

2022 Best Practices Proposal Form



Completed proposals are to be submitted to
Julie Parrish, Chair, SACUBO Best Practices Committee, info@sacubo.org
The deadline is November 10, 2021.

Best Practices Submission:

Title: **The Pioneer Way – Bringing Dining Services In-House**

Primary* Contact Information:

The primary contact must be a SACUBO member institution of higher education.

Institution: Spartanburg Methodist College

Address1: 1000 Powell Mill Road

Address2:

City: Spartanburg

State/Prov: SC

Zip Code: 29301

Salutation: Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms.

First Name: Trey Middle Name/Initial: Furman Last Name: Arrington

Suffix (Jr, III, etc.)

Professional Title: Vice President for Operations

Email: arringtont@smcsc.edu

Phone: 864.426.4948

Fax:

*Additional team contacts may be listed at the bottom of this form.

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Institution Information:

Institution:

Research Comprehensive/Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

Year Founded: 1911

Geographical Location: Upstate South Carolina

Number of Students: 1050

Website: smcsc.edu

Statement of the Problem:

Provide a brief statement identifying the challenge your institution encountered that benefited from your best practice.

After operating Dining Services via a third-party contractor, we saw that it was not able to be aligned with our culture of "student first, student always". We knew that in order to achieve that, we would need to have complete ownership of that operation.

Identify the Solution (250-words maximum):

Describe how you identified and developed your best practice solution including those involved with the process, impact on the organization, finances and resources.

SMC had been partnered with one of the large dining services vendors for nearly 30 years. In 2017, our new President stated that he wanted to create a culture of "student first, student always" in everything we did. As each member of the leadership team began to focus on this goal within their areas, one of those areas was SMC Dining Services. After spending an academic year trying to change that culture with the third-party vendor, we decided it was time for a change. Our five year plan was to eventually bring Dining Services in-house, but we needed to learn more about what a successful dining program could look like on a small, nimble campus like SMC. We terminated our contract with that vendor, and signed a new contract with a third-party college dining services vendor that only worked with small, religiously-affiliated institutions. The dining program greatly improved in years one and two, but there were still limitations to what that vendor was willing to do, based on their closed-book budget. In Spring of 2020, with the COVID pandemic hitting the world, we turned our focus to what Fall of 2020 would look like. We knew this was the time to bring Dining Services in-house, and we made that decision.

Implementation Timeline:

Provide a bulleted list of the steps and implementation timeline of your best practice solution.

1. 2017 – New Cultural Mission "Student First, Student Always"
2. 2017 – Dining Services responsibility transitions from CFO to VP for Operations

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3. Spring 2018 – Contract terminated with long-time, large dining vendor
4. Summer 2018 – New contract with another third party partner, but one that focuses on small, private, religiously-affiliated institutions.
5. Spring 2020 – Terminated contract with third party partner, began planning in-house operations for Fall 2020
6. Summer 2020 – Hiring and planning phase
7. Fall 2020 – Launch of in-house Dining Services at SMC!
- 8.

Benefits & Retrospect:

Provide a brief statement of the benefits achieved by implementing the best practice solution.

Our focus through this process was never on saving money, although that has certainly been a tertiary benefit. The focus was on serving our students and the rest of campus well, and we have been able to accomplish that beyond what any of us thought possible. Our students are very happy, and we see meal participation rates that rank higher than the national averages. SMC Dining Services has truly become a part of the SMC Experience. Other benefits have been that we provide all SMC employees with a free meal per day. We can very quickly change and adjust our processes when needed. SMC has become the regional employer of choice for food service employees. We serve a population that is very susceptible to food insecurity, but we are able to address that easily with complimentary meal plans for commuting students, as well as a food pantry for any other students or employees that might need it. We hope that we can show other small colleges that it is sustainable to operate your dining services program in-house, and we would love to partner with you to show you the lessons we have learned so far!

Additional Team Contact Information:

Additional Contact #2:

Institution:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State/Prov:

Zip Code:

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Institution:

Research Comprehensive/ Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

Salutation: Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms.

First Name:

Middle Name/Initial:

Last Name:

Suffix (Jr, III, etc.)

Professional Title:

Email :

Phone:

Fax:

Additional Contact #3:

Institution:

Address1:

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Fax:

Additional Contact #4:

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Form: Updated August 2021