

***E-Focused!* Enhancing Student Learning in Online Courses by Improving Institutional Readiness**

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) of Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) is designed to enhance online learning for freshman students, entering and transfer, who have completed less than 30 credit hours. The hard lessons learned from the Katrina and Rita hurricane disasters of Fall 2005, when many displaced SUNO students were calling to express a strong desire to continue with their studies at the institution, greatly influenced the choice of the QEP topic. *E-Focused* specifically promises a well-planned preparedness for any such future calamities and addresses measurable activities and assessments for increasing student learning, performance and success in online courses.

The **Goal** addresses student readiness for online learning by focusing on their technical competence in introductory Biology and English courses. Three (3) objectives are supported by nine (9) Student Learning Outcomes (SLO). **Objective 1:** To formally assess freshman students' *technical readiness* for online learning. The *SmarterMeasure* assessment will be applied as a pre- and post-test tool. Students who perform well will be allowed to enroll in the online sections of Biology 105 and English 111 for SLO 1.1. Students who do not meet the pre-test readiness benchmark will be directed to *SmarterMeasure's* remedial-type resource links or be required to enroll in the JRDV 111-H College Survival Skills course and be assisted formally by a class Instructor. **Objective 2:** To promote student effectiveness in the use of technology to improve their performance in online learning (*technical skills*). Seven (7) SLOs (SLO 2.1 to 2.7) for this objective will enable the assessment of student basic technological skills, discussion forum participation, assignment submission, participation in chat rooms and live discussions, test taking and submission, help page usage, and communication with faculty and fellow students, e. g. through e-mail or Blackboard Messaging. **Objective 3:** To improve student performance in online course content (*content area competence*). SLO 3.1 supports this objective, and it requires students to demonstrate mastery of the course content for the Biology 105 and English 111 online courses.

The assessment plan consists of three components: 1. Formative assessments of each phase of QEP implementation; 2. Summative assessments of each SLO; 3. Overall assessment of the QEP impact on students, faculty and the institution. Data will be reported annually and used for continuous improvement of online education and related institutional processes.

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