

Rappahannock Community College

Quality Enhancement Plan: First Year Experience



Executive Summary

Rappahannock Community College (RCC) embraces the philosophy that a First Year Experience (FYE) program will provide students with a foundation of skills and connections to the College that will lead to increased student learning and success. This tenant is embedded in the College's mission, Strategic Plan, and the individual expressions of the College community's commitment to students. The development of an FYE program is the College community's response to the needs of its student population. The implementation of an FYE program provides the support that undergirds a less experienced student population (21% increase of 18-20 year olds from 2004-2007), primarily composed of first generation college students (66% of spring 2007 students) and fundamentally under-prepared for college level coursework (1,965 from 2005-2007 enrolled in developmental courses) (New Student Orientation Seminar Clicker Survey, 2008; Developmental Studies Institution Effectiveness Team, 2007). These student characteristics present opportunities for RCC to develop an FYE program that promotes student success.

The QEP describes the College's blueprint for building the foundation for student success through an FYE program that seeks to increase student success in first year classes; improve first year student persistence; increase student affiliation with RCC and create a campus climate where students develop significant satisfaction with the FYE program. This effort will begin with the incremental establishment of three FYE curricular components: 1) the redesign of the first year seminar, Student Success Skills 100 (SDV 100); 2) the creation of the FYE Cohort, a modified learning community; and 3) the revised delivery of college information to first year students. These components are the basis for an FYE program that provides a platform for assessment and data driven improvements through continued allocated resources. This dedication to the College's FYE program ensures that student "Success Starts Here" (RCC's FYE slogan).

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