

Executive Summary

In the search for a single initiative to improve student learning at CCC, the college's research efforts led to addressing student success through the use of active learning instructional strategies in the classroom. This topic proved to be the best fit for the college's QEP and is justified by a literature review. This review revealed that when active learning instructional strategies are used, student learning improves-- a direct link to student success. The QEP topic for CCC focuses on helping faculty to become aware of how to implement and assess active learning strategies. The QEP proposal will implement three major initiatives:

*Extensive faculty professional development introducing active learning instructional strategies and how to implement them in the classroom

Although faculty members are well qualified to teach in their respective disciplines, more emphasis will be placed on the delivery method of the material. Faculty will be made aware of new instructional techniques that promote active learning by the student. Faculty will learn how to teach "old" topics with "new" zest. Active teaching and active learning will be the goal of this section of the QEP.

The first QEP professional development was the QEP kick-off. It was held on April 20, 2011 with faculty from all three divisions attending. Dr. Ed Neal, Professional Consultant for Higher Education, conducted the workshop that showed how using multiple instructional strategies improves student learning. Future workshops will be discipline specific and will illustrate how using a certain instructional technique works with a specific learning style. A variety of assessment tools will also be incorporated into the workshops. The College plans to make use of external and internal experts. There will also be workshops on how to use the different technologies that will aid faculty in delivering information in a variety of ways. The College has many ways to provide these resources to the faculty. The FIT group is part of a Title III Grant that organizes 10 faculty members each year for five years to show them how to implement technology into the classroom, particular hybrid and online courses. Also, there are monthly internal workshops dealing with specific technology or technology applications called "Tea and Technology" and "Lunch and Learn." The QEP Coordinator will also help identify active learning strategies for courses where faculty request help.

*Establish a learning resource center for faculty that will include discipline specific techniques, online learning style measures, and an assessment bank

A website will be housed on the Rose Library webpage that will be accessible to all faculty members (full time and adjunct). This website will contain background material on active learning and its goals. It will also house a copy of the QEP. However, its primary purpose will be to have accessible information on teaching

strategies that faculty can use in the classroom. The website will be maintained and updated by the QEP Coordinator. There will also be a QEP office where faculty can find “hands-on” material for ALS.

*Create a Faculty Learning Community or a shared best-practices network among faculty, whereby faculty express what instructional strategies prove to be most beneficial and/or to address any needs in implementation of various strategies.

A primary goal of the QEP is to create a learning community among the faculty. Instructors of the same disciplines will meet and discuss techniques that work and those that do not. They will discuss strategies that promote active learning among students. Weaknesses will also be discussed. As the plan progresses, inter-disciplinary discussions will hopefully commence as well. The result will be a “best practices” for CCC and a faculty learning community.

Assessment of the QEP is crucial to the successful implementation and to the continued practice and improvement of the plan. A more complete description of the methods of assessment is provided later in the document, but a summary is stated here. The assessment procedures will be threefold. First, there will be direct assessments in the classrooms where the QEP is implemented. The 2011-2012 academic year will be used to develop the classroom assessments that will give the most needed information. These assessments tools will be created in conjunction with the instructors who will be teaching the courses. Secondly, the social sciences department will have departmental assessments. These assessments will help to bond the social sciences as one department with one goal- active learning. Finally, the last set of assessments will ensure that the QEP aids the College in achieving its overall mission within the CCC Strategic Plan. The three-fold assessment plan will keep the QEP in the classroom, but show its overall effectiveness to the College.