

## **QEP Leadership Meeting February 22, 2010 Minutes**

**Members Present:** Karen Downey, Dwight Rhodes, Chris Chance, Johanna Hume

**Not Present:** Manuela Imthurn, Bill Lewis

**I. Documents e-mailed prior to meeting:** Agenda, The Quality Enhancement Plan/2007, Timeline Considerations, Great Institution Case Study, Agreement on Joint Reaffirmation Committee Visits, Procedures for Visits, List of Quality Enhancement Plans (with links).

### **II. Additional Documents:**

Karen distributed timeline and discussed upcoming dates.

Karen distributed her synopsis of the QEP.

Chris distributed information on gatekeeper courses that was discussed at an early Achieve the Dream meeting/workshop.

### **III. QEP Discussion:**

The committee discussed the need for the QEP to be focused and measurable. It was decided that the committee needed to “frame the argument” instead of soliciting undirected suggestions from faculty. With that in mind, the committee discussed what 2-4 suggestions should be submitted for faculty input.

Chris discussed Achieve the Dream and stated that positive results have been gathered from all areas including tutoring, the Psyc 1300 classes and the Writing Center.

A short discussion centered on the need for data that shows the QEP is necessary. For example, would it be possible to solicit feedback from UHCL on ACC transfer students? It was decided that faculty at UHCL would not have a sense of which students were from ACC. Although we have positive GPA data, and ACC is consistently ranked #1 in transfer student GPAs, this is not information that identifies any particular weaknesses. It would be easier to gather data from employers of graduates from technical programs, such as Court Reporting or Nursing or from Workforce Development. It might be better to collect in-house data on drop-out rates, failure rates, etc.

### **IV. Faculty Survey:**

The committee decided to submit three QEP proposals to the faculty.

1. Academic Honesty. The committee as a whole favors this plan. Dwight did raise some reservations on how well this plan would go over with the community, and it was agreed that, if chosen, this would need to be worded carefully.

Pros: It's easy to prove that we do not have a uniform policy. Drew stated in an earlier meeting that our legal counsel is adamant about our need to have a uniform policy, so this is an issue that will need to be implemented regardless. Data would not be difficult to find regarding national surveys and statistics. Stephanie Stockstill has ready data on how many reports are filed. A survey could be given to faculty regarding how many instances of cheating they encounter, how many they report, problems with online

research methods, issues with plagiarism/paraphrasing, etc. Students could also be polled. A QEP that focused on this issue could include behavior changes which could lead to better learning/academics as well as a focus on student values. All of these are acceptable reasons to pick a QEP. In addition, academic honesty would affect most areas of the college. Finally, significant funding would probably not be needed.

Cons: We don't want the QEP to frame ACC as a "cheating" college or for the community or board to get the idea that this is an issue that faculty routinely ignore or that all students engage in. The college would need to emphasize the desirability of "ensuring" academic honesty and improving student research and paraphrasing/writing efforts.

2. Reading. This will need to be refined and will need to be focused and specific. Pros: This could be an extension of Achieve the Dream. Since much is already in place, programs can be extended instead of created from scratch. It would be easy to compile data on the need to improve student reading. This topic touches all classes. All faculty would agree that college-level reading is essential and that this problem is serious and widespread. There are many colleges that have already used this issue as a QEP. There should be many examples of QEPs, already in place, that we could follow if we choose this one.

Cons: It might be difficult to come up with what the QEP will specifically be doing and how it is going to be evaluated/measured. Funding may also be an issue.

3. Mentors/Social Workers: Johanna mentioned that, in one early Achieve the Dream meeting, the coaches discussed some programs that were already successful. One was a program in which faculty (and possibly staff) were given several students for a year. They were to monitor those students and their progress, essentially being their "social workers." They were not academic mentors necessarily. They simply kept in touch once or twice a month and monitored grades, progress, problems, etc. Apparently, this program saw a huge improvement in retention rates with those students who participated.

Pros: This would be an inexpensive program. If staff were included as "mentors," the QEP would touch most areas of the college. Data on the need to increase retention is easy to find. It might be a QEP that was easy to measure in terms of student outcomes and success.

Cons: The committee needs to create a good name for the program/plan. Retention may not be something the faculty is as interested in as the first two possibilities.

## **V. Assignments:**

Dwight will look into community input. This could be from businesses, board, schools, etc. In addition, Dwight will write a paragraph on the possibility of Academic Integrity being our QEP.

Chris will write a synopsis of QEP, in lay terms, as well as why it should be a positive addition to Self-Study and not just a mandatory addition.

Johanna will write a paragraph on the social worker program as a possible QEP.

Karen will write a paragraph on reading as a possible QEP.

Bill is working on a budget for the committee.

## **VI. Additional members and help:**

Karen suggested that every committee member find a “back-up” faculty member who will be on-call to attend meetings if necessary. These faculty, and possibly a staff member for each committee member as well, will also help with reading, literature reviews, compiling data, etc. They will not be actual committee members; however, they can help with the workload, will keep up with the minutes and will help to broaden involvement in the QEP process.

It was agreed that a student ambassador be invited to join the committee. Johanna is going to talk to Liz about possible choices. In addition, Karen is going to ask about a stipend for an adjunct faculty member to join the committee.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The committee agreed to have a meeting every 2-3 weeks initially this spring in order to get the process started, with a flow of information primarily through emails. Meetings will thereafter be held monthly (or less) on a need-to-meet basis. Mondays at 2:30 and Fridays at 8:00 were fine for all members present. **The next meeting will be Monday, March 8@2:30.**