NC A&T State University’s

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

• SACS Criteria for QEPs
• University Community Input Phase I
• Existing University Data Collection
• University Community Input Phase II
• Strategic Plans, Visions, Missions
• Decision on the QEP
• Writing the QEP
• Marketing the QEP
• Funding the QEP
SACS Criteria for QEPs

- Purpose is to improve some aspect of student achievement or the learning environment
- QEP idea selected based on input from the broader university community
- Idea selected based on empirical data (e.g., NSSE)
- Idea selected to relate to the University’s strategic plan, mission, vision (FUTURES and UNC Tomorrow)
- Must be well focused. (“improve advisement” is too vague)
- Use actual student learning outcome achievement data (not course grades) to evaluate the success of the QEP once it is implemented
QEP Topic Identification Process

Not a top-down process. SACS requires community input.

Input; Phase I
University Data

Input; Phase II
UNC Tomorrow

Buy-In & Input this Summer

Write QEP this Summer

$ Marketing $ Fall & Spring
University Community Input Phase I

- **Nominal Group** Technique with all schools/colleges, for faculty, staff, and administrators (400+ participated). Resulted in Top 5 Improvements: Study Skills, Reading Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Writing Skills, and Experiential Learning.

- **Staff focus group** (1 group). Ranked top concern from faculty list and added to list of improvements.

- **Student focus groups** (4 groups). Ranked top concern from faculty list and added to list of improvements. (SoT, SoAg, CoEng, Student Athletes)

- **Student survey** (700+). Ranked faculty list. Study Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Reading Skills, Writing Skills, and Experiential Learning.

- **Alumni blog**: listed improvements that included more internships, start coops, better career planning, analytical skills.

- **Alumni survey** (low return rate, 6%, 30 out of 500) Made up for this later

- **Board of Trustees** (8 of 13, 61%) listed improvements: retention, basic skills, student services.
Existing University Data Collected

- **Sophomore and senior surveys:** sophomores rated career related services and advising related items low; seniors had higher rates of satisfaction.

- **Collegiate Learning Assessment:** near lowest among schools, slightly lower than expected based on SAT scores, gains during school similar to other schools.

- **National Survey of Student Engagement:** lower faculty support, less class prep, less writing, less speaking/presentation, less quantitative analysis, less advisement, more critical thinking, more computer use.

- **Faculty Survey of Student Engagement:** require less writing, advise less, structure courses to foster critical thinking.

- **Wabash** (used CLA and NSSE-type questions): lower critical thinking, lower SATs, lower positive attitudes toward reading, higher at wanting to succeed at business, higher at wanting to make a lot of money.
Existing University Data Collected

- **Accuplacer**: 48% of incoming freshmen scored below cutoff score in math
- **High failure rate courses**: mostly math related courses
- **Praxis I scores**: low in writing and math but very low in reading
- **UNST annual reports**: year 1 report showed deficits, year 2 report showed improvement and satisfactory progress, noted that departments are not addressing UNST objectives
- **Student Services annual/consultant reports**: CAE – weak connection to academic programs, should include career counseling w/ advisement, Career Services – big disparity in schools/colleges that get interviews at career fairs and those who don’t get interviews
- **Department five-year reports**: retention varies, professional exam have satisfactory pass rates
- **Accreditation Reports**: Electrical Engineering concludes that students are not prepared for college.
- **Internships, coops, special advisement**: schools/colleges little response
All groups were able to see input from other groups.

Each group rated the importance of an area of achievement improvement AND rated how well the University is performing in that area.

Results provided us with a matrix.

Sent out final survey for faculty vote on main focus of QEP.
Importance-Performance Analysis with Faculty, Staff, Admin – Alumni – Student Data

- Advisement Procedure
- Advisement Quality
- Analytical skills
- Ongoing assessment and tracking
- Oral communication skills
- Critical thinking
- Writing
- Student motivation
- Reading
- Student class prep
- Awareness of student support services

Adjusted IP Analysis

- Faculty
- Student
- Alumni
- Grand Mean
Final QEP Survey

- Asked faculty to vote for one area to be the focus of the QEP.

- Choices: writing skills, reading skills, critical thinking skills, oral communication skills, analytical skills

- Schools/Colleges: all 9
- Departments: 32
- Return rate: 40%

- Writing: 75
- Critical thinking: 88
- Oral communication: 16
- Reading: 38
- Analytical: 42
Strategic Plans, Visions, Missions

- FUTURES = Interdisciplinary + Global
- UNC Tomorrow = Global + Community + Economics + Public School Education + Health…
- A&T Vision = Learner centered + intellectual capital + interdisciplinary + discovery + engagement + excellence
- A&T Mission = Research intensive + research clusters (2008-2010 Undergraduate Bulletin)
- Both UNC Tomorrow response reports identify that basic skills will be the focus of UNST
- However, UNST states that departments are not integrating UNST
Decision on the QEP

Critical Connections

- Primary Focus: Critical Thinking
- Related Writing, Reading, Analysis, Speaking
- Global context – connect to UNC-Tomorrow
- Undergraduate student research as vehicle
- Outcomes defined by CLA rubric
- Builds on UNST but not done by UNST
- Freshman to Senior
- Design the basic curriculum
- Schools/Colleges customize and integrate with disciplinary content as a vehicle
- Might designate a core course per department per freshman to senior year/chairs: every course
- Requires student outcome assessment
- Benchmarks for QEP evaluation
- Should become part of strategic plan for SACS to view it with confidence
Writing the Critical Connections QEP

- Approved by Chancellor’s Cabinet, Dean’s Council
- George Stone and Vincent Childress, lead writers of summer draft
- Stephen McCrary-Henderson, Loury Floyd, Robin Lyles, and the 12-monthers and summer school QEP committee members have volunteered participation
- Department chairs need to provide input and feedback during this summer while the QEP is being written.
- Literature review: just completed
- Overall concepts/outline
- Input sessions
- Writing
- Feedback sessions
- Writing

Chairs and summer faculty (and some students) are absolutely needed to participate in planning talks this June and July. Deans should also participate when able.
Marketing Critical Connections

- Once the QEP topic is developed, the whole University must know of it and why it is important. Everyone must know what the QEP is or SACS will make a recommendation.

- Vincent Childress should be able to supervise the marketing effort while concentrating more on QEP revisions. Marketing subcommittee, and lead marketing person, should have QEP marketing as their primary responsibility. They must be engaging of the whole University and energetic in their efforts.

- **Print Materials:**
  - Parking hang tags
  - Banners on key buildings
  - Posters in dorms and all buildings
  - Poster on closed circuit TV
  - Aggie Report
  - Materials that each professor can teach to his or her own students
  - University homepage
  - Sports ticker at the stadium /gym
  - Give-a-ways at key locations [pencils, calculators, note pads]
  - Tent cards in the cafeteria

- **Human Intervention:**
  - Radio show
  - Regular radio ads
  - Promotional contests across all groups of students: Greeks, department clubs, dorms, cafeteria, etc.
  - Information sessions with school/college administrators, faculty, and staff
  - Information sessions with ALL divisions, NOT JUST Academic Affairs
  - Visit each department
  - Visit each office
Funding
Critical Connections Marketing

● We will have to find money to fund the marketing items.

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● Human Intervention:
  - Regular radio ads including off campus radio
  - Contest rewards

What are some other ideas for funding these?
During the writing of the actual QEP, we have to find money to fund it for academic year 2010 – 2011 and the following four years.

Possible Costs:
- Director
- Overhead
- SPA
- Student support
- Consultant fees
- Student assessment
- QEP evaluation costs
- Faculty professional development

What are some other ideas for funding these?