

## SET SAIL: SUCCESS EQUALS TEAMWORK, STRATEGIES, AND INSPIRED LEARNING

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The transition to college exposes students to new physical, social, and intellectual contexts all at once. The uncertainties associated with each of those contexts can make adjusting and navigating the college experience a challenging task. The purpose of New College of Florida's QEP is to enhance student success by supporting our first-year students in this transition, with a focus on what it takes to be a self-regulated learner: a student who takes an agentive role in their path to academic achievement. We have designed a program of first-year seminars (FYS) that focus on supporting new students in their academic and social transition to New College. Each seminar is designed to meet three goals:

- \* Cultivate Community Connections and a Sense of Belonging
- \* Foster Agency as a Learner in one's Educational Path
- \* Instill Transferable Academic/Professional Skills

By using active learning strategies, peer discussions, and opportunities for making social connections in the classroom, and by integrating peer leaders as well as a variety of support staff into the process, the SET SAIL FYS program is constructed as a campus-wide learning community, with a particular focus on fostering a sense of belonging. By deliberately teaching students agency/self-regulated learning skills and academic/professional skills in the context of coursework with engaging intellectual content, we connect those skills to the students' interests, goals, and ambitions during the college years and beyond. By integrating academic work with a variety of available student support services, SET SAIL leads students to think more holistically about their academic path and their role in creating it. By giving deliberate and overt attention to the need for both academic supports and a structured context for cultivating social connections with faculty, staff, and students within the academic space of the classroom, the FYS program delivers the kinds of instruction and experiences that data have shown our students need.

In practical terms, the SET SAIL FYS teaches students transferable skills in a manner that emphasizes the normality of the adjustments and challenges that come with entering a new physical, social, and intellectual environment. The SET SAIL assessment plan is designed to measure student development in the following outcomes: establishing connections with peers and professionals at New College; demonstrating effective self-regulated learning and time management; exploring and understanding the opportunities of a liberal arts education; navigating the New College academic program, and demonstrating active and critical reading of texts. Ultimately, participation in SET SAIL leads students to think more holistically about their academic path and their role in creating it.

QEP Director: Dr. Elizabeth Leininger  
Associate Professor of Biology  
eleininger@ncf.edu