service areas, such as the Registrar’s Office, Counselling and Human Resources and this provides the first opportunity to try these tools in a school where Lean content has already been introduced as part of the curriculum.

The work funded by FHSG facilitates using the Lean value stream methodology in analyzing program delivery to improve quality and cost outcomes. The nine programs being looked at include Project Management – Post-graduate Certificate; and all core business diploma programs (e.g. Business – Accounting, Business-Human Resources, etc.) that share a common first year. Lean typically looks at improvements along three dimensions, namely, quality, delivery and cost and tracks metrics for this purpose. With respect to programs, this primarily translates to KPIs and cost of delivery. However, faculty, student and graduate involvement in the review are critically important to a successful redesign that focuses on enhancing value-added learning opportunities (such as work integrated learning) that align with our strategic academic priorities, and our SMA (Strategic Mandate Agreement). This work is being carried out in three phases until March 31, 2015. To date, the first phase has been completed, and it is clear that CLT curriculum consultant participation will also be a key driver to success in these projects.

For further information about these projects, please contact Jenny Olason (1273) or Russell Turner (1452), Lean Project Leads in the School of Justice and Business Studies.

Lean and Integrated Program Planning (IPP) – how do they connect?

The Lean work in the academic division has been linked to the Integrated Program Planning work which was funded through the Productivity and Innovation Fund (PIF). Both initiatives rely heavily on metrics and data that track quality and costs, which are important issues for the MTCU’s differentiation agenda for the post-secondary system. To this end, IPP focuses on WHAT the College offers. It will help the College allocate resources and shape a program portfolio that is rooted in the Academic Plan and responds to evolving demands from students, employers and other stakeholders. It will also help us integrate our

“I have already seen that there is so much we can learn from Lean practices in terms of curriculum design and development. Through the adoption of continual improvement principles, we can provide our students with learning opportunities that are relevant, authentic, and efficient. And while it might seem contradictory for a process that has efficiency as its end goal, I have seen some of the best examples of student-centred learning emerge from the Lean projects taking place in the School of Business”.

Wendy Morgan, Curriculum Consultant

“We could never have achieved this without this process!”

Raymond Yip Choy, Faculty and Program Coordinator

planning work so that we have clear, focussed priorities relating to the entire college. Lean practices focus on HOW programs are delivered. They will help the College to maximize the efficiency and quality of its program delivery. The two initiatives work together to strengthen Fleming's program offerings and respond to a rapidly changing post-secondary environment.

New Processes for 2014

In the summer and fall of 2013, two new value streams were completed, specifically, the Capital Planning and Recruitment processes. Both are moving along with implementation. The capital planning process, led by Angie Sims, resulted in a staged gate approach to capital planning that requires business cases to be developed and then approved on an ongoing basis throughout the year by the new Capital Planning Steering Committee. The business case process requires thoughtful consideration and review of proposed capital projects which will lead to closer alignment with the strategic goals of the college and complements an integrated program planning process. It will also reduce the amount of reprioritization of capital lists and the lack of coordination of projects resulting in wasted time and effort on behalf of purchasing staff; those involved in the front end planning, and project execution.

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A number of metrics were gathered as part of the current state process review for recruitment, some of which dispelled the perceptions that we have long lead times for hiring and disproportionality large interview panels. For example, the average days from posting to interview is 25.8 business days; the average interview panel size is 3.6 interviewers -- costing on average \$263 per hour, and the typical "error rate" due to reposted competitions is 14%. This said, the process improvements led by Nick Duley will seek to improve the quality, cost and delivery metrics by a minimum of 10%. To this end, the recruitment "future state" focussed on creating standardization in the recruitment processes, namely, "standard work" which is a fundamental Lean objective. Timing improvements include working simultaneously in process steps in order in to shorten the timeline from vacancy identification to job acceptance ("Lead Time") and the amount of manual work for the HR consultants and HR Assistants ("waste").

Upcoming Lean Training

There are two training initiatives underway. During the CBD faculty professional development week, three workshops will be offered covering general Lean principles and how Lean is being applied in the academic area. Faculty from Phase 1 of the work will participate in the delivery to provide a case study. Later in the spring, Lean workshops will be offered as part of the Support Staff PD Certificate program. During these workshops, staff will be given the opportunity to tackle a small process improvement in their own work area using Lean tools.

Fleming's Quality Improvement Academy



In the fall, Fleming staff travelled to SAIT in Calgary to discuss the prospects of the two colleges collaborating on a “national academy”. This academy would offer a range of Lean programming, from certificate to certification as well as coaching services to both individuals and industry, all designed to sustain continuous improvement initiatives. To prepare for this new venture, Fleming hosted a “Voice of the Customer” event which is an innovative Lean process to gather stakeholder and customer feedback when developing a new product or services. The February event included attendees from Siemens Milltronics; GE; the City and County of Peterborough; Peterborough Regional Health Centre, as well as an array of other private and public sector organizations. What we heard was that employers are looking for Lean training and support for continuous improvement as part of how they will upskill their workforce to achieve success. With this in mind, we have begun to design curriculum with a strong applied learning focus. Furthermore, workshop participants expressed that employers want our graduates to come prepared with Lean knowledge and principles, whether they are in manufacturing, healthcare or municipal government.

Earlier in March, SAIT staff attended Fleming to mark the beginning of an exciting new partnership proposal where we may collaboratively design and deliver a national institute by sharing content, knowhow and building on each other's strengths. To begin, Fleming will be launching a pilot this fall to offer a workshop series for Lean certification training, similar to our Peak Leadership program cohort model, to a number of industries. This has the potential to evolve to significant contract training opportunities.

How Can I Use Lean to Improve a Process?

A number of staff members have brought forward new ideas for processes that could be reviewed using Lean methodology. Some are large processes and will require the involvement of staff across multiple departments. Others are small and more contained. If you have an idea for a process that needs improvement, please contact Trish O'Connor to get more information about getting started.

For more information about the Lean Initiative please contact Trish O'Connor at ext. 1067 or trish.oconnor@flemingcollege.ca