



YOUR FUTURE. OUR FOCUS.

Office of the President

July 24, 2008

Dr. Donna Wilkinson, Vice President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA. 30033-4097

Dear Donna:

I am sending you the Executive Summary of Lord Fairfax Community College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), "Seeking the Ox: Developing Critical Thinkers at Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC)." The plan reflects the College's broad efforts to research, establish, and develop critical thinking as an integral part of every aspect of life at the College. A wide range of LFCC partners have indicated critical thinking as a crucial and foundational skill for student success, whether in the workforce or in transfer to four-year undergraduate education.

Stakeholders in every area of LFCC's community, including employees, students, College and Foundation Board members, alumni and service area employers, contributed to the Quality Enhancement Plan. Their efforts demonstrate a solid commitment to the College and a strong belief in the value of critical thinking in every avenue of life. I am pleased to present the QEP as evidence of their hard work and dedication. Progress on the plan continues according to schedule, and curriculum enrichment is well underway.

We trust that the QEP will continue to inform collaboration, innovation, and improvement at LFCC. Likewise, we trust that the critical thinking skills and processes described in the Plan will continue to enhance every aspect of life at the College. We invite interested parties to contact Lord Fairfax Community College's QEP Director for further information on the QEP process at the College.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

John S. Capps
Interim President

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**SEEKING THE OX: DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKERS AT LFCC
LORD FAIRFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

The Quality Enhancement Plan of Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC), entitled "Seeking the Ox: Developing Critical Thinkers at LFCC," aims to create a culture of critical thinking (CT) which permeates all aspects of the College community. The outcome of a critical thinking culture will be improved critical thinking skills among students. These skills include the ability to

- Explain, analyze and synthesize what we see, hear and read
- Use creativity to discover multiple and diverse approaches to issues
- Find relevant information to address tasks and problems
- Evaluate claims and evidence to draw reasonable conclusions
- Justify conclusions and solutions
- Apply concepts to real-world problems
- See connections and patterns both within disciplines and across disciplines
- Reflect on our own thinking and learning.

The title of our QEP is adapted from a series of traditional Buddhist images showing a young man's search for an ox (representing knowledge) and the process by which the ox becomes a part of the seeker's world. This theme highlights the multiple contexts and extensive time required to develop critical thinking skills across the curriculum.

The QEP plan promotes cultural change through three goals: fostering awareness and understanding of CT among college employees in all disciplines and units, enhancing critical thinking skills in all courses and programs, and encouraging critical thinking practice outside the classroom. Activities to support these goals include a campus-wide professional development plan, a critical thinking mini-grant program to support innovations, and both print and electronic resources for faculty and staff. In addition, the College will infuse at least one of six general CT learning outcomes into all courses, and the College will implement institutional and course-based assessment of CT, using three nationally normed instruments as well as faculty developed assessment tasks. Finally, the College will promote a series of extra-curricular activities to highlight CT outside the classroom.

QEP Director: Dr. Miriam Moore, Professor of English/ESL

Email: mmoore2@lfcc.edu

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