

QEP Title:

Academic Coaching: An Approach to Student Success

Contact:

Atlanta Metropolitan State College
Mark A. Cunningham, Ph.D.
Associate Provost, SACSCOC Liaison
mcunningham@atlm.edu

The Need for the QEP and Factors Causing Low Academic Performance

Student success is the top priority of Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC). The academic success of AMSC's students, a fully commuter population, is particularly challenging because of competing interests such as work and family responsibilities. Only 47% of AMSC students return in the fall semester from the previous spring semester. Academically, full-time students have 2-3 times higher academic performance than part-time students, 60% of the AMSC student population. Thus, the need strongly exists to improve student academic success. The institution has identified key factors that negatively impact student academic performance, including (1) the need for additional out-of-class academic support; (2) inadequate time management for students who are attempting to balance work, school and family; (3) the lack of a strong academic mindset for first-generation and new freshmen students who make choices to leave college because they do not fully appreciate the value and positive economic impact that a college education can provide; and (4) poor study skills/lack of college-readiness.

How the QEP will Address the Problem

The goal of the QEP is to provide academic coaching for high-risk students, defined as those with a high probability of failing academically. Various student sub-groups exist in the high-risk category, including: (1) first-generation students, (2) academically underprepared students, (3) high-DFW grade recipients, (4) those in academic jeopardy, and (5) new freshmen. Through academic coaching, the QEP will collaborate with existing campus efforts to provide high-risk students the additional academic and individualized support services that will increase their academic success. Based on the literature, high-impact interventions, such as tutoring, time management/study skills, and academic mindset/purposeful choice activities are among the most effective strategies for reversing the negative outcome many high-risk students inevitably experience. Thus, the QEP will provide high-impact interventions to AMSC students, depending on the need(s) of each student. Utilizing academic coaching, the QEP will assess students on an individual basis and provide them the most effective intervention. For some students, out of class academic support, including tutoring, will be the primary strategy to enhance their academic performance, while other students may require a different high-impact strategy to move them back on the path to success.

The Scope of the QEP

New freshmen emerged as the highest risk subgroup and will be the primary focus of the QEP. The QEP will provide intervention strategies for new freshmen: (1) with high DFW grades in their first year; (2) on academic warning; and (3) violating SAP (satisfactory academic progress) financial aid policies. The QEP Program expects to serve up to 40 students each week, including students who need repeat support sessions. When possible, students with similar academic needs will be combined into small groups to increase QEP efficiency and maximize resources. QEP Academic Coaches will fully utilize the expertise of several existing campus support services, when necessary, to ensure that the QEP does not exceed its capacity and capabilities, and more importantly; so that no student needing support services is turned away.

QEP Oversight and Assessment

A QEP coordinator will oversee daily operations, coordinate communication and meetings, and report QEP activities. The QEP Steering Committee, a campus-wide representative body, will provide administrative oversight of the QEP. A Faculty Liaison and Peer-educators will assist in training, communicating with students, collecting data, creating reports, and conducting intervention strategies. The Department of Institutional Effectiveness will assist the QEP staff with assessments, data extraction/analysis, data dissemination, and analytics to identify and select students that are the best fit for the QEP Program.

Budget

The QEP 5-year budget is provided in the table below. The largest annual budget occurs in year 1, with nearly flat budget levels in subsequent years. Key QEP personnel, Coordinator and Faculty Liaison, are full-time faculty, with reassigned time.

Line Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
QEP Personnel	\$27,180	\$27,180	\$27,180	\$27,180	\$27,180
Supplies. Equipment	\$7,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Training/Evaluations	\$5,000	\$6,500	\$6,000	\$6,500	\$6,000
Grand Total	\$39,680	\$35,180	\$34,680	\$35,180	\$34,680