

QEP Title: Think More, Be More: Learning Employability Skills Through Critical Thinking

Institution: Savannah Technical College

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Executive Summary

The Savannah Technical College Quality Enhancement Plan seeks to enhance the employability skills of students and graduates through teaching that is focused on the improvement of students' critical thinking skills. The College sought to address a Student Work Ethics program that was deemed overly subjective and nonproductive. The resulting literature review revealed:

- An overlap of the skills addressed in the Student Work Ethics program and the employability skills discussed in the literature;
- A linkage between critical thinking and employability skills;
- A significant disparity between students' perceptions of their own employability skills and employer's perceptions of those skills; and
- The validity of the Conover Workplace Readiness Assessment in assessing both critical thinking and employability skills.

The foundation of this QEP will be (1) the administration of the Conover Workplace Readiness Assessment (CWRA) to all students during their first semester at the College, and (2) the addition to every credit course of a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) exercise designed to improve student's critical thinking skills. The initial administration of the CWRA will identify the baseline critical thinking and employability skills of the student, and also those areas that should be improved. During their program tenure, students will be provided access to online training developed by Conover to specifically address those areas needing improvement. The new Critical Thinking SLO's will integrate instruction on critical thinking contextually into every course, thereby providing students with relevant circumstances in which to hone their critical thinking skills during their time in their chosen program. Each of these SLO's will call for students to gather, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas that inform their habits and behaviors. They will then describe, discuss and demonstrate employable habits and behaviors in an industry context specific to their program of study. Finally, the capstone course of every program will include a second administration of the Conover Workplace Readiness Assessment for the purpose of measuring improvements in the critical thinking and employability skills of the student since admission to the program. Evaluation of the QEP, specifically through comparison of graduating students' CWRA scores to their initial scores, and post-graduation industry surveys, will be reported annually.

Think More, Be More will be administered within the Institutional Effectiveness Division of the College, and implemented by the QEP Director, a full-time employee of the College. Savannah Technical College has committed the necessary financial resources to implement *Think More, Be More* during the next five years.