



THE ABCs OF COLLEGE SUCCESS

*Improving the First Year Experience by **A**dvising Holistically, **B**uilding Skills, and **C**onnecting Early.*

Wade College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) developed following an open, institution-wide self-study which actively involved all members of the college community including faculty, students, staff, and administrators. This process – via institutional data, surveys, roundtables, and trial revised advising study – demonstrated that a significant portion of the new-student population is underprepared for the expectations and rigor of collegiate life, and would benefit from a structured first-year experience program focused on providing students with the additional preparation and support necessary to help them reach their academic and professional goals.

The Wade College QEP seeks to improve the academic achievement and persistence of first-year students. The institution's goals focus on empowering first-year students to: **(1) Manage their academic plan and identify key barriers to their success; (2) Establish meaningful connections to peers and institutional support resources; and (3) Develop essential skills for college success.** To achieve these goals, the college has implemented three initiatives: **(1) mandatory proactive advising for new students prior to matriculation and throughout the first year, (2) increased emphasis on connection building across orientation and first-year seminar courses, and (3) enhanced curriculum in the first-year seminar course to address deficiencies in college success skills.**

The primary initiative of the QEP is to develop a proactive academic advising model spanning the admissions process and freshman year. The institution recognizes that a variety of key barriers may inhibit a student's attendance and academic success, many of which students are hesitant to communicate to faculty or administration before it is too late. The implementation of a mandatory proactive advising model prior to matriculation and during the first year of studies, will give students a clear understanding of their academic plan, and allow them to better identify and address their individual challenges earlier.

The second initiative provides increased opportunities for new students to make meaningful, supportive connections with peers and college representatives. The institution recognizes that students who have a support network may be more likely to attend classes, troubleshoot problems, and complete the program. A revised orientation program and curriculum in the first-year seminar course to establish this support system with an increased emphasis on connection building will contribute to successful outcomes in this endeavor.

The third and final initiative emphasizes essential college success skills topics in the first-trimester courses. The institution recognizes that addressing deficiencies in success skills may lead to better first to second year persistence and better overall program completion rates.

Desired student learning outcomes, as well as Wade College Quality Enhancement Plan outcomes, will be measured on an ongoing, regular basis. These metrics will be utilized to refine the initiatives and ensure they continue to reflect the needs of the student population.

For more information, please contact:

Elizabeth Johnston

Dean of Academic & Student Affairs

ejohnston@wadecollege.edu | 214-637-3530