

## ***The Ripple Effect: Transforming Student Success in Distance Learning, One Student & One Instructor at a Time***

**The Quality Enhancement Plan of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College • Richmond, Virginia**

---

*The Ripple Effect: Transforming Student Success in Distance Learning, One Student & One Instructor at a Time* seeks to significantly impact distance learning at the institution by focusing upon student readiness, student orientation and integrated student support services, and faculty training.

### ***Student Readiness for Distance Learning***

***The college will implement the use of a student readiness tool to help students, advisors, and faculty assess individual students' levels of preparation for distance learning, and to guide the college in its development of student remediation modules for distance learners.*** Student readiness for distance learning is critical for student success. JSRCC will implement the use of an evaluative instrument—SmarterMeasure (formerly known as READI)—that will help students identify their skill levels and adaptability to distance learning. As a result, students and their advisors will be able to make informed decisions about distance learning opportunities. The institutional results of SmarterMeasure will also be assessed and used to develop remediation modules for students.

### ***Student Orientation to and Integrated Student Support for Distance Learning***

***The orientation module will focus on preparing students for distance learning, will be delivered to students prior to their enrollment in distance learning courses, and will emulate the best practices of distance education. Further, these efforts will be supported by the development of a holistic model of student support services for distance learning.*** Students planning to enroll in distance learning classes will complete a *Student Orientation to Distance Learning* module. This module will introduce the student both to the technological skills required for effective distance learning and to the challenges of self-directed learning. Students who demonstrate weak skills in this orientation will be directed to remediation modules. Additionally, as students progress into their distance learning courses, they will be systematically provided access to and information about the student support services that exist at the college. These support elements will be integrated through a team approach built upon the understanding that instructors, student advisors, academic support services, and the Center for Distance Learning all play vital and overlapping roles in assisting students to achieve academic success.

### ***Faculty Training in Distance Learning***

***The college will articulate, develop, and implement a comprehensive faculty training program for faculty who are teaching or who plan to teach distance learning courses; further, through the training program, faculty who achieve the highest level of training will serve as peer mentors in distance learning.*** Once implemented, the *Faculty Training in Distance Learning* program will focus on 1) increasing faculty knowledge and skills in best practices in distance education, 2) providing faculty access to information and resources in effective distance learning strategies and technologies, and 3) promoting and expanding an already-established institutional culture of ongoing faculty development. Additionally, through its intended *Ripple Effect*, the training program will also impact students and instructors in the physical classroom as, increasingly, overlapping teaching strategies are used within on-campus and online instructional spaces.

This QEP's tripartite approach targets the two primary obstacles to student success in distance education: the transition of the learner into the online classroom and the preparation of the instructor for this instructional context. By addressing both areas of concern simultaneously, JSRCC will effectively enhance the experiences of students *and* faculty in distance learning and witness the collateral benefits that accompany these transformations. This QEP seeks to impact student success with the following defined and measureable positive outcomes:

- sustained student retention in distance learning courses
- enhanced student success in passing distance learning courses
- increased student and faculty satisfaction with the quality of learning and experience in distance learning courses

#### **PRIMARY CONTACT**

Dr. Ghazala Hashmi, QEP Coordinator  
[ghashmi@reynolds.edu](mailto:ghashmi@reynolds.edu) • 804.523.5515