

Our Lady of Holy Cross College

New Orleans, Louisiana

Quality Enhancement Plan: "Preparing Students for Success Program"

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Executive Summary

Our Lady of Holy Cross College is a Catholic college founded by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. Guided by a mission statement that directs its community to share their "educational resources with all" and by the Marianite tradition of "standing with those who are excluded," the College recognizes its ethical and moral obligation to increase its attention to under prepared students who, without sufficient support, may not have a chance to succeed in college. These guiding principles led the faculty to choose, and the President of the College to support, the topic of developmental learning for the College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

Our mission and strong desire to nurture student success translates into acceptance of a substantial number of incoming freshmen (~ 30%) who must take at least one developmental course. We believe our freshmen significantly benefit from our state of the art developmental learning program. Recent research on best practices in developmental education supports our centralized, cohesive and holistic program. The faculty concurs with the research and supports the QEP which led to the creation and implementation of the developmental program entitled "Preparing Students for Success."

The Preparing Students for Success Program is designed to improve student learning and academic success opportunities for students enrolled in developmental courses. It is also intended to promote their success in subsequent general education courses. Program features include the hire of a coordinator to oversee the program, encouraging students in developmental classes to attend tutoring, including counseling sessions as a course component, emphasizing advising, and using varied assessment tools, such as pre- and post-testing in developmental classes.

In addition to the above-mentioned programmatic features, instruction in developmental courses emphasizes best practices in developmental learning, as advocated by the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE). Consistency in the use of best practices across developmental courses is enhanced through uniform syllabi, supervision by the Coordinator of the Program, increased professional development opportunities, and communication amongst Program faculty at regularly scheduled meetings. The ultimate aim of the pedagogical strategies used is to create optimal student-centered learning opportunities different from traditional lecture-based college instruction.

One of the important aspects of the Preparing Students for Success Program is the support for faculty members who are being trained today in best instructional practices as advocated by educational literature, a review of similar programs at other colleges and universities, and NADE recommendations. Formative and summative assessments monitor program effectiveness, measure student learning, and promote on-going Program improvement. The Program was initiated in the fall of 2009.