



FIRST-YEAR ISLANDERS (FYI) Quality Enhancement Plan 2010-2015
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The Campus

Texas A&M University Corpus Christi is a Hispanic-serving, regional, doctoral institution with a nationally recognized First-Year Learning Communities Program. In spite of its strengths, A&M-Corpus Christi serves an increasingly diverse population of first-generation, low-income, international, and Hispanic first-year students. Institutional data on the challenges facing first-year students demonstrates a need to reinvest in the first-year experience to improve first-year student learning. The First-Year Islanders (FYI) quality enhancement plan provides structure and momentum to centralize mentoring/advising/retention efforts, mobilize faculty, and celebrate the first-year experience.

FYI Mission Statement

Through its First-Year Islanders (FYI) program, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will transform the academic experience of first-year students.

The First-Year Islanders plan will improve the learning experience of first-year students by:

- Transitioning first-year students to higher education learning through inaugural programs,
- Redesigning first-year courses through disciplinary-based faculty Communities of Practice (COP), and
- Creating professional learning communities (PLCs) focused on promoting first-year student learning through reflective practice.

FYI Programs

To improve the retention and learning of first-year students, A&M-Corpus Christi has implemented an FYI Bridge program for alternatively admitted students, an FYI Convocation for all first-year students, and faculty communities of practice and other professional development focused on first-year student learning, particularly in gateway core curriculum classes such as American History, Political Science, and Biology, and developmental courses in Mathematics. These COP are leading course redesign efforts in areas key to student success. To lead further faculty development, topics-based Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) will be initiated in 2011. A new FYI Office and new Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) are supporting these FYI faculty development activities.

FYI Assessment

As a result of the FYI, a greater percent of first-year students will use academic support services, demonstrate mastery of the Student Learning Outcomes of gateway courses, and achieve academic success in their first year in college. Already, survey and focus group data demonstrate that the FYI Convocation made students feel welcomed to the campus and engaged their thinking about academic success. Faculty and staff are using direct measures of student writing, content-based exams, and reading responses to assess student learning. Increased success in fundamental learning in the first year will increase students' chances of persisting toward degrees at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.



For more information, contact FYI Director Susan Wolff Murphy at (361) 825-2230 or susan.murphy@tamucc.edu, or access the website at fyi.tamucc.edu