

Cornerstone Experience

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Update

Co-Chairs Report “Excellent Progress Made” on QEP Planning

Edison State College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee co-chairs Professor Kathy Clark and Dr. Thomas Rath report that “excellent progress” has been made this semester in fine-tuning the QEP focus and implementation plan.

The Committee is pleased to welcome Mary Stuart Hunter (see page 2) as our QEP consultant. Ms. Hunter will provide guidance on course design and other initiatives supporting a sustainable first-year course.

A highlight of the semester for the QEP Committee was a productive meeting in late January with Dr. Barry Goldstein, SACS COC Vice President. Dr. Goldstein asked Committee members to think of the QEP as a grant proposal that we are submitting for funding. Many questions were

asked and answered during the session, and upon his departure, Dr. Goldstein indicated to District President Kenneth Walker that the QEP project showed “promise.”

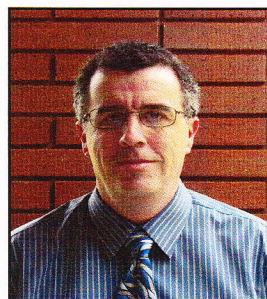
In addition to progressing on course design, the Committee has fine-tuned the plan for pilot implementation (see sidebar) and submitted a budget for 2011-12. Assessments and indicators have been drafted, and a literature review performed. The Cornerstone Experience course has been submitted to the State for numbering and will carry the Edison State College name.

Professor Clark and Dr. Rath conducted informational sessions at their respective campuses for student services personnel and others who were unable to attend the January Cornerstone Assembly.

QEP-related workshops for faculty and staff are in the planning stages, and the initial draft of our QEP document will be reviewed prior to the end of this semester. Committee work will continue through the Summer.



QEP Co-Chairs Kathy Clark, Professor of Economics, Collier (above) and Dr. Thomas Rath, Academic Dean, Charlotte (below)



To assist its transition from conceptual discussions to the operational phase of course development, the QEP Committee adopted the following definition of Student Learning on November 19, 2010:

Student Learning at ESC is defined as the development of self-reliance through positive changes that are attributable to the collegiate experience. These changes are expressed through measurable gains in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values that prepare students to be contributing members of society.



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Adjustments in QEP Timeline

The QEP Committee has elected to delay Cornerstone Experience pilot implementation until Spring 2012. The new timeline will enable the College to accommodate necessary professional development for faculty and staff, identify faculty to teach the course, provide proper notification and incentives to students identified as potential pilot participants, and allow adequate time to embolden the QEP marketing and communications plan.

Further, the QEP Committee wishes to incorporate suggestions from our QEP evaluators who will serve as part of the Reaffirmation On-Site Review Committee in November 2011.

The QEP will be highlighted during August professional development days, and related on-site conferences are in the planning stages. Details will follow.

Consultant Compliments QEP Planning and Work Products



Mary Stuart Hunter, University of South Carolina Assistant Vice Provost and Executive Director of University 101 Program and the National

Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, is serving as Edison State College's QEP consultant. She visited the Lee Campus on March 24 and 25 for the first visit in a new relationship helping us to develop and implement an exemplary Cornerstone Experience course and First-Year Experience (FYE) program.

In addition to providing assistance with course content and student engagement, Ms. Hunter will guide the College in involving all constituencies in QEP implementation, providing appropriate professional development, and developing implementation plans to include assessment.

At Thursday's session, the QEP Leadership Team discussed the status of the QEP Committee's work, including draft course outcomes. A "man on the street" video, created by ESC student George Schwigk, who works part time as an Edison Online videographer, provided feedback from students concerning what they know now that they wished they had known the first week on campus.

Ms. Hunter complimented the group on the QEP plan, process, and work products, and recommended that the critical next step be to narrow and refine the proposed course outcomes to assure that those selected are meaningful, measurable and doable.

The following day, nearly 40 faculty, academic administrators and student services personnel participated in Listening Post sessions focusing on first-year students. Ms. Hunter reminded the groups that the QEP focus is to examine something we are already doing to make it better and more intentional in order to enhance student learning. She said that the first-year experience programs and related credit course are popular QEP topics.

Participants in the Listening Post sessions shared their views on how the Cornerstone course will be different from other courses, including content and learning activities. They were asked to think back to their individual experiences as first-year students, envisioning a hometown newspaper headline summarizing their first semester in college.

Announcements concerning future meetings with our consultant will be emailed to the various college constituencies.

Mary Stuart Hunter's resume may be accessed at:
<http://www.sc.edu/fye/center/staff/cv/Vita%20-%20January10.pdf>

Attending My First FYE Annual Conference

By Myra Hale, Professor of Speech and QEP Committee Member/Chair of Communications Subcommittee

The only downside to attending the 30th Annual First Year Experience (FYE) Conference was that it was scheduled over the Super Bowl weekend in cold Atlanta, Georgia. Besides that one flaw, the conference was a great opportunity to learn from some of the best minds around the country and from abroad regarding best practices for improving the first year college experience for all students.

The conference was attended by over 1,500 people representing 49 states. Representatives from Africa were also in attendance. I was excited to collaborate with a number of people who teach the first year experience course at their colleges. Another favorite part of the conference for me was the opportunity to take part in several professional development workshops to improve and enhance my ability to reach out and connect with first year college students. To my surprise, many of the teaching techniques that I learned about are techniques that I immediately implemented in my public speaking classes upon my return.

I look forward to sharing some of the techniques that I learned at the conference in a future issue of this newsletter. Perhaps some of these may work for you!



QEP Director's Corner

Kevin Shriner, M.A., M.Ed., Associate Dean, First Year Experience and Academic Success

The recommendations of the *Foundations of Excellence (FOE)* committees are providing a strong foundation for our FYE program and cornerstone course. The emerging construction-related theme of foundations and cornerstones will be continued in the FYE website design and marketing materials. The website launch is planned in early April.

I invite your comments concerning the working draft of Edison's New Student philosophy statement, developed by the FOE Philosophy subcommittee and the FYE Communications and Marketing Committee. Email kshriner@edison.edu or phone me at ext. 1632.

"At Edison State College we value student success and therefore commit to creating a foundation for our students by encouraging the development of critical thinking skills, making the acquisition of knowledge relevant to their lives, providing them with strategies to succeed in life, and giving them opportunities in and outside of the College to apply their learning."