

San Antonio College's QEP

QEP Committee:

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Sarah Padilla: 2004-2005 Treasurer, San Antonio College Student Government

Cynthia Price: Senior Statistical Research Specialist for the Office of Institutional Research

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Joanne M. Wilson, M.A.: Assistant to the President

Pick People who have the Skills you need!

THE PROCESS: November 2003, SAC's Retention Task Force became core of QEP Committee. QEP Website developed. Committee and the President worked with entire campus to obtain feedback about focus and implementation strategies. The President visited college departments, Faculty Senate, Staff Council and the Chairs Council, featured the QEP at Convocation and Employee Development Day Focus was presented to College Academic Council and approved. The institutional background/history and literature review of best practices in achieving improved student learning sections were drafted in early 2004 and continuously updated, and the Committee developed draft process objectives and expected outcomes/measures of institutional change and student success. In summer and fall of 2004, Implementation and Management, Budget and Resources and Evaluation plans were drafted. SAC drew upon institutional strategies discussed in its Title V CDP from 2000, the Retention Task Force Report, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and Achieving the Dream, and institutional support systems that have been shown to improve student learning and persistence. Literature Review included learning styles assessment, student-centered teaching, faculty-student and faculty-faculty mentorship programs, learning communities, cooperative learning, peer tutoring/mentoring and SI, problem-based learning, transitional bridge programs, orientation programs, and the use of mid-semester grade reports/academic alert systems.

DEFINITION OF STUDENT LEARNING: a process that leads to the mastery of material, the improvement and utilization of analytical and cognitive abilities, and the acquisition and enrichment of physical, technical, personal and interpersonal skills.

DEFINITION OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: improvement in students' knowledge, skills, or behaviors. This improvement can be measured using: pre- and post-tests of change in knowledge; end-of-course tests or projects that measure mastery of skills; instruments measuring behavioral change (e.g., the Learning and Study Skills Inventory, LASSI, the CLA); observation and/or electronic or other types of student portfolios; and quantitative indicators of academic success such as grades, licensure examinations, achievement in sequential coursework, persistence/retention rates, and graduation/transfer rates.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP) FOCUS: a College-Wide Professional Development Initiative Utilizing Teaching and Student Support Strategies that Improve Student Learning.

GOAL: *By the end of the QEP implementation period, San Antonio College will have significantly improved student learning through enhanced teaching and support strategies.*

The Raul S. Murguía Learning Institute, to be comprised of five interconnected components:

- **Semester-long Orientation and Best Practices Course** for new and developmental or gatekeeper faculty, including student-centered pedagogical best practices: student-teacher interaction and collaborative/active learning; Learning Communities; Service Learning; problem and/or inquiry-based learning; SI; and teaching based on learning styles.
- **Graduate Coursework** for faculty and staff in community college teaching, leadership, etc.
- **Professional Development Workshops** for both faculty and staff in Best Practices.
- **Mentorship Support** for new faculty members and other interested faculty.
- **Master Teacher Program** – interested faculty will attend a series of workshops.

All components include training in the assessment of student learning outcomes.

PROPOSED QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN OUTCOMES: 1) Increased numbers of SAC students each semester will be receiving instruction in classrooms that utilize “best practice” strategies proven to improve student learning; 2) Improved student learning through the piloting of the following strategies: critical thinking skills; instruction in learning styles, study skills, life skills, motivation and concentration, research skills, career exploration and time management; inquiry- and problem-based learning; student-centered learning (Assessment of Learner-Centered Practices); 3) Increased in-class retention and productive grade rates for students in classes affected by the Murguía Learning Institute; 4) Increased productive grade rates for students in sequential courses to those improved through the MLI.

EVALUATION: Measures used to date include the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Assessment of Learner-Centered Practices (ALCP). We are researching additional instruments.

Resources for Developing and Evaluating your QEP:

San Antonio College’s Accreditation Website <http://www.accd.edu/sac/selfstudy>

San Antonio College Learning Outcomes Website <http://www.accd.edu/sac/iic/staff/scaceres>

<http://www.accd.edu/sac/iic/staff/scaceres/Program%20Outcomes/AssessPlanDesign.htm>

Direct Link to San Antonio College’s Quality Enhancement Plan

http://www.accd.edu/sac/selfstudy/html/responses/pdf/qep/San_Antonio_College_Quality_Enhancement_Plan_8-9-05.pdf

Murguía Learning Institute <http://www.accd.edu/sac/murguia>

The League for Innovation in the Community College: <http://www.league.org/welcome.htm>

League for Innovation in the Community College. (2004, August). An assessment framework for the community college: Measuring student learning and achievement as a means of demonstrating institutional effectiveness (White Paper). <http://www.league.org/publication/whitepapers/files/0804.pdf>

Allen, Mary J. (2004). *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education*. Bolton, Mass: Anker.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement, <http://www.ccsse.org>

Methods for Assessing Institutional, Program & Course Learning Outcomes

Traditionally-Used Quantitative Indicators

- *Productive grade rates*
- *Retention/Attrition rates*
- *Course completion rates for developmental and non-developmental courses*
- *Successful completion of sequential courses*
- *Graduation rates (degree and certificate)*
- *Transfer rates to four-year schools*
- *Passing rates on licensure exams*
- *Employment rates, especially for technical/professional students*

Qualitative Indicators*

- *Alignment of course work with course descriptions and syllabi*
- *Student satisfaction*
- *Employer satisfaction (professional/technical programs)*
- *Learning portfolios*
- *Communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening)*
- *Computation skills (understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning, analyzing and using numerical data)*
- *Community skills (citizenship; appreciation of diversity and pluralism; community, global, and environmental awareness)*
- *Critical thinking and problem-solving skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, decision making, creative thinking)*
- *Information management skills (collecting, analyzing, and organizing information from a variety of sources)*
- *Interpersonal skills (teamwork, relationship management, conflict resolution, workplace skills)*
- *Personal skills (ability to understand and manage self, management of change, learning to learn, personal responsibility, aesthetic responsiveness, wellness)*
- *Technology skills (computer literacy, Internet skills, retrieving and managing information via technology)*

* *Some of these indicators were taken from Miles, C. & Wilson, C. (Summer 2004). Learning outcomes for the twenty-first century: Cultivating student success for college and the knowledge economy. New Directions for Community Colleges, 2004 (126). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*

Lessons Learned in the Accreditation Process

1. Involve your college at all levels early. People support what they help create. Show top level (Presidential) involvement and support.
2. Get help. **Take advantage of the early visit offered by your SACS Liaison.** Check out other schools. Come to SACS meetings. Use an outside consultant if you feel it is necessary.
3. Don't be afraid of false starts. Create something that is best for your particular school.
4. As things progress... keep your big picture clear. It is about improving your school. Don't get lost in the details.
5. Inform your folks. Use lots of methods. Our promotional activities included: Student newspaper, Buttons, Banners, Flyers, Screen Savers (especially on Onsite Team's computers), Regular item on College Council agenda, Focus on Excellence newsletter www.accd.edu/sac/sacmain/HTML/pdf/Focus.pdf
6. Keep in mind that nothing is perfect.
7. Keep your QEP Report focused on goals and keep it easy to read. Make sure your evaluation/assessment part is well thought out and includes an array of quantitative and qualitative **outcome** measures of Student Learning.
- 8.) Flash drives with all material on it.
9. Develop a slogan/logo....E.G: "It's All About Learning."
- 10) **Do what you Promise.**

For On-Site Visit:

- Have someone (or some people) personable, preferably someone involved in the QEP process, pick up visitors at airport.
- Make sure you have a group of available students who know the QEP inside and out.
- Meeting (lunch) with Board members, well briefed.
- Have your President available to the Committee at all times.
- Have the President prepared with a brief response to every one of the evaluation criteria for the QEP to start off the discussion on each issue.

Lessons Learned During Faculty/Student Assessment

- ◆ Make sure faculty know objectives and outcomes
 - ◆ Make sure faculty know length of evaluation process so they make commitment to an ongoing process of learning and change
 - ◆ Make sure they understand the instrument being used for evaluation
 - ◆ Be aware of flex, online and practicum classes
 - ◆ Be prepared with alternative process for tailoring assessment strategies to faculty needs
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SAC is considering the use of:

The Community College Learning Assessment (CCLA)
http://www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm

CLA Tests:

• **critical thinking** • **analytic reasoning** • **written communication**

CCLA uses:

Performance Tasks - “real-life” activity (such as preparing a memo or policy recommendation) using documents that must be reviewed and evaluated. measures assess ability to interpret, analyze and synthesize information.

Writing Prompts - evaluate students’ ability to articulate complex ideas, examine claims and evidence, support ideas with relevant reasons and examples, sustain a coherent discussion, and use standard written English.

Samples 100 FTIC starters in Fall and 100 graduating students in Spring. Measures “value added” by school.