



Isothermal Community College

The focus statement of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Isothermal Community College is empowering students to complete their educational goals through academic planning and problem solving. Three specific initiatives have been identified: Mandatory Orientation, Mandatory ACA (First Year Experience course), and Proactive Advising. Through these three initiatives, Isothermal will prepare students to achieve their goals by starting their college experience with a strong foundation, hence our QEP slogan “Start Strong. Finish Stronger.”

In the development of the QEP, the college community explored barriers to credential completion, which aligns with the college’s strategic goals. Key stakeholder groups indicated that knowing how the institution works and knowing how to effectively and efficiently complete a credential were the most significant factors. Orientation was created in both online and in-person formats to meet the diverse needs of students’ schedules and to address common student pitfalls in the first few weeks of classes (i.e. technology, college policies and procedures, financial aid, etc.). The ACA course was redesigned from a capstone course to an in-depth orientation course. A new assignment, the Master Academic Plan or MAP, was added to the course to give all students a defined goal and semester-by-semester plan. Lastly, a proactive, early intervention model was incorporated into the QEP through the First in the World grant. The model employs an alert software and a support team of faculty and staff to personally reach out to students who demonstrate at-risk behaviors in order to help them successfully overcome their barriers. Together these initiatives will improve the college’s ability to facilitate students’ efforts to attain a credential.

Assessment of the QEP will focus on student learning, environment improvement, and institution effectiveness. Student learning will be measured by a rubric adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ VALUE rubrics. The environment improvements will be measured by participation in training sessions and satisfaction surveys. Institutional effectiveness will be primarily measured by completion and retention rates. All in all, this a campus-wide effort to empower students to achieve their goals from admission to graduation.

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