QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Over the past ten years Valencia has been continually engaged in national, grant-related projects focused on improving student learning / success. These projects have included Achieving the Dream, Foundations of Excellence, and the Developmental Education Initiative. The impetus for our next college-wide project focused on student learning / success is not coming from a national grant, but from our regional accrediting body - the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) – which is required to reaffirm the college’s accreditation every ten years. Our next reaffirmation is in 2014. The reaffirmation process includes the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) - a broad based, college-wide change initiative focused on student learning or the conditions that impact student learning. Valencia’s QEP needs to be articulated by August 2013. The QEP is the centerpiece of the reaffirmation process and will be implemented over the course of 5 years beginning in the Fall of 2013 or Spring of 2014.

Beginning in the Spring of 2012, faculty, staff, and students entered into an exploration phase working toward identifying Valencia’s next Big Idea. A series of reading circle discussions, meetings, and brainstorming sessions led to four emerging themes – Student Purpose, Student Learning, Student Navigation, and the New Student Experience. During the Fall of 2012, a total of 14 groups (approximately 280 faculty and staff) across the college met to further explore and unpack each theme as it related to Valencia and its students. The recurring proposition within the Big Idea Groups (BIGs) was that Valencia students need a coordinated first year experience to guide them toward the successful completion of their first 15 college-level credits at Valencia.

The result of the BIGs and a post-SACS conference discussion among the college’s senior team, faculty leadership, and QEP leadership led to the creation of a vision statement for a proposed New Student Experience (NSE); in order for a new Valencia student to navigate the college experience successfully, it requires access to mandatory / universal career and academic advising, an extended orientation, integrated student success skills, and the development of an educational plan.

A series of feedback sessions hosted across the College during the months of February and March led to a gathering at the Criminal Justice Institute of nearly 130 Valencia faculty and staff on March 22, 2013. This summit was an open, collaborative, decision making forum at which the general vision and outcome for Valencia’s proposed Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was reviewed, discussed, and voted on. The plan was approved by an overwhelming majority of those gathered - 122 people voted, 111 voted to move forward (green cards), 11 people expressed caution / concern with the plan (yellow card), and 0 people rejected the plan (red card). For more details on the NSE, please visit: QEP – The Next Big Idea to Guide Our Work into the Future.

If you have questions about the QEP, please contact any of the faculty leaders for this work (Christina Hardin - Osceola Campus; John Niss - Winter Park Campus; Jamy Chulak - West Campus; Ed Holmes - East Campus and representing Counselors college-wide). If you have questions about the SACS reaffirmation process, please contact Kurt Ewen, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.