

## **Sophomore Success: A Quality Enhancement Plan**

**Eckerd College**

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The Eckerd College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is focused on providing our sophomore students with the information and skills they need to be successful during college and beyond. The College's first-year retention efforts succeeded in stabilizing our retention rate at 81% over the past 6 years. During that same time, however, sophomore retention has fluctuated widely and with it so has the graduation rate. Internal research identified students who did not declare a major by the start of the sophomore year as being particularly at risk for attrition.

Our QEP has two tracks: 1. EC Thrive: A focused, year-long, for-credit experience targeted to sophomores who have not yet declared a major or are feeling uncertain about their choice of major, and 2. EC Ignite: An overarching series of events and activities aimed at all sophomore students. (For the purposes of this QEP, a sophomore is defined as a first-time-in-college student returning for a second year.)

The EC Thrive course will be designed during the 2020-2021 academic year and will launch in the fall of 2021. Course sections will be capped at 10 students and will be team-taught by a faculty member (who will also serve as the faculty mentor to any undeclared students) and a qualified staff member. EC Thrive will focus on decision-making, vocational discernment/career-readiness, and connecting to one's future self.

The course proposal will go through the standard academic course proposal review process at the College. The course will be credit-bearing and will be offered as credit/no-credit.

EC Ignite will begin roll-out in the 2020-2021 academic year and will expand to include more activities and events over time. The program will consist of some new events, the expansion of some existing events, and the re-focusing of some programs to target more directly the sophomore experience.

The learning outcomes associated with our QEP are

- Academic self-confidence,
- Integration of work view and life view,
- Emotional intelligence.

The institutional goals associated with our QEP are to stabilize and improve sophomore retention rates and improve overall six-year graduation rates.

Our Executive Director for Institutional Effectiveness will serve as the QEP Director, working with a designated Sophomore Success Team and Student Advisory Committee that includes faculty as well as Student Life staff.

The QEP's SLO's will be assessed through a combination of rubrics and surveys. Institutional indicators (retention and graduation rates) will be tracked and reviewed annually.