



**EASTERN
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State College
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KNOW OUR QEP: THE CORE SCHOLAR PROGRAM

SACS Notes

Our Mission: To engage our diverse population in quality accessible learning opportunities which successfully meet individual and community needs.



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We're All In! SACS Visiting Team Arrives Monday, October 21st

The focus of our Fall Welcome Back at the King Center earlier this fall was on our journey to SACS reaffirmation. We highlighted the wide-spread participation in support of the many initiatives implemented during the past few years to advance our institution and improve student learning. Since that time we prepared our Focused Report and submitted it along with the Quality Enhancement Plan: The Core Scholar Program, and the Level II Substantive Change Report which provides quality indicators in support of our offering Bachelor degrees. All of these reports can be found on MyEFSC; just login with your B# and pin and you will see them listed in the upper-right of the screen.

The SACS visiting team will arrive on our campuses for a 4-day visit on Monday, October, 21st during which time they will talk with students, faculty, staff, administrators, and board members about our institution. The team of 12, made up of presidents, administrators, deans, and faculty from other institutions in the SACS region outside of Florida, will visit all campuses along with some of our off-site dual enrollment facilities to get the full picture of our institution. The highlight of the visit will be on Tuesday, when the QEP Team will present the **Core Scholar Program** to the visiting team for their enjoyment and review. On Wednesday, the visiting team will split up to attend 3 separate luncheons; one with students, one with faculty and staff, and one with the College leadership. Then first thing Thursday morning they will present their findings, which will complete their visit.





Did you know...?

Did you know that our President, Dr. Jim Richey has been on two SACS on-site visiting teams? Last year, he spent a week at Greenville Technical College in Greenville, South Carolina, serving as a SACS reviewer during that college's reaffirmation. He also visited Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina, last month as a part of their SACS Reaffirmation Committee.

Dr. Richey has brought many lessons learned back to our institution and has shared them with the Eastern Florida teams as preparations continue for the SACS on-site visit during the week of Oct. 21. "My experiences with the Greenville and Central Piedmont reaffirmations were invaluable in helping us get ready for our own SACS visit," said Richey. "My gratitude goes out to everyone here at Eastern Florida who has devoted countless hours to the process. It's a true team effort and I know we'll be successful."

Career & Technical Program Assessment

BY KIMBERLY GREENE

Good news! Based upon student assessment data, Eastern Florida State College (EFSC) has been deemed compliant in Section 3.3.1.1 Educational Programs by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The SACS off-site report stated, "The institution has developed a comprehensive program for the assessment of student learning outcomes and uses the results to improve student learning and the quality of educational programs for all levels and delivery modalities." All of your efforts and hard work have paid off, so congratulations to *everyone* involved in the collection and reporting of student assessment data!

Career and Technical program assessment started in 2008-09 using the Program Assessment Submittal System (PASS). A total of 12 Career Tech programs reported assessment data based on final grades. It progressed to 26 programs in 2009-10, still using final grade data. By 2011-12, all 50 A.S., A.A.S., A.T.D. and P.S.A.V. programs developed program assessment plans using direct measures to assess student learning outcomes.

The Core Abilities Survey (CAS) is a separate and different process from that being implemented by the Assessment Committee. All faculty members are asked to participate in the Core Abilities survey – General Education faculty members as well as Career and Technical faculty members. The Core Abilities Survey not only shows *where* our Core Abilities are assessed, but also the *extent* to which they are being assessed. The Core Abilities Survey began in fall 2011 with less than 500 sections reporting results. The survey has been done every semester since and has continuously grown in participation to more than 1200 results reported spring term 2013.

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In preparation for our SACS on-site visit just around the corner, student artifacts (examples of student work), the grading criteria and completed grading rubrics are needed to support the assessment results data. All faculty members reporting 2012-13 data in CAS and/or PASS should have received an email outlining the artifact collection process.

Those Career and Technical programs offering courses in *summer 2013* that are linked to student learning outcomes will be asked to report student data in mid-to-late October. Student data on the Core Abilities and career programs student learning outcomes for *fall 2013* will be collected in early January 2014.

Please contact Kimberly Greene at greenek@easternflorida.edu, 321-433-7727 with any questions.



General Education Assessment

BY KATINA GOTHARD

The Assessment Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) formed in the spring of 2011. This committee consists of ten faculty members and three administrators. The Assessment Committee is charged with the development and implementation of an evaluation framework to assess student learning outcomes.-

Since the Career and Technical Programs had already begun the assessment process, the Assessment Committee decided to begin our work by focusing on the A.A. Program. We have since worked diligently with the A.A. faculty to establish a process for assessing the College's established Core Abilities. During the first phase of this initiative, Critical Thinking was identified as the Core Ability most represented in the majority of the high-enrollment courses taken during a student's career at the College. Twenty two faculty members from seven high enrolled courses were recruited to develop analytic rubrics and activities to assess the Critical Thinking Core Ability in their courses. After this framework was tested by the faculty teams and vetted by the Assessment Committee, the assessment initiative was expanded in Academic Year 2012-13 to include the remaining Core Abilities in thirty five A.A. courses with participation from all 175 A.A. faculty members.

AC meeting agendas and minutes along with analytic rubrics and other resources are available on the Web!

Visit the Academic Affairs Council Web Page and click on AAC Subcommittees

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This fall 2013 semester, the Assessment Committee will continue to work with faculty in the A.A. Program to finalize and approve the rubrics and assessment tools that were piloted during the spring 2013 semester. During the spring 2014 semester, using the discipline-approved rubrics and assessment tools, the Assessment Committee will significantly expand the collection of student performance data. All 175 full-time A.A. faculty members, as well as a random sampling of the part-time A.A. faculty, will be involved in this process.

In addition to our work with the A.A. Program, we plan to 1) develop standards for the selection and validation of performance measures, benchmarks, and assessment tools used by all programs, 2) create a college-wide assessment handbook, and 3) create a 3-5 year assessment plan for the A.A. Program.

We are looking to expand our membership so please contact us if you are interested in joining our committee. The work is challenging, but our group dynamic is fantastic. You will find everyone on the committee is brilliant, amazingly talented, and dedicated to improving the student experience.

OUR QEP: The Core Scholar Program

BY DR. RAMONA SMITH

As many of you know by now, a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a requirement of our Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaffirmation. The QEP is defined by SACS as a course of actions for institutional improvement that addresses one or more issues contributing to student learning and student success. The focus of the QEP should be to enhance student learning. It is the only part of the reaffirmation process that looks towards the future. It was important for us to consider input from faculty, staff, students & the community, along with college data, to support our choices and form our goals from the very beginning. Then we developed a detailed plan to accomplish those goals based on the literature and available best practices. We have to show it can be sustainable at EFSC and that we have institutional dedication and capability to complete the 5 year plan.

At the time of our reaffirmation, our QEP will be evaluated based on for criteria; 1) the scope and focus, 2) our institutional capability and commitment to implementation, 3) our assessment plan, 4) and the level of campus involvement in developing the plan. The major focus of the on-site visit in October will surround the Quality Enhancement Plan. All employees and the students need to be familiar with the QEP plan, as a result. That is why over the next couple of months, you will start to see more and more signs and reminders of our QEP.

Our QEP plan is the “Core Scholar Program.” The purpose of this QEP is to equip our students with the basic skills (a combination of academic and soft skills) necessary for success in college and eventually the workplace. While some of these strategies are completely new, some require building upon the successes of existing resources and improving the processes to make them more visible to our students. The program is a voluntary program for any EFSC student. If they complete all requirements, they will be given perks such as early registration, distinctions at graduation, mention on transcripts, networking sessions within their chosen career fields, and other incentives to be determined. The Core Scholar Program includes participation in four strategies designed to improve the basic skills of our students:

- Peer Tutoring in high impact courses by students identified by their instructors as having been successful in the course
- Success Coaching to help our students overcome obstacles by utilizing college services & resources
- Soft Skills Workshops covering topics our students have requested, such as time management, organization and study skills
- Learning Communities designed to help our students examine their career options and identify a Major Area of Interest (MAI)

All of these initiatives will be available to any of our students, but only Core Scholars will be required to participate in all of them. Designing this program has been an incredibly broad-based process. The number of people who joined together to work on these initiatives is impressive. Our team consists of faculty (both adjunct and full-time from most disciplines), staff (including advisors), campus coordinators, student activity directors, the



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QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN



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learning lab staff, career center staff, library faculty and staff, data analysts, and the list goes on. If you name a group on campus, chances are they had a say in the direction of the QEP. We have also enjoyed great support and cooperation by our Executive Council, which has certainly made the process easier.

We have used that momentum to produce some great activities and events on our campuses. You might remember the “Get in the Game” themed Welcome Back event last fall, and the similarly themed events at the Student Welcome Backs as well. You probably saw or participated in the QEP Zombie Chases that Mary Roslonowski headed up, or the Food For Feedback project that Tony Akers led. In addition, we have run yoga sessions and “Minute to Win It” games collegewide to promote our soft skills sessions. We held contests to design the QEP logo and a video contest to advertise the Core Scholar Program. We have asked for your participation and input, and you delivered.

As fun as the process has been, developing our QEP was a huge responsibility. A QEP Steering Committee, chaired by Dr. Ramona Smith, was formed and began the work over 2 years ago. Since then, the following subcommittees have been developed to further that work:

- Learning Community (MAI) Subcommittee – chaired by Barbara Kennedy & Mark Quathamer
- Success Coaching Subcommittee – chaired by Melissa Alvarez-Mangual
- Peer Tutoring Subcommittee – chaired by Dale McGinnis
- Soft Skills Workshops Subcommittee – chaired by Sandi Melkonian
- Marketing Subcommittee – chaired by Dayla Nolis

Thank you everyone for the support our committee has enjoyed. Thank you for sharing your ideas and time. The Core Scholar Program is an amazing project that will no doubt be a great benefit to our students!



SACS Reaffirmation

BY DR. JAYNE GORHAM

Our journey to reaffirmation started a little over a year and a half ago when we established 8 writing teams led by the 3 Vice Presidents, and 5 Provosts with the mission of writing our compliance certification report which is made up of 92 requirements and standards. In late summer and fall of last year the teams were busy writing and rewriting narratives and gathering and creating supporting documentation to make our case for compliance.

Late last November, we sent out a call for volunteers to help us review and strengthen the draft of the report. Approximately 30 people from across the college stepped up to participate.

During the winter break we had 3 outside consultants, who are experienced SACS reviewers, review our draft. In January, armed with the feedback from those two review processes, the writing teams went back at it and revised their reports and gathered more supporting evidence. When February rolled around, it was time to do the final edit and style and format review to prepare the document for submittal to SACS. To do this, we established what we affectionately referred to as the “war room” where approximately 20 additional volunteers gathered in a computer lab every day for three weeks to standardize the language and formatting of the document. The narrative had to be put into one voice, every Internet link had to be tested and converted into a PDF for offline viewing, and all acronyms and punctuation had to be standardized. Having everyone in one space together allowed for constant communication about on the fly decisions and the energy among the group was amazing.

Our efforts resulted in a high quality SACS Compliance Report which is 410 pages of narrative and thousands of pages of compelling evidence describing the excellence of Eastern Florida State College. The complete report is available on our myEFSC Portal (once you log in to myEFSC, the report is located in the upper right).

At the end of May, the first official SACS review was completed and we received the initial findings from the off-site review team. Out of the 94 sections, 84 were judged as compliant and 8 were judged as non-compliant. This is a very good off-site review. In fact, according to our SACS Vice President, “This was an excellent off-site review. I think the fewest non-compliance judgments for an institution I’ve seen is 6 and the most 47.”

Over the summer we’ve been writing what is referred to as a focused report and strengthening our case for compliance in those 8 areas. Just a few weeks ago our SACS Vice President visited the college and her cursory review of our efforts to close the gaps was quite positive. That report was submitted in early September and the SACS on-site visiting team will arrive on our campuses during the week of October 21st. When they complete their visit, we will know their initial findings so stay tuned for an update at that time.



**SACS
Compliance
Report and the
QEP Report are
available on
myEFSC!**

**Get Caught Wearing the
QEP LOGO**

PALM BAY, COCOA & TITUSVILLE CAMPUSES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21st

MELBOURNE CAMPUS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22nd

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