

“A Quest for Quality in Online Instruction”
Quality Enhancement Plan-Executive Summary

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Introduction

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Steering Committee was formed at the beginning of the Spring semester 2006. The committee was charged with gathering information from the college community (involving students, faculty, staff, and community leaders) regarding opportunities for improving student learning at Southside. Data collection was performed via surveys, focus groups, and interviews. A short list of topics was identified as a result of this procedure. Due to the massive geographical service region the college serves, the proliferation of online courses, and rising gas prices, the QEP Steering Committee chose to focus on improving online learning.

QEP Goals

A total of fourteen goals were established to guide the successful implementation of the QEP. Below is a sample of the goals. For a complete list including their rationale and supporting criterion, visit SVCC's Institutional Effectiveness webpage at <http://www.southside.edu/about/ir>.

1. Develop best practices for online instruction.
2. Develop and implement a student online readiness assessment tool.
3. Create a template for online and hybrid courses.
4. Make necessary student services available online.
5. Compare the variability in student success between online/seated courses.
6. Provide relevant professional development opportunities for online faculty.
7. Improve the college's website to support online learners.

QEP Implementation

After the QEP Steering Committee fulfilled its charge the membership combined with the membership of the college's Teaching and Learning Through Technology (TLTR) committee to form the QEP Implementation Committee. This new committee is co-chaired by a faculty member from each campus. Its charge is to facilitate the achievement of all fourteen QEP goals in accordance with the QEP timeline. Implementation is being coordinated through QEP Implementation Sub Committees who meet regularly concerning their goal and report back to the main QEP Implementation Committee.

QEP Outcomes

The effect of the Quality Enhancement Plan is already evident. Improvements in the usability of the college's website and distance learning pages have been well received by students and faculty. In addition, student success in online courses has increased 5% over the year prior to the QEP's implementation. The QEP Implementation Committee's energy and focus continue to keep the institution on track in realizing this worthwhile initiative. For more information concerning SVCC's QEP, its development, or its implementation, please contact Chad Patton, Dean of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness via email at the following address: chad.patton@southside.edu.