



Pellissippi State Community College

Quality Enhancement Plan:

Strong to the Core

QEP Report for SACSCOC

On-Site Review Team

On-Site Visit: September 27-29, 2011

Pellissippi State Community College
10915 Hardin Valley Road
Knoxville, TN 37933

SACS Leadership Team

Dr. L. Anthony Wise, Jr., President

Lois Reynolds, Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs; SACS Accreditation Liaison

Dr. Sharon Yarbrough, Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning

Marilyn Harper, Associate Professor, Chair, QEP Selection Committee

Mark Fuentes, Associate Professor, Co-Chair, QEP Design Team

David Key, Assistant Professor, Co-Chair, QEP Design Team

Notes:

Until his retirement on June 30, 2011, Dr. Allen Edwards was president of Pellissippi State and a member of the SACS Leadership Team.

Dr. L. Anthony Wise, Jr. was vice president of Academic Affairs until becoming president of Pellissippi State on July 1, 2011.

Lois Reynolds, assistant vice president of Academic Affairs, is serving as interim vice president of Academic Affairs since July 1, 2011.

Effective August 1, 2011, the Learning Division has been officially renamed Academic Affairs.

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Executive Summary

The purpose of Pellissippi State Community College's Quality Enhancement Plan, "Strong to the Core," is to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses through increasing student engagement in core curriculum areas.

The targeted core curriculum areas are writing, oral communication, and mathematics. The targeted courses are ENGL 1010 (English Composition I), SPH 2100 (Public Speaking), and MATH 1130 (College Algebra).

The process of selecting the QEP began in August of 2009 with the appointment of members to serve on the QEP Selection Committee. The committee was made up of representatives from faculty, staff, and administration of the College. The charge of the QEP Selection Committee was to gather input from all constituencies of the College, including students and members of the community, and select a topic for the QEP. Once the topic was chosen, a new committee consisting primarily of faculty – the QEP Design Team – was appointed and charged with refining the QEP topic and developing and testing an action plan for the QEP.

The QEP Design Team began work in August of 2010 and will continue its work until December 2011, at which time the QEP will be turned over to a QEP director and implementation team to further refine and expand the action plan of the QEP.

The QEP focus, Strong to the Core, will revolve around employing active learning strategies in the classroom to increase student engagement with course material, other students, and faculty, to improve student performance in core competencies. By mid-March, 2011, the QEP Design Team developed an action plan and assessment strategy for increased student engagement in each of the targeted courses. Several members of the QEP Design Team tested the action plan in one section of a targeted course they were teaching. In addition, one of the active learning strategies was tested in a non-targeted course to gather more data about the validity of the learning strategy. The tests have yielded some interesting results. Not only have the assessment measures shown that the engagement activities strengthened students' competency in the targeted learning objective; but overall, students found the activities to be beneficial to them, valuable to the educational process, and engaging.

In fall 2011, the College will roll out the pilot for the QEP on a larger scale. The QEP Design Team members will pilot a QEP strategy in their courses and expand the engagement into sections of targeted courses taught by other instructors. Assessment will continue during the pilot of the QEP and until its completion in 2016.

Introduction to Pellissippi State

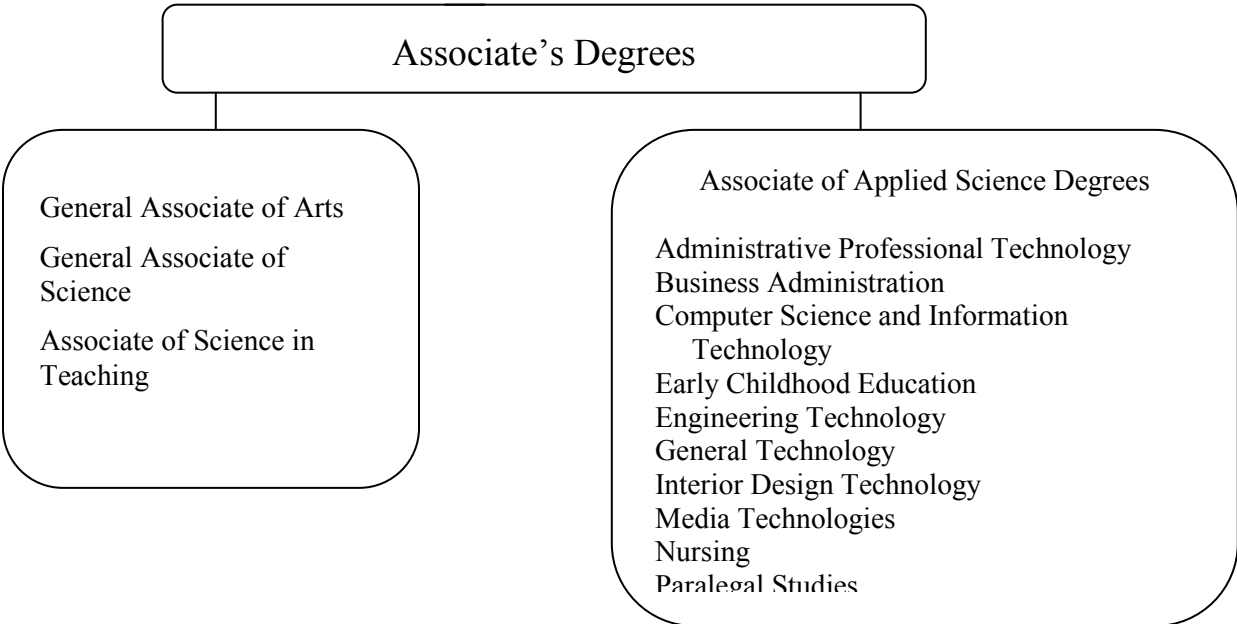
The mission of Pellissippi State Community College is to serve its community by providing college-level and non-credit courses and learning support instruction using a variety of delivery methods, including distance learning. The College provides support for teaching and learning, training and workforce development, and opportunities for life, civic and cultural enrichment.

The College serves the citizens of Knox and Blount counties through providing university parallel associate’s degrees, career/technical associate’s degrees, institutional certificates, and continuing education opportunities. The College has three campus locations in Knox County—10915 Hardin Valley Road, the College’s main campus; 3435 Division Street, and 1610 E. Magnolia Avenue in Knoxville—and one campus in Blount County at 2731 W. Lamar Alexander Parkway in Friendsville.

Students planning to earn a baccalaureate degree at a four-year college or university may complete the first two years at Pellissippi State by earning either an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree. Pellissippi State offers a broad selection of courses that transfer to four-year institutions.

In addition to the university transfer programs, the College also offers programs that prepare students for business and technical careers and culminate in the Associate of Applied Science degree. These programs are designed for the student whose primary educational goal is entry-level employment or career advancement. The College's career programs are continually revised to reflect changes in the skills and knowledge graduates need to be successful in responsible positions in business and industry. These degree programs are not designed for transfer to baccalaureate institutions; however, the general education courses included in these degrees transfer to most four-year colleges and universities, and several of the programs are fully transferable. Pellissippi State’s degree programs are listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Degree Programs at Pellissippi State



In addition to degree programs, the College also offers remedial and developmental education to prepare students for college-level study. Table 1 below provides a breakdown of students by degree program and credit hours in fall 2010.

PROGRAM	Headcount	% of Headcount
Career/Technical	2,520	23%
University Parallel	6,810	62%
Special/Other	1,719	16%
CREDIT HOURS	Number of Credit Hours	% of Credit Hours
Regular college-level	93,280	86%
Remedial	4,317	4%
Developmental	10,653	10%
Audit Hours	31	Less than 1%
TOTAL Cr. Hrs.	108,281	100%

In fall 2010, the College had a headcount of over 11,000 students, with over 7,200 full-time equivalent students, as shown in Table 2 below:

ENROLLED STUDENTS	Number	% of Total
Headcount	11,049	
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	7,217	
Full-Time	5,826	53%
Part-Time	5,223	47%
Female	5,824	53%
Male	5,225	47%
CLASSIFICATION		
First-Time Freshmen (FTF)	2,062	19%
Other Freshmen	3,651	33%
Sophomores	3,585	32%
Special	1,751	16%

Also in fall 2010, the College employed 211 full-time faculty who taught 56.5 % (64,436 of 107,357) of the College's total credit hours. To augment the full-time faculty, the College also employed 357 adjunct faculty who were responsible for teaching 43.5 % (42,921 of 107,357) of the College's total credit hours. In addition, the College employed 265 full-time staff and administrators and 265 part time staff and administrators to support the learning process. To ensure the quality of Pellissippi State's programs, all employees of the College carry appropriate qualifications for their position and participate in an annual evaluation process.

Chapter I – Process Used to Develop the QEP

The QEP selection process started in July of 2009 when Dr. Allen Edwards and the SACS Leadership Team appointed a twenty-five person QEP Selection Committee made up of faculty from each academic department, academic department deans, staff, administrators, and representatives from all four of the College's campuses. The QEP Selection Committee was charged with obtaining broad input in selecting the topic of the QEP.

The original QEP Selection Committee members are listed below. (See Appendix A for complete list of QEP Planning and Development Teams.)

Marilyn Harper, Associate Professor (Liberal Arts), Committee Chair

Faculty Representatives:

Kathy Byrd, Associate Professor, Department Dean (English)

Arlene Cleveland, Professor (Business and Computer Technology), Division Street

Dr. Lawana Day, Professor (English), Blount County

Biff Farrell, Assistant Professor (Engineering and Media Technologies)

Dr. Jonathan Fowler, Associate Professor, Department Dean (Liberal Arts)

Mark Fuentes, Associate Professor (Business and Computer Technology), Faculty President

Teresa Fulcher, Associate Professor (Natural and Behavioral Sciences)

Ralph Gillespie, Associate Professor (Transitional Studies), Division Street

David Key, Assistant Professor (Liberal Arts)

Nancy Pevey, Associate Professor (Mathematics)

Marty Salter, Associate Professor (Liberal Arts)

Pam Smith, Associate Professor (Transitional Studies)

Dr. Jane Stribling, Assistant Professor (Liberal Arts), Magnolia Avenue

Staff and Administrative Representatives:

Dr. Rebecca Ashford, Vice President, Student Affairs

Teri Brahams, Executive Director, Business and Community Services

Holly Burkett, Assistant Dean, Blount County Campus

Ron Kesterson, Vice President, Business and Finance

Dr. Mike North, Assistant Dean, Division Street Campus

Lois Reynolds, Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs; SACS Accreditation Liaison

Rosalyn Tillman, Assistant Dean, Magnolia Avenue Campus

Audrey Williams, Director, Educational Technology Services

Dr. L. Anthony Wise, Jr., Vice President, Academic Affairs; Chief Academic Officer

Julia Wood, Director, Marketing and Communications

Dr. Sharon Yarbrough, Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning

Initial Stage of Selection: Focus Groups

In the fall of 2009, a member of the QEP Selection Committee met with each academic department (Business and Computer Technology, Engineering and Media Technologies, English, Liberal Arts, Mathematics, Natural and Behavioral Sciences, and Transitional Studies); each administrative division (Business and Community Services, Business and Finance, College Advancement, Information Services, and Student Affairs); and faculty and staff at each of the College campuses (Blount County, Division Street, Hardin Valley, and Magnolia Avenue). In addition, representatives from the QEP Selection Committee solicited input from adjunct faculty.

All meetings were conducted as focus groups, with the same script being followed for each meeting. The groups were first given an overview of the QEP process and were then asked to review the College's Mission Statement to determine whether it is appropriate and accurately reflects Pellissippi State's current focus. Next, each group prepared a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis for the College as a whole. Finally, each group was asked three questions intended to lead to development of a QEP topic:

What do you think helps students to learn?

What can we do to help students learn better?

Where should we focus our attention and resources to have the greatest positive impact on student learning?

External groups, such as the Pellissippi State Foundation Board, Pellissippi State Advisory Committees, and local Chambers of Commerce were asked for ideas of how the College might help students learn better. Various groups of students were also asked the same questions. Council of Student Advocates (COSA) and Student Success Mentors were asked to survey students in their capacities as student leaders. In addition, students from Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK) and all students in COLL 1500 (College Success) classes were asked the same questions. Overall, there was less response from students than the Committee had hoped for. In addition, an e-mail address, qep@pstcc.edu, was established so any interested persons could e-mail ideas and issues related to the QEP directly to the QEP Selection Committee.

All responses and e-mails received were reviewed and compiled by the SACS Leadership Team and presented to the QEP Selection Committee during the January 2010 meeting. The QEP Selection Committee reviewed the responses and identified the following five themes as occurring most frequently:

Increasing Student Engagement through connections within the College

Increasing Student Engagement through connections outside the College

Revising Learning Support Courses (Developmental Studies), particularly with regard to the new state A-100 Guidelines

Considering effects of high and low expectations, with emphasis on increasing student accountability

Improving computer and information literacy and the effectiveness of on-line learning

Second Stage: Preparation of Whitepapers

In spring semester 2010, the members of the QEP Selection Committee were divided into five groups, each of which was assigned the task of researching one of these topics and preparing a whitepaper supporting adoption of that topic as the QEP. The groups were charged with conducting a needs analysis for the topic and determining how addressing that topic would improve student learning. The groups were to conduct research on their assigned topic to address the following questions:

- What evidence exists to demonstrate that the issue is a problem at Pellissippi State?
- What evidence exists that making changes related to this topic will improve student learning at Pellissippi State?

Whitepapers were completed on all topics except “Revising Learning Support Courses,” which was determined not to be a viable choice for the QEP because the Tennessee Board of Regents was in the process of developing new guidelines for developmental studies, and those new guidelines would determine the direction, limitations, and requirements for the Developmental Studies Program statewide.

When completed, the whitepapers on the four remaining topics (Increasing student engagement through connections within the College; Increasing student engagement through connections outside the College; Considering effects of high and low expectations, with emphasis on increasing student accountability; and Improving computer and information literacy and the effectiveness of on-line learning) were distributed to the College president, the SACS Leadership Team, and the QEP Selection Committee for review. After the initial review of the whitepapers and further discussion, the SACS Leadership Team decided to broaden the QEP selection process again, specifically with the goal of acquiring more input from students. This would allow the College to compile more data in support of the need for the topics considered most applicable and viable based on all the research.

In order to collect more input from students, an additional survey was administered in April of 2010. The survey consisted of a single question: “What can Pellissippi State do to help you learn better?” In addition to administering paper surveys in different venues, the committee made the survey available on-line at the College’s website (www.pstcc.edu). Several faculty members administered the survey in their classes, and Student Success Mentors and members of the Council of Student Advocates (COSA) distributed surveys to students on all four of the College’s campuses. The SACS Leadership Team collected survey responses for several weeks. Once all the responses were collected, members of the SACS Leadership Team compiled and categorized the results and prepared a list of themes and their frequencies to present to the QEP Selection Committee.

In late spring 2010, The QEP Selection Committee met again to examine the total range of input from all sources and prioritize the emerging QEP themes. From this meeting, two major themes emerged:

- Increasing academic support and
- Increasing student connections within and outside of the College.

Chapter II – Identification of the QEP Topic

At the last QEP Selection Committee meeting of spring semester 2010, two major themes were identified: increasing academic support and increasing student connections (to each other, to faculty, and to content). These two major themes were the most frequently identified by all constituencies as needing to be addressed in the QEP.

Summer 2010: Development of QEP Focus Statement

In the summer of 2010, three faculty members (Mark Fuentes, David Key, and Pam Smith) were contracted to complete research and develop whitepapers arguing for the two final topics. The two whitepapers, “Strong to the Core: Increasing Academic Support to Increase Student Performance in General Education Core Competencies” and “Café Connections: Increasing Academic Student Support through Online Course Resources,” were completed in early July 2010.

The whitepapers were then forwarded to the SACS Leadership Team, the QEP Selection Committee, and Pellissippi State’s SACS mentor (Dr. Barbara Jones) for review. On July 19, 2010, the QEP Selection Committee and Dr. Jones met to hear brief presentations about each of the two proposals, to determine the QEP topic, and to develop a QEP Focus Statement.

From the two proposals, several common themes emerged:

1. Students want a more dynamic and interactive classroom. On the surveys administered to students in April of 2010, 22.5% (431 responses out of 1,912) suggested that improved faculty-student interaction would help them learn better.
2. Faculty recognize that there is not enough positive interaction with students. During the April 28, 2010, QEP Selection Committee meeting, 44.8% of the selection committee ranked improving faculty-student interaction as a critical component of the QEP initiative.
3. All Pellissippi State graduates are required to take the College Basic Academic Subject Examination (CBASE). Pellissippi State’s results¹ in some the subject areas are somewhat below the national average. CBASE scores range from 40 to 560 points and are assessed against a defined body of knowledge. The point scale is designed so that a score of 300 is the average for the entire nation-wide group (Note: there is no oral communication component of the CBASE). Pellissippi State’s results for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 are shown in Table 3.

¹ More information and complete results for CBASE are available on Pellissippi State’s Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning website.

Table 3 – Selected CBASE Results (2007-2008, 2008-2009)

	<u>Average</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
English – Overall (2008-2009)	282	58
English – Writing (2008-2009)	290	50
Mathematics – Overall (2008-2009)	290	62
Mathematics – Algebra (2008-2009)	288	62
English – Overall (2007-2008)	271	62
English – Writing (2007-2008)	280	54
Mathematics – Overall (2007-2008)	287	63
Mathematics – Algebra (2007-2008)	290	60

4. Pellissippi State participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The CCSSE, which benchmarks effective educational practices at community colleges, surveys both faculty and students with a series of questions that relate to student engagement at the College. Pellissippi State’s CCSSE² results are average. Some of the more significant results of the 2009 CCSSE are as follows:
 - a. Pellissippi State’s benchmark score was 53.3 for Student-Faculty Interaction. Although the score was well above the Consortium score of 51.4 and the CCSSE Cohort score of 50.0, the expansion of faculty-student interaction should create more positive academic outcomes.
 - b. One of the CCSSE questions asks faculty what percentage of class time was devoted to in-class writing: 45% of full-time faculty and 63% of part-time faculty responded 0%, while 40% of full-time faculty and 26% of part-time faculty responded 1% to 9%.
5. Success rates³ in certain core curriculum course areas were examined. Over the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years, some of the success rates in core curriculum courses were increasing, and others were decreasing. However, in either case, the QEP Selection Committee recognized there is room for improvement. Success rates are shown in Table 4:

Table 4 – Selected Success Rates by Semester

<i>Course</i>	<i>Fall 2008</i>	<i>Spring 2009</i>	<i>Fall 2009</i>	<i>Spring 2010</i>
ENGL 1010	68.4%	64.7%	56.8%	55.0%
ENGL 1020	68.1%	63.6%	73.9%	71.0%
MATH 1130	56.7%	52.5%	56.6%	56.8%
MATH 1730	55.0%	53.8%	57.7%	62.7%
SPH 2100	70.4%	71.9%	75.1%	72.8%

² More information and complete results for CCSSE are available on Pellissippi State’s Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning web site.

³ Success rates are provided by Pellissippi State’s department of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning. Success rates are NCCBP definition of “Enrolled Success Rate”: total number of successful students (earning grades of “A”-“C”) divided by the number of students enrolled for credit.

Based on information from the second group of whitepapers and a lengthy discussion about the QEP and what would have the most significant impact on student learning, the following QEP focus statement was developed:

The purpose of PSCC's QEP "Strong to the Core" is to increase interaction among faculty, learners and content in core curriculum areas to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success measures. (draft, June 2010)

Targeted Core Curriculum Areas:

- 1. Writing*
- 2. Oral Communication*
- 3. Mathematics*

Summer 2010: QEP Design Team Established

In July 2010, the president of the College appointed a 12-person QEP Design Team that was charged with developing the substance of the QEP based on the QEP Focus Statement. Members of the Design Team are listed below. (See Appendix A for complete list of QEP Planning and Development Teams.)

Mark Fuentes, Associate Professor (Business and Computer Technology), Co-Chair

David Key, Assistant Professor (Liberal Arts; History), Co-Chair

Brenda Ammons, Associate Professor (Mathematics)

Teresa Fulcher, Associate Professor (Natural and Behavioral Science) (fall 2010 only)

Dr. Annie Gray, Associate Professor (English)

Anita Maddox, Associate Professor (Liberal Arts; Speech)

Nancy Pevey, Associate Professor (Mathematics)

Pat Riddle, Associate Professor (Engineering and Media Technologies; Mechanical Engineering)

Marty Salter, Associate Professor (Liberal Arts; Speech)

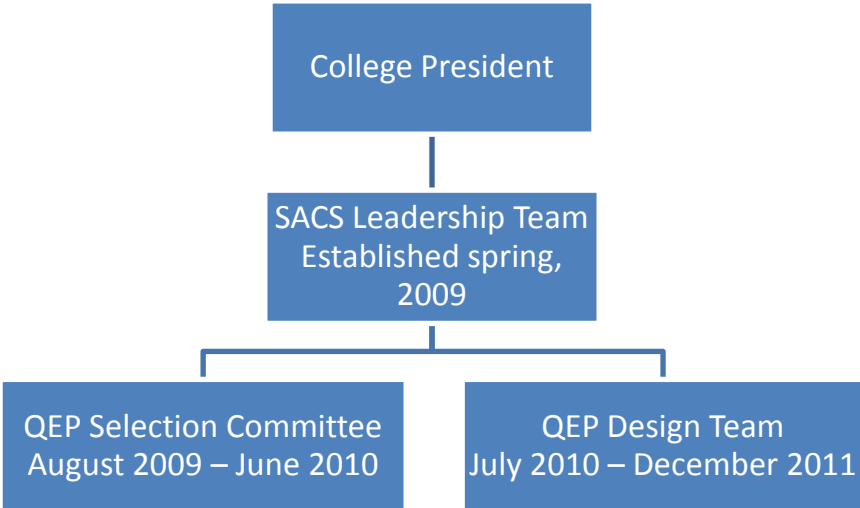
Pam Smith, Associate Professor (Transitional Studies; Reading)

Rosalyn Tillman, Assistant Dean, Magnolia Avenue Campus

Dr. Sharon Yarbrough, Director Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning

The overall organizational structure for selection and design of Pellissippi State's QEP is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 –Structure for QEP Selection and Design (see also Appendix A)

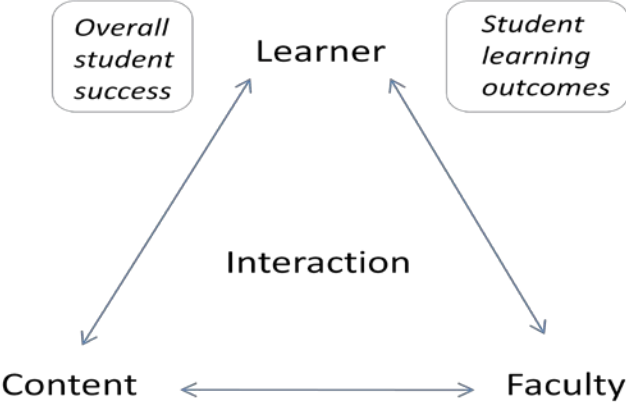


The QEP Design Team met for the first time on August 16 and 17, 2010, for a planning retreat. During the retreat, the Design Team, under the direction of the SACS mentor, discussed the definition of a QEP, the process used to develop the QEP to that point, and the timeline necessary to develop, implement, assess, and report on the QEP over the five-year QEP project.

In addition, the QEP focus statement was revised to better reflect the goals of the QEP and the method by which they will be achieved. The revised QEP focus statement is as follows:

The purpose of PSCC’s QEP, “Strong to the Core,” is to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success measures through increasing interaction among faculty, learners and content in core curriculum areas. (draft, August 17, 2010)

The following working model of the QEP was developed by the committee at this point as well:



After lengthy discussions about the specific issues and problems with respect to student learning, the QEP Design Team determined that the following areas would be the focus of the QEP:

- A. Level of student interaction with faculty
- B. Level of peer-to-peer interaction
- C. Level of student interaction with content
- D. Success in targeted core courses

Other issues of persistence rates, inadequate academic skills at entry, long term learning, and compartmentalized learning were considered but eliminated as being beyond the scope of the QEP.

The core curriculum areas chosen by the team to be targeted by the QEP were oral communication, writing, and mathematics. The targeted courses for the QEP were to be SPH 2100 (Public Speaking), ENGT 1010 (Engineering Communication and Applications), THEA 2200 (Acting I), ENGL 1010 (English Composition I), ENGL 1020 (English Composition II), HIST 1010 (Western Civilization I), HIST 1020 (Western Civilization II), HIST 2010 (US History I), HIST 2020 (US History II), LAW 1050 (Legal Writing), MATH 1010 (Survey of Mathematics), MATH 1130 (College Algebra), MATH 1530 (Elementary Probability and Statistics), and MATH 1710 (Precalculus Algebra).


Fall 2010: Development of QEP Models

Beginning on September 10, 2010, and continuing throughout the fall semester, the QEP Design Team met regularly on Friday mornings from 7:30-9:30 a.m. At the first QEP Design Team meeting on September 10, the committee focused on a review of what was discussed during the retreat, a potential model for the QEP, and possible professional development associated with the QEP. The committee divided into smaller groups to begin research, literature review, and investigation of best practices with respect to student interaction.

The next several meetings of the QEP Design Team revolved around best practices for increasing interaction, where the focus of the QEP should be (inside the classroom, outside the classroom, or on-line), and which courses and learning objectives should be targeted in the initial stages of the QEP. At the meeting on October 8, 2010, the team reviewed all the components of the QEP that had been discussed to date. This discussion led to modifying the College's QEP Focus Statement and developing the initial model, shown in Table 5, for Pellissippi State's QEP:

The purpose of Pellissippi State's QEP "Strong to the Core" is to increase interaction among faculty, learners, and content in core curriculum areas in order to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success. (revised draft, October 8, 2010)

Table 5 – Initial QEP Model (October 8, 2010)

I. Transform classroom instruction to emphasize active learning strategies.	II. Expand opportunities for students to engage with faculty and other students outside the classroom.	III. Expand opportunities for students to engage with faculty and other students using web-based resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Classroom assessment techniques (CATs). B. Group projects. C. Classroom Discussions. D. Student lead instruction. E. Laboratory components/modules F. Student Response Systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Increase SI participation. B. Expand availability of tutoring in learning centers on all campus locations. C. Establish, as a College priority, the support of adjunct faculty, providing adequate space and tools for holding office hours to engage with students. D. Encourage the development of student study groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Encourage posting of grades and assignments using D2L. B. Encourage student blogs and use of discussion boards for postings on course content. C. Encourage use of practice on-line quizzes.
 <p>FACULTY DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT THESE ACTIVITIES Workshops, Seminars, Webinars, Training</p>		
<p>Assessment Measures</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CLASSE (Classroom Survey of Student Engagement)- will measure increase in active learning strategies. 2. Comparison of success rates in courses using active learning versus courses not using active learning. 3. CCSSE. 4. Student feedback on CATs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage increase in SI sessions and participation. 2. Percentage increase in availability and use of tutoring. 3. Documentation of student visits to instructor's during office hours— could be via student surveys. 4. Documentation of outside of class student group formation. 5. Correlation of student performance with self reported participation in these activities. 6. CCSSE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitored and documented usage via D2L tracking. 2. Comparison of student success correlated with increased web communication.
<p><i>Student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success</i> In core courses where these strategies are being implemented, specific course content driven rubrics will be developed to measure student learning. Control courses (those not involved in initial pilots) will establish a benchmark against which success will be measured.</p>		

Since professional development will play a significant role in helping the faculty increase interaction and engagement, the QEP Design Team explored the possibility of creating a Center for Teaching and Learning as a platform for professional development opportunities associated with areas of interest for the QEP. To investigate that possibility further, the QEP Design Team, along with the SACS Leadership Team, invited Dr. David Schumann, Director of the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, to speak at the October 15, 2010, QEP Design Team meeting. Dr. Schumann described how the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center was established, staffed, and funded. He also explained how the Center aids in providing professional development for faculty through seminars, professional critiques, and mentoring. After Dr. Schumann's presentation and a brief question and answer session, the QEP Design Team, along with the SACS Leadership Team, discussed how the establishment of a similar Teaching and Learning Center at Pellissippi State might be beneficial for the QEP and faculty development in general. The QEP Design Team also discussed the need for an official statement of the components of the QEP. The following statement of the components of the QEP was proposed and discussed further at the meeting on October 22:

The QEP of Pellissippi State will focus on peer-to-peer, student-and-faculty, and faculty-to-faculty interaction through engaged learning inside the classroom, outside the classroom and in web-based environments by creating a Teaching and Learning Center to facilitate and create a faculty-driven support system for developing learning strategies and outcome measures.

After further discussion of the possibility of a Teaching and Learning Center as part of the QEP, including the importance of including adjunct faculty in QEP activities, the team revised the focus statement and model further during the October 22 meeting, as shown below and in Table 6:


QEP Focus Statement:

The purpose of PSCC's QEP, "Strong to the Core," is to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success measures through increasing interaction among faculty and learners in core curriculum areas. (revised draft, October 22, 2010)

QEP Mission Statement:

The QEP of Pellissippi State will focus on peer-to-peer and student-and-faculty interaction through enhanced learning inside the classroom, outside the classroom, and in web-based environments supported by a teaching and learning center that creates and facilitates faculty driven systems for programs to develop learning strategies and outcome measures. (October 22, 2010)

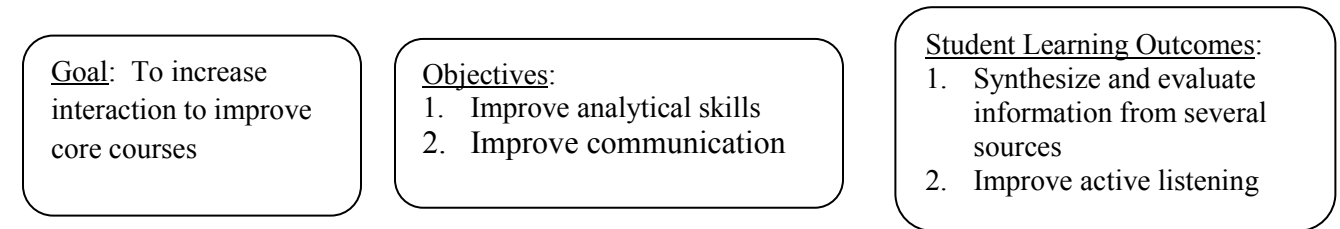
Table 6 – Revised QEP Model (October 22, 2010)

I. Transform <i>classroom</i> instruction to emphasize active learning strategies.	II. Expand opportunities for students to engage with faculty and other students <i>outside</i> the classroom.	III. Expand opportunities for students to engage with faculty and other students using <i>web-based</i> resources.
A. Classroom assessment techniques (CATs). B. Group projects. C. Interpersonal interaction and dialogue. D. Student led instruction. E. Laboratory components/modules F. Student Response Systems. G. Service Learning. H. Capstone Projects.	A. Increase SI participation. B. Expand availability of tutoring in learning centers on all campus locations. C. Establish, as a College priority, the support of adjunct faculty, providing adequate space and tools for holding office hours to engage with students. D. Encourage the development of student study groups.	A. Encourage posting of grades and assignments using D2L. B. Encourage student blogs and use of discussion boards for postings on course content. C. Encourage use of practice on-line quizzes.
 <p>FACULTY DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT THESE ACTIVITIES Workshops, Seminars, Webinars, Training, Reflective Practices, Faculty Inquiry Groups, Action Research</p>		
<p>Assessment Measures</p>		
1. CLASSE (Classroom Survey of Student Engagement) will measure increase in active learning strategies. 2. Comparison of success rates in courses using active learning versus courses not using active learning. 3. CCSSE. 4. Student feedback on CATs.	1. Percentage increase in SI session and participation. 2. Percentage increase in availability and use of tutoring. 3. Documentation of student visits to instructor's during office hours—could be via student surveys. 4. Documentation of outside of class student group formatio 5. Correlation of student performance with self reported participation in these activities. 6. CCSSE.	1. Monitored and documented usage via D2L tracking. 2. Comparison of student success correlated with increased web communication.
<p><i>Student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success</i> In core courses where these strategies are being implemented, specific course content driven rubrics will be developed to measure student learning. Control courses (those not involved in initial pilots) will establish a benchmark against which success will be measured.</p>		

Plan for First QEP Test in Spring 2011

Over the course of the following three weeks, the QEP Design Team continued to consider and develop an action plan to be used in core courses to increase faculty–student interaction and to research assessment methods that would be feasible for the action plan. Each member of the QEP Design Team examined the core curriculum areas, the College’s general education reports to TBR, success rates, and other measures. Based on this information, the QEP Design Team created the revised QEP model shown in Figure 3 for the initial test phase in spring 2011:

Figure 3 – Initial Proposed Model for QEP Test in Spring 2011



Targeted core areas and classes for spring 2011 QEP Test:

Analytical Reasoning: Math 1130

Identified problem: Students need to connect math to other disciplines.

Proposed action plans:

- Supplemental instruction sessions
- Instructor led active learning sessions
- Enhanced tutoring efforts

Oral Communication: Speech 2100

Identified problem: Students need to learn how to listen more effectively

Proposed action plans:

- Peer assessments
- Reflective assessments
- Dyad/or small group exchange
- Departmentally developed or nationally normed tests
- Surveys

Written Communication: English 1010

Identified problem: Students need improvement in using multiple sources

Proposed action plans:

- Enhanced active learning strategies (service learning projects, capstone projects, dialogue groups, oral presentations)
- Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGS)
- Expansion of English 1030 Writing Workshops to initiate more one-on-one time with instructors

On November 22, 2010, the QEP Design Team and SACS Leadership Team invited Dr. Barbara Jones, the College's SACS mentor, to campus to discuss the QEP, the design of the QEP to date, and the remainder of the QEP process over five years. After reviewing the materials provided to her, Dr. Jones suggested that the committee was designing a QEP that was far too large and impractical to attempt. The Design Team suggested that it lost focus on the QEP when it began examining individual programs and trying to design an all-inclusive QEP project. Dr. Jones reminded the group that the purpose of the QEP Design Team is to find one specific, tightly focused aspect of the instructional process that impacts student learning, then design an intervention to achieve improvements in that area.

During the meeting with Dr. Jones, it was also determined that the Design Team needed more input from students to determine how students would define better interaction and what types of activities they believed would improve student learning. Finally, Dr. Jones reminded the QEP Design Team that it should develop processes and tools to create more interaction and synthesis of material, and then, when those have been implemented, determine whether they have a measureable impact on CSSEE, CBASE, General Education Assessment, national benchmark data, retention, success rates, and the other measures of success Pellissippi State uses.

At the December 10, 2010, meeting (the last meeting of the fall semester), the QEP Design Team discussed creating student focus groups, determining questions to be asked during the focus groups, and narrowing the focus of the QEP. The issues were identified, and the Design Team began to identify possible questions and format of the focus groups.

Spring 2011: Development of Action Plan

During the January 26, 2011, meeting, the QEP Design Team determined that the focus of the QEP should be limited to increased interaction in the classroom. There were a number of other very good, viable ideas for interaction outside of the classroom and on-line; however, it was clear that including those activities would make the QEP too large and impractical. The group recognized that some of these other activities might be initiated separately from the QEP or brought into the QEP in later phases. In addition, the QEP Mission Statement created in October was eliminated. Finally, the Design Team identified an action plan for the rest of the spring 2011 semester, described below.

The Design Team determined that questions from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) should be adapted for use in the student focus groups. Pat Riddle and Sharon Yarbrough were to work together to determine the questions to ask the focus groups and design a script for the leaders of each focus group to follow. See Appendix B for the focus group script. The Design Team was broken into smaller teams to conduct the student focus groups. One focus group was to be conducted on each campus of Pellissippi State as follows:

Brenda Ammons and Mark Fuentes – Blount County

Annie Gray, David Key, and Pam Smith – Division Street

Nancy Pevey and Rosalyn Tillman – Magnolia Avenue

Anita Maddox, Pat Riddle, and Marty Salter – Hardin Valley

Each team was to receive a focus group script by February 10, 2011, and invite seven to nine students to participate in the focus group. The teams were responsible for conducting the focus group, preparing minutes from the focus group, and summarizing the results by March 15, 2011.

The QEP Design Team met again on March 23, 2011 to discuss the results of the focus groups. Although each focus group had unique responses from the students, the most significant and recurring themes were those listed below. (See Appendix C for summaries of the focus group responses.)

- More positive engagement with instructors
- More open discussion and conversations in the classroom
- More peer-to-peer interaction among students (with instructors being moderators)
- Computers and programs used as supplements to the course
- Respect and civility between instructors and students
- Quick feedback on assignments
- Exercises involving “Teach the Teacher” or teaching to other students
- Activities that show practical applications of the course material

After each focus group team finished presenting findings to the Design Team, a discussion began about best practices and engagement techniques to be used in the classroom to test the QEP. The Design Team also discussed assessment measures for the classroom engagement activities. Finally, team members agreed to conduct a test of the QEP in one or more sections of a targeted course they were teaching in spring 2011. The faculty that would test were to design an active learning or engagement strategy around a significant course objective, use the strategy in their course, and assess the effectiveness of the strategy. Pat Riddle agreed to design an engagement questionnaire specifically for the active learning strategies as one of the assessment techniques. Faculty who were testing an active learning engagement strategy were to complete the test by April 20, 2011. Finally, the QEP Design Team made another revision to the QEP Focus Statement to better reflect the actual focus of the QEP—engagement, rather than interaction—as engagement better reflects the terminology used in the literature and best practices:

The purpose of PSCCs QEP, “Strong to the Core,” is to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses and overall student success measures through increasing student engagement in core curriculum areas. (draft, revised March 23, 2011)

The final meeting of the QEP Design Team for the spring 2011 semester took place on April 14, 2011. The members of the team who had tested engagement strategies in their courses gave a brief presentation about the activity and the outcome of the activity. The following engagement strategies were developed or modified by Design Team members for the test:

- Inverted Classroom
- Split-Room Debate
- Group Activity and Discussion
- Classroom Assessment Techniques

At this meeting, the QEP Design Team also heard a presentation by Dr. Sharon Yarbrough about the new Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) given during the 2010-2011 academic year. The

SENSE survey is different from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in that it focuses on entering students in their first semester at the College, whereas the CCSSE is intended for more experienced students. Finally, the Design Team made one last revision to the QEP Focus Statement. The final QEP focus statement is:

The purpose of PSCC’s QEP, “Strong to the Core,” is to improve student learning outcomes in targeted courses through increasing student engagement in core curriculum areas.

Table 7 identifies the constituencies that provided input into selection and design of the QEP:

Table 7 – Constituency Input Into QEP Process			
<u>Students</u>	<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Staff/Administration</u>	<u>Community</u>
QEP Selection Committee received input for QEP topics from Council of Student Advocates (COSA).	Faculty were members of QEP Selection Committee.	Staff and administrators were members of QEP Selection Committee.	Knox and Blount Chambers of Commerce were asked for input into what can improve student learning.
Council of Student Advocates (COSA) and Student Success Mentors surveyed other students for ideas of what can help students learn better.	Faculty were members of QEP Design Team.	Staff and administrators were members of QEP Design Team.	PSCC Advisory Committees were asked for input into what can improve student learning.
COLL 1500 College Success students completed a survey providing comments about their learning experiences.	Faculty from all departments were included in focus groups to provide input on SWOT analysis and College Mission Statement.	Staff and Administrators from all administrative divisions were included in focus groups to provide input on SWOT analysis and College Mission Statement.	Members of the community and business partners were informed of the QEP process and asked for input.
Student focus groups were conducted again after QEP topic was selected.	Faculty from each campus and the adjunct pool were included in selection and design process.	Staff and administrators from all campuses were included in selection and design process.	Community was provided access to on-line survey and e-mail address to provide input.
Students were given access to on-line survey and e-mail address to provide input.	Faculty were included in writing whitepapers for QEP topic selection.	Staff and administrators were included in writing whitepapers for QEP topic selection.	

Chapter III – Desired Student Learning Outcomes

Pellissippi State's QEP will increase engagement in core curriculum areas to improve student learning outcomes. The targeted courses for the QEP are ENGL 1010 (English Composition I), SPH 2100 (Public Speaking), and MATH 1130 (College Algebra).

These courses were targeted for the QEP because they provide the core competencies that students need to be successful in college and they include student competencies which must be reported annually to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR): communication (reported through English Composition I and Public Speaking) and mathematics (reported through College Algebra). In addition, these courses will impact the greatest number of students and will reach all campuses of the College. Table 8 shows the number of sections of each of the targeted courses and number of students in those courses for the most recent two academic years.

Year and	ENGL 1010		SPH 2100		MATH 1130	
Campus	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment
2009-2010:						
Blount County	21	425	11	250	8	159
Division Street	20	389	12	271	7	129
Hardin Valley	115	2,626	70	1,468	32	824
Magnolia Avenue	10	170	5	99	3	46
Total (2009-2010)	166	3,610	98	2,088	50	1,158
2010-2011:						
Blount County	25	640	14	321	8	185
Division Street	22	457	13	285	7	158
Hardin Valley	109	2,586	84	1,701	36	849
Magnolia Avenue	10	227	5	110	6	101
Total (2010-2011)	166	3,910	116	2,417	57	1,293
Total						
	332	7,520	214	4,505	107	2,451

The QEP will focus on specific student learning outcomes in the targeted courses. Research from Astin, Tinto, the California State Post Secondary Education Commission, and the National Writing Project suggests that strengthening students' communication and mathematics skills will also lead to increased student success in all courses and to an increase in overall student success and completion.

Learning outcomes for English Composition targeted by the QEP:

Students will, with a minimum of 70% competency,

Analyze and evaluate oral and written communication representing diverse points of view and use the information as supporting evidence in essays.

Write a clearly stated or implied thesis statement supported by the entire essay.

Write clear, well-organized, and sufficiently-developed analyses.

Quote/paraphrase effectively from assigned readings when writing analyses.

Learning outcomes for Public Speaking targeted by the QEP:

Students will, with a minimum of 74% competency,

Analyze and evaluate oral communication representing diverse points of view and use the information as supporting evidence in speech presentations.

Plan and deliver a speech using visual aids and incorporate a question and answer section.

Maintain eye contact with the audience during a persuasive speech.

Plan, research, and present an effective persuasive speech.

Learning outcomes for College Algebra targeted by the QEP:

Students will, with a minimum of 70% competency,

Write a polynomial function given its real zeros and their multiplicities and determine the real zeros and their multiplicities for a polynomial function.

Solve equations analytically: linear, absolute value, quadratic, rational, radical, special polynomials, exponential, and logarithmic.

The listed student learning outcomes are among those that have the most significant effect on student learning in core curriculum. The targeted levels of competency in each of the learning outcomes represent the minimum successful competency. Competency in each of the learning objectives will be measured through a series of assessments; see Chapter IX: Assessment. The initial test of the QEP occurred in spring of 2011; the pilot and roll-out will occur in fall of 2011. After the pilot stage, additional core curriculum learning outcomes may be added to the QEP, as appropriate.

Chapter IV – Literature Review and Best Practices

Recent trends toward retention through enhanced student engagement have caused officials in higher education to consistently seek out new student success measures. One way in which educators have sought to improve student performance is through increased student engagement. Although much debate has centered on academic effectiveness through engagement, gaining a clear focus on the meaning and purpose of student engagement is often elusive. Although researchers often differ in their explanations and concepts of student engagement, they generally all agree on the premise that students learn from what they actually do in college (Pike & Kuh, 2005). Thus, student engagement has been defined as participation in educationally effective practices that lead to a range of measurable outcomes (Kuh et al., 2007). Accordingly, recent research has moved toward pinpointing and measuring student engagement and success. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) surmised that students with greater involvement in academics and collegiate experiences demonstrate greater levels of knowledge and cognitive development. It is this interest in engagement coupled with cognitive development that motivated Pellissippi State to design a QEP that promoted student engagement as a method by which to improve student success in its core competencies.

Although looking at student engagement through the scope of the established literature is key to understanding its origins and complexity, this process must also be joined with practical definitions that will enable college instructors to gain a clear insight into how engagement techniques can best serve the needs of their students (Barkley, 2010). Accordingly, the purpose of this literature review is to contextualize Pellissippi State's focus on student engagement within the broader context of the relevant literature. This review will begin with an analysis of the history and significance of student engagement and continue with an examination of student engagement through active learning. This review will conclude with an assessment of how active learning techniques can bolster student success at Pellissippi State.

Historically, the importance and relevance of student engagement can be traced to the works of Astin (1984), Pace (1984), and Kuh and associates (1991). In the 1970s, Robert Pace developed the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (Kuh, 2009). In order to gain a greater insight into the totality of the collegiate experience, Pace (1984) developed the College Student Experiences Questionnaire to assess the quality of students' effort and the attainment. The questionnaire covers a myriad of college experiences including personal collegiate experiences. Importantly, this survey also allowed the students to rate their perceptions of college satisfaction. This instrument allowed colleges to gauge the entirety of a student's experience in order to fashion policies and programs that might lead to greater student engagement. Concurrent to the work put forth by Pace, Alexander Astin generated his theory of student involvement (Astin, 1984).

In order to more clearly define the principles of effective student engagement Astin began to look at issues concerning student involvement. Astin's (1984) student involvement theory focuses on student involvement as it moves away from subject matter and technique, to focus on the motivation and behavior of the student. Astin surmises a student that is more involved with different aspects of the academic process is more likely to be a successful student (Astin, 1984). Additionally, Astin (1984) also delves into issues concerning the instructional process. He began by constructing the merits of content theory.

Simply, content theory was predicated on the notion that student learning and development hinged on the exposure to the right subject matter. This theory had traditionally formed the basis of collegiate education as classes were evaluated based on the strength of the syllabus. Since this methodology was so prevalent, Astin (1984) contends that proponents of content theory believed that students learned by attending lectures and by completing individual assignments. In essence, content theory tends to place students in a passive role as recipients of information. Conversely, Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement promotes the active participation of the student in the learning process.

In addition to continued works by Astin, scholars such as Ernest Pascarella, Gary Pike, Patrick Terenzini, Vincent Tinto, and George Kuh have contributed a multitude of studies and metrics that highlight the different dimensions of student effort and its relationship to collegiate outcomes (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Pike, 2006; Tinto, 1987, 1993; Kuh, 2009). As student engagement research became more widespread in the 1990s, researchers began designing assessments that would eventually "mainstream" the field of student engagement.

The introduction and extensive use of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and its two-year college counterpart, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), has moved student engagement into the forefront of higher education (Kuh, 2009). The introduction of engagement based assessments has allowed institutions of higher education a window into the perceptions of their students. The NSSE and the CCSSE established that student engagement could reliably be measured across institutions. This data could then be used by institutions to improve their policies and programs (Kuh, 2009). As the reliability of these types of assessment tools gained acceptance, the relevance and importance of student engagement as an indicator for both student and institutional performance has intensified.

In addition to gaining an understanding of the historical relevance and background of student engagement, it is also important to gain a greater understanding of how engagement techniques are operationalized to produce positive outcomes. Barkley (2010) posits that although discussions of student engagement are often complex, college instructors generally view engagement as a process of motivation. Students who are motivated and engaged will endeavor to make meaning out of what they are studying. This process will inevitably give rise to involved students who are engaged in academic tasks through the use of higher-order thinking skills such as analyzing information or solving problems. Essentially, teachers are relating student engagement to active and dynamic learning (Barkley, 2010).

Student Engagement through Active Learning

Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves (Chickering and Gamson, 1987, p. 3).

Active learning is an important component of student engagement, and it is important to understand how active learning and engagement interact to produce positive academic results. Although the move toward creating dynamic learning environments is ubiquitous, it is essential to understand that enthusiastic and

Second Active Learning Strategy: Split-room Debate

The second active learning strategy refined for the QEP is the split-room debate. In a split-room debate, the instructor makes a brief presentation about a controversial topic (or any topic that has opposing points of view) and divides the room in half with each side representing one of the major points of view on the issue. Students are then asked to sit on the side of the room that corresponds to their position on the issue. The instructor moderates the discussion as each of the groups presents the arguments for its side of the debate. As each student finishes presenting his or her argument, he or she chooses who speaks next. Students are encouraged to move to the other side of the room if their view changes as the debate continues. The split-room debate can be used in conjunction with the inverted classroom: Instructors can require an assignment outside of class, summarize during the following class meeting, and then divide the students for debate.

The split-room debate provides a framework for students to carefully develop their arguments and points of view. It also helps students recognize a range of perspectives that are inherent to complex topics and realize how their own opinions and the opinions of others can change as understanding of each side of the debate continues.

Although United States History is not a QEP targeted course, the split-room debate was tested in a section of United States History I taught by one of the members of the QEP Design Team. The results of the test in spring 2011 show that the activity will be useful in QEP targeted courses during the pilot in fall 2011 and forward.

Although many learning outcomes can be improved through use of the split-room debate, the targeted student learning outcome in this test of the split-room debate was the students' ability to analyze and critique historical issues. This exercise allows the students to debate with minimal prompts from the instructor, and the strategy was implemented in order to get the students to discuss the material with one another in the hopes of creating better analytical and critical skills.

Following a lecture on the United States Constitution, the class was asked to research material concerning the ratification of the constitution. During the following week, the class was instructed to take a position concerning the ratification of the constitution that mirrored the debate between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists. The students were then asked to debate the ratification of the constitution using historical documentation and to make arguments for the ratification or denunciation of the proposed constitution. As the debate evolved, the students were allowed to change their position based on the arguments. After the debate ended, students were asked which way they would have voted and why.

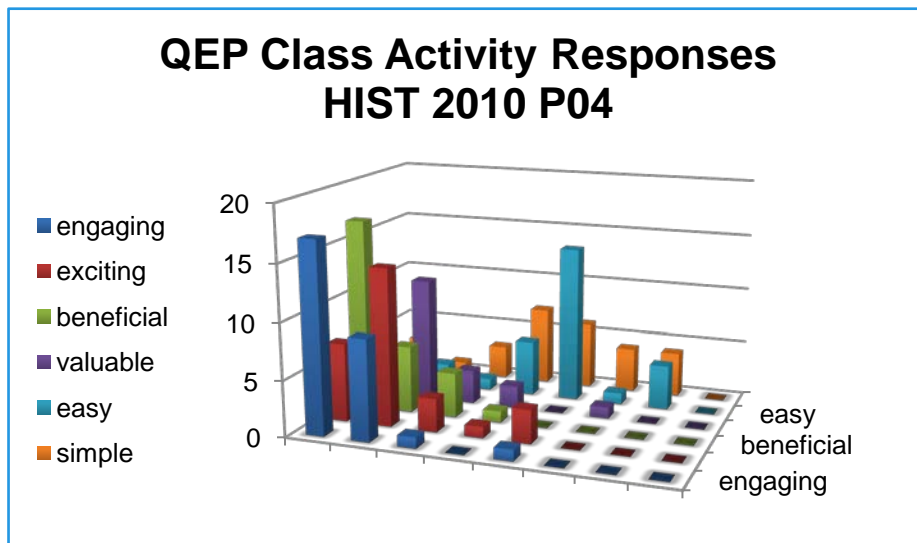
After the debate concluded, students took an engagement survey regarding the exercise, and they were also tested on how well they were able to synthesize and analyze the information on the final exam. A rubric was created in order to determine an overall score for their final exam. This metric also served as an indicator of how well they grasped the ratification process. The rubric is attached as Appendix E.

Each exam and corresponding ratification section was scored using the following rubric scale: 1= below average, 2 = average, 3 = good, 4 = excellent. After each paper and section was scored using this scale, the averages were compared. For the entire final exam, the student average was a 2.91, while the average

for the section on the ratification process was 3.19. The results indicated that although there was a slight increase in the average for the section that centered on the ratification, most students who did well on the whole exam also did well on the ratification section. Though the results did not vary greatly, the results of the engagement survey were positive. The students reported that they felt the activity was engaging (92.9% responded 6 or 7 to the engaging category, with an average of 6.5), beneficial (82.1% responded 6 or 7 to the beneficial category, with an average of 6.4), and valuable (78.6% responded 6 or 7 to the valuable category, with an average of 6). Survey results are shown in Table 12 and Figure 7.

	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	
engaging	17	9	1	0	1	0	0	Boring
exciting	7	14	3	1	3	0	0	Dull
beneficial	17	6	4	1	0	0	0	Useless
valuable	11	11	3	2	0	1	0	Worthless
easy	1	2	1	5	14	1	4	challenging
simple	3	1	3	7	6	4	4	Complex

Figure 7 – Graphical Representation of QEP Class Activity Student Responses (HIST 2010 P04)



Third Active Learning Strategy: Group Activities

In addition to the inverted classroom and the split-room debate, another active learning strategy tested for the QEP is the use of group activity and discussion. Although group discussion can be a component of both the inverted classroom and the split-room debate, group activities can also be used independently.

Group activities help students analyze the components of the activity, gain a wider perspective from the diversity of the group, and engage in brainstorming and associative thinking. Group activities that are most effective are those in which the instructor is merely a facilitator and the students decide on the course of the discussion and make discoveries on their own.

During the test of the QEP in spring 2011, group activities were used in both English Composition I and Public Speaking. The tests in both courses revolved primarily around small group activities; however, both also included a component of the inverted classroom. In both cases, the classes were given a reading assignment outside of class, and class time was used to engage the students in group activities.

In the English Composition course, the group activity was based on the course unit in argumentation, dealing with the topic of wealth and poverty. Students were assigned two readings that they would need to reference in their own argumentative essays on wealth and poverty. One is an excerpt from Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, and the other is Andrew Carnegie's *The Gospel of Wealth*, each representing a view on the role of wealth and poverty in a social context.

Students were required to come to class having read the two pieces. First, the class talked through each piece carefully, dissecting the subject matter and examining how the authors crafted their arguments. Then, students were asked to split up into groups of five and decide on one of the two pieces to discuss more deeply as an analytical team. Within their teams, each student was to assume a role as a *proponent*, a *critic*, an *example giver*, a *summarizer*, or a *questioner*. Team members studied and annotated the text carefully for ten minutes through the filter of their specific roles and then dialogued with each other for another fifteen minutes about what each found in the text. Each group then reported to the entire class on their findings (through their specific roles). During the dialogue, discussion, and presentations, the instructor acted only as a moderator and facilitator.

The instructor observed that the activity seemed to hold students' interest and to engage them in deeply meaningful discussions on the finer points of each writer's argument. Students in different groups also discovered significantly different findings and truths, even though they had chosen the same author's literary work. Each student then prepared an essay, incorporating the reading material the group had analyzed as part of the engagement activity. Two students in particular demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the philosophies on both wealth and poverty, showing that the activity had supported good reading comprehension skills. Grades on the essay also demonstrated that the activity fostered good comprehension skills. The essays were graded based on a rubric, and the scoring of the essays seemed to support the effectiveness of the activity. The grading rubric is attached as Appendix F. The grade distribution for the essays was as follows:

Grade of A = 3 students (18.7%)

Grade of B = 7 students (43.7%)

Grade of C = 3 students (18.7%)

Grade of D = 1 student (6.3%)

Grade of F = 1 student (6.3%)

Grade of I = 1 student (6.3%)

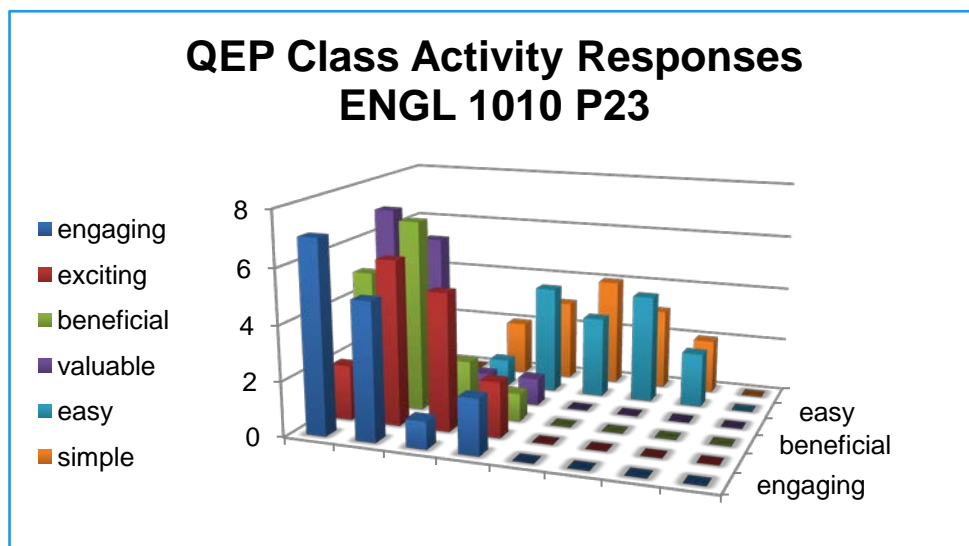
The grade of I is an incomplete; that student did not complete the essay or finish the course. Also worthy of note is that the one student that received the “F” grade is the one student that did not participate in the active learning activity.

In addition to scores on the essays, students were asked to complete the engagement survey created by the QEP Design Team. Students were asked to respond considering only the specific engagement activity completed in class. Based on the results of the survey, overall, students found the activity moderately challenging (60% of responses were 1-3 in the challenging category, with an average score of 3.13) and complex (60% of responses were 1-3 in the complex category, with an average score of 3.27). However, students also found it engaging, exciting, and beneficial. Average scores were 6.13 in the engaging category, 5.53 in the exciting category, and 6.07 in the beneficial category, with at least 53% of responses either 6 or 7 in those three categories, as the survey results in Table 13 and Figure 8 indicate.

Table 13 – QEP Class Activity Student Survey Responses (ENGL 1010 P23)

	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	
Engaging	7	5	1	2	0	0	0	Boring
exciting	2	6	5	2	0	0	0	dull
beneficial	5	7	2	1	0	0	0	useless
valuable	7	6	1	1	0	0	0	worthless
easy	1	0	1	4	3	4	2	challenging
simple	1	0	2	3	4	3	2	complex

Figure 8 – Graphical Representation of QEP Class Activity Student Responses (ENGL 1010 P23)



In Public Speaking, the small group activity tested in spring 2011 revolved around the persuasive speech. The class was assigned a reading about persuasive speeches using Monroe's Motivated Sequence of Appeals. They were told that they would be asked to prepare a persuasive speech in the following class meeting applying the five steps in Monroe's Motivated Sequence. During the following class meeting, students were divided into groups and asked to choose an item from the following group of items (the items might be different in future sections of public speaking):

- Stuffed Ernie doll with one arm
- Bucket with a hole in it
- A yellow floatee for the arm
- Large pink fuzzy dice
- Old Iowa license plate
- Geico mask and fan
- Deflated Lisa doll
- First place trophy from Miss Patsy's School of Dance
- Broken flower pot

Within their groups, students were asked to design a three- to four-minute presentation, using the Motivated Sequence, designed to persuade the audience to purchase the product. However, the groups were instructed to "sell" the item for some use other than that for which it was originally intended. The groups then presented their speeches to the class.

The results of the test of the active learning strategy in Public Speaking were equally as impressive as those of the other tests. Each group was graded on its persuasive speech based on a rubric, which is included as Appendix G. The grade distribution for this assignment follows:

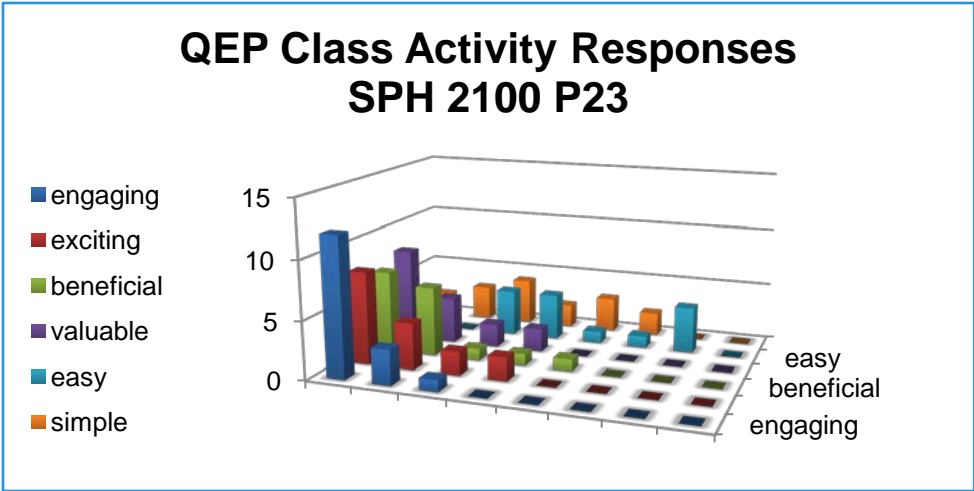
- Grade of A = 5 students (31.2%)
- Grade of A- = 7 students (43.8%)
- Grade of B = 2 students (12.5%)
- Grade of C+ = 2 students (12.5%)

Following the assignment, the QEP engagement survey was administered. Based on the results of the survey, students responded well to the engagement activity revolving around the motivated speech. This is demonstrated with an average score of 6.69 on the engaging category, an average of 6.13 in the exciting category, and an average of 6.06 in the beneficial category. A minimum of 75% of students rated the activity either 6 or 7 in each of those categories as shown in Table 14 and Figure 9.

Table 14 – QEP Class Activity Student Survey Responses (SPH 2100 P23)

	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	
engaging	12	3	1	0	0	0	0	boring
exciting	8	4	2	2	0	0	0	dull
beneficial	7	6	1	1	1	0	0	useless
valuable	8	4	2	2	0	0	0	worthless
easy	2	0	4	4	1	1	4	challenging
simple	2	3	4	2	3	2	0	Complex

Figure 9 – Graphical Representation of QEP Class Activity Student Responses (SPH 2100 P23)



Fourth Active Learning Strategy: CATs

The final engagement tool used by the QEP Design Team is Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs). CATs are brief formative assessments that are simple, non-graded, and anonymous. CATs are primarily designed to assist faculty in determining what and how students are learning. Use of CATs can assist faculty in designing and planning class activities. Although designed primarily to provide instructors with useful feedback, CATs can also be used as engagement techniques because they require students to reflect upon the content of the course and to participate by means of writing and discussion. Some CATs (Angelo & Cross, 1993) that might be used in the QEP target courses are the one-minute paper, chain notes, memory matrix, directed paraphrasing, one-sentence summary, application cards, application article, journals, suggestion box, peer review, and small group instruction. An example of a commonly used CAT that has been tested for the QEP is the “Muddiest Point.” After teaching the concepts needed and having the class complete activities related to the topic, the instructor uses the last five minutes of class to ask students to describe in writing the most unclear point from the lesson and the aspect they anticipate having the most difficulty with while working on their homework. Students are asked to submit their unclear points anonymously at the end of class. The instructor reviews the concepts that students are most unclear on at the beginning of the next class meeting to reinforce those concepts.

The muddiest point CAT was used in College Algebra (MATH 1130 P25 section) during the test of the QEP in spring 2011. The test yielded mixed results. Twelve students turned in brief answers to the question of what they were most unclear about at the end of the discussion of polynomials. Eleven of the twelve (91.7%) had no particular problems with the concepts. Five of the students (41.7%) said that they were “crystal clear” and had no problems. Another student (8.3%) commented that he or she always felt like he or she understood the material after class. One student (8.3%) had particular concerns about the multiplicity of a root, and another (8.3%) had problems understanding how to find the end behaviors and extrema from a table. Those concepts were addressed at the beginning of the next class.

At the end of the following class meeting, the class was given another opportunity to indicate their muddiest points. The responses of the twelve students were again positive overall. One student even looked forward to doing the homework assignment on the material. The muddiest point exercises were helpful to the students in having them analyze their thoughts and identify the specific topics about which they had concerns.

All of these engagement techniques are supported by the literature review as being active learning strategies that increase student engagement and can lead to enhanced learning outcomes and greater student success (Barkley, 2010).

Professional Development as Part of QEP

The final component of the QEP to be implemented is professional development. The QEP budget includes funds for reference materials, workshops, and seminars. Faculty will be afforded the opportunity to attend conferences, seminars, and workshops that relate to increased engagement, best practices, and classroom pedagogy. In addition, in-house seminars, workshops, and on-line learning communities will be provided. The first in-house professional development activities will occur in August of 2011 at the College’s annual in-service. Sessions will be available dealing with classroom management, active

learning, and assessment. As part of professional development, the members of the QEP Design Team will train other faculty in using the active learning strategies that were successful in the spring 2011 test, so these strategies can be implemented in other sections of the targeted courses.

Since adjunct faculty teach a significant number of courses for the College, including many sections of the QEP targeted courses, adjunct faculty will be involved in the process of training and implementation. Since adjunct faculty are held to the same standards as full-time faculty, they will be expected to use QEP related active learning strategies in their sections of targeted courses. The College will provide training for adjunct faculty regarding the QEP, active learning strategies, and assessment beginning in August 2011 with the College's annual in-service and the adjunct faculty in-service.

Chapter VI - Assessment Tools

The purpose of Pellissippi State's QEP is to use increased engagement and active learning to improve student learning and competency in core curriculum areas. Assessment activities and evidence have been designed for the QEP in order to ensure effectiveness and continuous improvement of the plan throughout the course of the five-year QEP cycle and to determine the extent to which student learning is improved by the QEP plan.

The College will use a number of assessment tools throughout the course of the QEP. These assessment tools will be used during the 2011-2012 academic year to gather baseline data and in subsequent years as both formative and summative assessment of the QEP. The key assessment tools are listed below:

Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE)

SENSE is a standardized survey designed to measure students' perceived level of engagement during their first year at the College. SENSE collects and analyzes data about institutional practices and student behaviors in the earliest weeks of college. This data can help colleges understand students' critical early experiences and improve institutional practices that affect student success in the first college year. SENSE is administered during the fourth and fifth weeks of the fall academic term to students in courses randomly selected from those most likely to enroll entering students. Students respond to the survey in class, and the colleges receive survey reports including data and analysis. SENSE was first administered by Pellissippi State in fall of 2010. Since the QEP targeted courses, especially English Composition I and College Algebra, have a large population of entering students, SENSE results will provide a baseline for the summative assessment of Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Initial baseline data will be gathered by administering the SENSE in fall of 2011. SENSE will then be administered annually in the fall semester through fall of 2014 (this will be the last entering group of students that will have both SENSE and CCSSE data during the course of the QEP).

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

CCSSE asks questions of both faculty and students about institutional practices and student behaviors related to engagement that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. The CCSSE is administered to students in their second year of college. The results of the CCSSE will be compared to the corresponding results from the SENSE to determine the increase in student engagement. CCSSE will be administered annually, using the results from the 2011-2012 academic year as a baseline. To make the results of the CCSSE and SENSE comparable, SENSE results will be compared to CCSSE results from the following academic year. Additional questions can be added to the CCSSE by Pellissippi State to gather specific data; so in the early phases of the QEP, additional questions relating to the QEP might be developed and added to the CCSSE.

College Basic Academic Subject Examination (CBASE)

CBASE is a nationally normed exam that tests general education knowledge, including writing and mathematics. The College administers CBASE to all degree-seeking students in their last semester of

study. CBASE scores range from 40 to 560 points and are assessed against a defined body of knowledge. The point scale is designed so that a score of 300 is the average for the entire nation-wide group (note that there is no oral communication component of the CBASE). The CBASE administered during academic year 2011-2012 will serve as the baseline data. The QEP target for CBASE is an average score of 300 or greater in QEP related categories. This corresponds to a competency level at or above the national average.

Common Course Rubrics

Course rubrics have been developed for essays in English Composition I (See Appendix F), and Public Speaking (See Appendix G). These common rubrics will be used to assess the level of competency on individual assignments in the corresponding course. Active learning strategies that target learning outcomes will be measured through specific items on the common rubrics. Course rubrics will be used to establish a baseline competency in the learning objectives targeted by the QEP during the 2011-2012 academic year. Course rubrics will be used on an on-going basis as a formative assessment tool to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the QEP. Adjustments may be made based, in part, on this evidence. Additional course rubrics will be developed to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the QEP for specific learning outcomes as appropriate.

Exam Questions and Common Final Exams

Exams in College Algebra have problems specifically designed to address learning outcomes. In addition, all College Algebra courses use a common final exam. The exam problems and common final exam questions will be used to assess the level of competency on individual learning outcomes. Active learning strategies that target learning outcomes will be measured through these specific exam questions and problems. Baseline competency in the learning objectives targeted by the QEP will be collected from these exam questions and problems during the 2011-2012 academic year. In addition, common questions and exam problems will be used on an on-going basis as a formative assessment tool to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the QEP. Adjustments may be made based, in part, on this evidence. Additional common questions might be developed in future phases of the QEP, as necessary, to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the QEP for targeted learning outcomes. The target competency level for MATH 1130 is that at least 75% of students will receive complete or partial credit for the test questions related to the learning outcome targeted by the active learning strategy, with at least 50% of students receiving complete credit. In addition, at least 75% of students will receive complete credit on common final exam questions related to the targeted learning outcomes.

Student Surveys

Students in QEP target courses will complete a survey after each active learning activity. (See Appendix D for the survey). This survey will measure student perception of the active learning strategy and provide useful feedback for formative assessment of the QEP. The survey requires students to rate, on a seven-point scale, six attributes of the active learning strategy (level of engagement, usefulness, challenge, excitement, value, and complexity). Surveys were used during the test of the QEP in spring 2011 to establish baseline data for the active learning strategies developed in the QEP design. Surveys will continue to be used in fall 2011 to gather additional baseline data and throughout all phases of the QEP as

a formative assessment for the QEP active learning strategies. The following are the targets for survey results:

Average of 4 on the “complexity” and “challenging” categories

Average of 6 on the “engaging,” “beneficial,” and “valuable” categories, with a minimum of 75% of students responding 6 or 7

These targets will be refined after the baseline data is gathered in 2011-2012 academic year.

Focus Groups

Throughout the course of the QEP, focus groups will be conducted with students and faculty that have been associated with sections of targeted courses. The focus groups will provide formative feedback on the effectiveness and validity of the QEP active learning strategies. The first focus groups will be conducted in Phase II of the QEP in the 2012-2013 academic year.

Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) Test

The MAPP is a test of general education skills designed to assist colleges and universities in assessment of outcomes of general education programs. The MAPP test measures reading, writing, mathematics, and critical thinking skills, representing subject matter that is normally taught in the first two years of college. In summer 2011, Pellissippi State began administering the MAPP test to students who had completed their first thirty hours of coursework. The combination of the MAPP test and, later, CBASE will provide pre- and post-test data for the QEP. The College will use the 2011-2012 academic year to baseline the MAPP test and determine the targets for improvement from MAPP to CBASE.

Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) General Education Assessment

In order to determine the effectiveness of general education, TBR requires that institutions evaluate competence of students in communication, both oral and written; mathematics; and critical thinking through assessing their skills at the completion of ENGL 1010 English Composition I, SPH 2100 Public Speaking, and MATH 1130 College Algebra (Assessing General Education in the TBR System). The general education assessment for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic years will be used as a baseline for the core competencies. In addition, the general education assessment will be used as a formative assessment of the QEP. Target level of achievement will be set after baseline data for 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 has been collected. See Appendix K for information about the assessment of general education in the TBR system.

Formative Assessment

The assessment measures described above will allow the QEP director to evaluate and assess the QEP implementation plan throughout the course of the QEP and make adjustments as necessary to maintain continuous improvement. Formative assessments will be analyzed by the QEP director and the office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning on an on-going basis. The formative assessment tools listed above will provide data for continuous improvement of the QEP and improvement and development

of additional assessment tools as needed. Recommended changes during the course of the QEP will be communicated to the vice president of Academic Affairs by the QEP director.

Summative Assessment

The QEP director will be responsible for preparing a QEP report each year. This report will not only address the formative assessment made during the prior academic year, but will also evaluate the extent to which the QEP is accomplishing its goal of improving the learning outcomes outlined in Chapter III: Desired Student Learning Outcomes. The annual QEP report will not only include assessment results, but recommendations for improvement of the QEP. In addition, the QEP director, with support from Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning, will prepare a summative final report in year five to detail the history and effectiveness of the QEP. This report will be the basis for the five-year report that will be submitted to SACS-COC.

Chapter VII - QEP Timeline

Pellissippi State's QEP process began in July of 2009 with the appointment of members to the QEP Selection Committee. The selection process continued until June of 2010, when the QEP Focus Statement was adopted by the committee.

In July of 2010, the QEP Design Team was charged with refining the statement and designing the QEP. The Design Team was composed of some members of the original QEP Selection Committee, plus additional faculty and staff. Mark Fuentes and David Key were appointed as co-chairs of the Design Team. All members of the Design Team were awarded three credit hours of released time for their work in refining the QEP Focus Statement and designing and testing the QEP. The Design Team worked through May of 2011 on the design and initial test of the QEP. During fall semester 2011, the Design Team will be responsible for the rollout and pilot of the QEP.

Phase I Academic Year 2011 – 2012

The first phase will involve piloting the QEP and gathering baseline data. In this phase, additional active learning strategies will be developed to address the learning objectives targeted by the QEP. Assessment tools will be refined, and new tools will be developed.

<i>QEP Phase I (2011-2012 Academic Year)</i>			
<i>Semester</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Fall 2011	Roll-out and market the QEP to College constituencies	Increased awareness of the QEP and its objectives	Vice President, Academic Affairs; QEP Design Team
Fall 2011	Recruit additional faculty teaching targeted courses to pilot QEP	Implementation of QEP active learning strategies in two sections of each targeted course on each campus	QEP Design Team
Fall 2011	Provide training on active learning strategies for faculty involved in the QEP	Awareness of faculty in targeted course areas of the QEP and the active learning strategies that will be used to improve student learning outcomes	QEP Design Team
Fall 2011	Collect evidence from ENGL 1010, SPH 2100, and MATH 1130 courses	Establishment of baseline data on student competency level in core areas	Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning

<i>QEP Phase I (2011-2012 Academic Year) (continued)</i>			
<i>Semester</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Fall 2011	Appoint QEP Director	Implementation of QEP goals, direction of QEP efforts, preparation of reports	President; Vice President, Academic Affairs
Spring 2012	Select appropriate assessment tools for QEP learning outcomes and targets	Administration of tools to measure competency levels in target courses	QEP Director; Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning
Spring 2012	Expand training and workshops to additional faculty	Increased knowledge of student engagement and assessment techniques	QEP Director
Spring 2012	Increase application of QEP learning strategies into 25% of ENGL 1010, SPH 2100, and MATH 1130 course sections	Determination of competency levels in additional sections of courses	QEP Director and Faculty
Spring 2012	Collect evidence from ENGL 1010, SPH 2100, and MATH 1130 courses	Comparison of results to baseline data established in fall 2011	Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning
Summer 2012	Prepare first-year report on QEP	Establishment of goals for QEP	QEP Director

<i>QEP Phase III (2013-2016 Academic Year) (continued)</i>			
<i>Semester</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>
Fall 2014 and Spring 2015	Develop additional active learning strategies for use in targeted courses	Designation of additional active learning strategies specifically designed for targeted career/technical courses	QEP Director
Fall 2014 and Spring 2015	Pair targeted career/technical courses with ENGL 1010, SPH 2100, and MATH 11130, as appropriate	Strengthening of core competencies in career/technical courses	QEP Director and Faculty
Fall 2014 and Spring 2015	Identify learning objectives in additional career/technical courses that will be targeted by QEP and develop assessment tools	Implementation and assessment of learning strategies in target courses	QEP Director; Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning
Fall 2014 and Spring 2015	Continue to collect data from ENGL 1010, SPH 2100, MATH 1130, and targeted career/technical courses	Formative assessment used to make modifications to the QEP as necessary	Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning
Fall 2015	Prepare fourth year report on QEP	Outcomes for the activities and assessment of the fourth year of the QEP; comparison with previous data; evaluation of the QEP	QEP Director
Fall 2015 and Spring 2016	Facilitate any final faculty training and workshops as necessary	Increased knowledge of student engagement and assessment techniques	QEP Director
Fall 2015 and Spring 2016	Develop or refine active learning strategies as necessary	Implementation and assessment of learning strategies in target courses	QEP Director
Fall 2015 and Spring 2016	Collect final evidence and data from all QEP targeted courses	All data will be used as summative assessment of the effectiveness of the QEP in improving targeted student learning outcomes	QEP Director; Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning
Spring 2016	Prepare five-year QEP report		QEP Director

Chapter VIII - Organizational Structure

The SACS Leadership Team was the first group created for the reaffirmation process. It was originally composed of the following members:

Dr. Allen Edwards, President

Dr. L. Anthony Wise, Jr., Vice President, Academic Affairs; Chief Academic Officer

Lois Reynolds, Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs; SACS Accreditation Liaison

Dr. Sharon Yarbrough, Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning

Marilyn Harper, Associate Professor; Chair, QEP Selection Committee

(See Appendix A for complete list of QEP Planning and Development Teams.)

Marilyn Harper was appointed chair of the QEP Selection Committee, reporting to the SACS Leadership Team. The QEP Selection Committee members reported to the chair of the committee and were divided into smaller groups for research and writing whitepapers. Each of the smaller groups had a chairperson, and the groups reported to the Selection Committee.

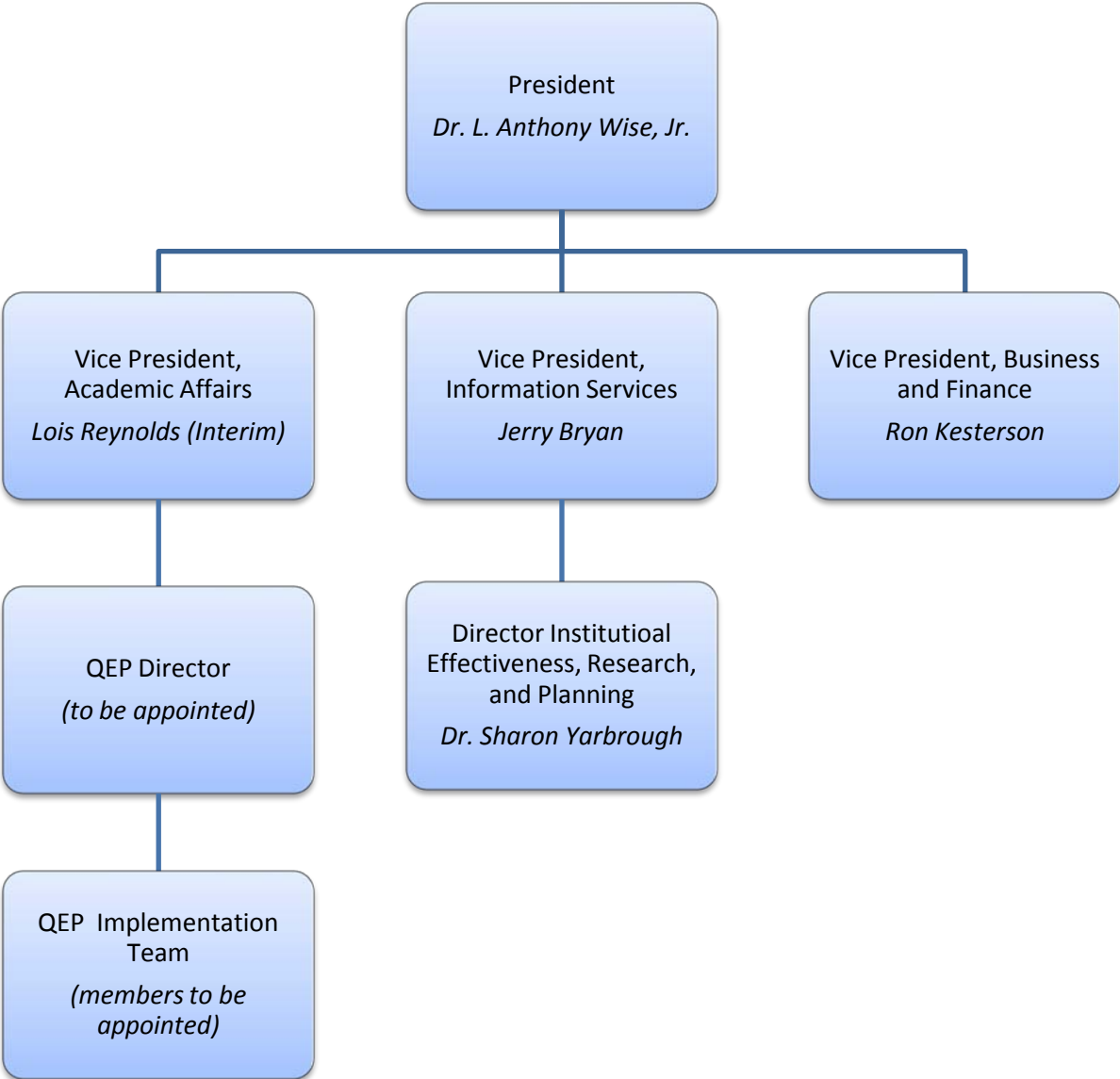
The QEP Design Team was appointed by the president of the College, with input from the SACS Leadership Team. The co-chairs of the QEP Design Team (Mark Fuentes and David Key) reported to the SACS Leadership Team and were later added as members of the Leadership Team.

During the fall of 2011, the college president will appoint a full-time QEP director. The QEP Director job description is attached as Appendix H. The QEP director will be appointed from the faculty, will teach one three-credit-hour course per semester, and will be responsible for QEP related activities. The director will have the responsibility of implementing and assessing the QEP college-wide. The director will oversee expansion of the QEP's active learning strategies to additional sections of targeted courses, determine the best assessment techniques to use in evaluating effectiveness of the QEP, determine target goals and benchmarks, and oversee faculty development, as appropriate, for college-wide implementation of active learning strategies into all sections of the targeted courses over the course of the QEP. The director will also be responsible, with support from Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning, for creating a final assessment of the QEP and the extent to which it achieved improvement in the student learning objectives. The QEP director will write the five-year report for the SACS Commission on Colleges.

The QEP director will report to the vice president of Academic Affairs, who reports directly to the president of the College. The QEP director will have an implementation team to assist with faculty development, best practices, assessment, and communication with faculty. The implementation team will consist mainly of experienced faculty, with released time to fulfill their responsibilities for the QEP.

The QEP director will be supported by the College's department of Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning. Institutional Effectiveness will provide assistance and support with assessment tools, gathering and interpreting data, and reporting. Budgetary and financial reporting support will come from the vice president of Business and Finance. Figure 10 illustrates the organizational structure.

Figure 10: QEP Organizational Structure



The QEP and its related activities will be included each year in the College’s annual planning cycle. As part of the College's institutional effectiveness process, annual planning is used to assess targeted student learning outcomes. Academic departments assign faculty members to serve as program coordinators for academic programs. Every March in the planning cycle, program coordinators are responsible for submitting a Planning Goal Outcomes and Uses template to the director of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Planning. (Template is included as Appendix I.) Program coordinators document goals, objectives, and action plans for the upcoming academic year. Each program must list a minimum of four academic goals relating to program/course goals, two administrative goals, and one professional development goal.

An additional academic goal focusing on the QEP will be added to the planning cycle starting in the 2011-2012 academic year. In the current cycle, faculty document the following fields for goals set the

\previous spring: outcomes achieved, with evidence; source of the assessment (what was used to determine the outcome); use of outcomes toward improvement; and evidence. Included in this assessment are results of assessment for the student learning outcomes. During the next phase of the review, the Institutional Research director meets with the Academic Assessment Committee to review plans for assessing student learning outcomes. The review is conducted using the Academic Assessment Rubric, which is included as Appendix J. The Academic Assessment Committee evaluates the use of outcomes to insure that improvements were used in the achievement of the program goals. This process will be applicable to the QEP outcomes and goals as well.

Chapter IX – Resources

Pellissippi State has sufficient personnel, financial, and physical resources to implement and sustain the QEP through its planned five-year cycle. Discussions of the financial needs of the QEP started in fall of 2010, shortly after the QEP topic was selected and work began on designing the QEP.

The QEP Design Team and SACS Leadership Team have met to discuss the personnel and financial needs of the QEP and develop a budget that will allow all elements of the QEP to continue through its completion in 2016. At the beginning of the QEP process, Dr. L. Anthony Wise, Jr., vice president of Academic Affairs, discussed budget needs with Ron Kesterson, vice president of Business and Finance, and asked him to integrate costs for the QEP into the College's annual budget. The College's president and vice presidents have pledged financial and personnel support for the QEP. The budget for the QEP will be included in the College's annual budgets submitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) for approval. The 2011-2012 budget for Pellissippi State was submitted for approval in May 2011 and was approved during the June 2011 TBR meeting. The College will include a budget for the QEP in each of the fiscal years when the QEP will be active. Based on discussions with the SACS Leadership Team, the QEP Design Team, and the vice president of Business and Finance, the QEP budget shown in Table 15 was developed.

Table 15 – Five-Year QEP Budget

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total
QEP Director	\$25,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	\$225,000
Released Time	\$21,960	\$14,640	\$14,640	\$14,640	\$14,640	\$80,520
Faculty Development:						
Conferences/Seminars	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$15,500
Books and Resources	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$800	\$4,800
Consultants/Trainers	\$25,000	\$22,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$15,000
Marketing:						
Initial QEP Roll-out	\$15,000					\$15,000
On-going Promotion		\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$12,500
Supplies and Miscellaneous	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$6,100
Total	\$93,160	\$96,840	\$75,840	\$75,840	\$72,740	\$414,420

The proposed total budget for 2011-2012 for Pellissippi State is approximately \$70 million. At less than one quarter of one percent of the College's total budget, the proposed QEP budget will not place a financial burden on the College. During fiscal year 2010, the College had \$13,055,500 in unrestricted net assets; \$15,972,203 in current assets; and \$8,152,426 in current liabilities. The College has also experienced significant growth in tuition and fees and in student population (both head count and FTE) every year since fiscal year 2006. For fiscal year 2009-2010, the College's net tuition revenues were \$28,116,198, and state appropriations were \$19,105,332. During the fiscal year 2010-2011, net tuition revenues of the College were \$33,126,000, and state appropriation totaled \$22,054,700. Net tuition revenue and state appropriations are expected to increase with approval of the 2011-2012 budget.

Pellissippi State's Business and Finance office will be responsible for providing budget and expenditure reports to the QEP director. As the QEP develops, adjustments can be made to the budget as needed and incorporated into the College's master budget and planning cycle.

The QEP will require physical and personnel resources in order to carry out its objectives. Most physical resources required by the QEP already exist at the College; any physical resources not already owned by the College are included in the QEP budget in the items "Books and Resources" and "Supplies and Miscellaneous." The majority of the personnel resources required by the QEP also already exist at the College. Pellissippi State will appoint a QEP director in the fall of 2011; the salary of the director is included in the QEP budget. The QEP will also require faculty to plan specific engagement techniques, assess the effectiveness of the activities, and document the results. Released time for the QEP Design Team members is included in the QEP budget for the pilot phase of the QEP in fall 2011. Released time is also included in the budget for the five-year length of the QEP for faculty who will have additional administrative responsibilities for the QEP.

Pellissippi State has sufficient academic resources to support the QEP. Library Services has the capability of ordering books or electronic resources that the QEP might require and the space to shelf them. The Educational Resource Center also supports research activities. Each academic department is aware of the QEP process and responsibilities with respect to the process; all departments have pledged their support for the QEP.

Summary

Pellissippi State's QEP is entitled Strong to the Core. Based on input from all stakeholders, the College chose to improve student learning in core competencies using increased engagement developed through active learning strategies. There is adequate evidence to suggest that core competencies should be strengthened at Pellissippi State. The QEP seeks to use one of the College's strengths, student engagement, to achieve improvement in the targeted learning outcomes. Increased engagement and active learning are supported by a significant body of research as effective means to increase student success. The QEP Design Team has developed an action plan with an appropriate timeline to accomplish the objectives of the QEP and assessment tools to evaluate the plan and the extent to which it achieves its objectives.

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Glossary of Terms

Active Learning – Umbrella term that refers to several models of instruction that focus the responsibility of learning on the learners. Active learning refers to techniques that require students to do more than simply listen to a lecture. Active learning is a process whereby students engage in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Assessment – Activity by which a program evaluates, analyzes, and seeks to improve the effectiveness of its activities to help students, faculty, and other professionals achieve the objectives of the program; a systematic collection, review, and use of information.

Assessment Tool – An instrument that has been designed to collect objective data about students' knowledge and skill acquisition or the effectiveness of an activity.

Benchmark – Student performance standard (the level(s) of student competence in a content area); standard by which achievement can be measured or judged.

Best Practices – Generally accepted, informally standardized techniques, methods, or processes that have proven themselves over time to accomplish given tasks.

CATs – Classroom Assessment Techniques: short formative assessments that are simple, non-graded, and anonymous.

CBASE – College Basic Academic Subject Examination: a nationally normed exam that tests general education knowledge, including writing and mathematics. The College administers this exam to all degree-seeking students in their last semester.

CCSSE – Community College Survey of Student Engagement: a survey for both faculty and students about institutional practices and student behaviors related to engagement that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. The College administers this survey to students in their second year.

CLASSE – Classroom Survey of Student Engagement. The College currently does not administer this survey.

COC – Commission on Colleges, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation body for colleges.

COLL 1500 – College Success, a three-credit-hour course intended to introduce first-year students to the college expectations and to help them learn what is required to succeed in college.

CoLTs – Collaborative Learning Techniques. Developed by Barkley, Cross, and Major (2005), these are techniques designed to increase collaboration to enhance student learning.

Core Competencies – Those specific skills that make it possible for students to achieve broad educational objectives and succeed in attaining their educational goals.

D2L – Desire2Learn, Pellissippi State's online course management system.

Engagement – Practice of students being active in their own educational process; participation in educationally effective practices that lead to a range of measurable outcomes (Kuh et al., 2007); a process of motivation; the product of motivation and active learning.

Engagement Strategies – Specific assignments, exercises, or other activities that are designed to increase student engagement.

ENGL – Abbreviation for English.

ENGT – Abbreviation for Engineering Technology.

FIGs – Faculty Inquiry Groups; gatherings of faculty to reflect upon and share strategies and pedagogies from their courses.

FTE – Full-Time Equivalent students.

Goal – Statement of a program’s intent, purpose, or expected outcomes; a guiding principle to help in formulating measurable objectives; a broad, generalized statement about what is to be learned.

Head count – Number of distinct students at the College.

HIST – Abbreviation for History.

Implementation Plan – Outline of the specific steps to be taken, designating those who are to take them and specifying the assessment measures to support the outlined strategy. A detailed listing of activities, costs, expected difficulties, and schedules required to achieve the objectives of the plan

MAPP – Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress, a test of general education skills designed to assist colleges and universities in assessment of outcomes of general education programs. The MAPP test measures reading, writing, mathematics, and critical thinking skills representing subject matter that is normally taught in the first two years of college. PSCC administers the MAPP test to students within their first 30 credit hours of coursework.

My Math Lab – Web-based math tutoring application used in many mathematics courses at Pellissippi State.

NCCBP – National Community College Benchmark Project.

NSSE – National Survey of Student Engagement, a survey of both faculty and students about institutional practices and student behaviors related to engagement that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. This is the four-year college equivalent of the CCSSE.

Objectives – Specific, measurable, observable behaviors or goals.

QEP – Quality Enhancement Plan; plan developed by the College to improve student learning outcomes that are believed to have the most significant impact on overall student learning.

SACS – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, regional accrediting body for the south eastern United States.

SENSE – Survey of Entering Student Engagement, a standardized survey designed to measure students’ perceived level of engagement during their first year in college.

SETs – Student Engagement Techniques, specific assignments, exercises, or other activities that are designed to increase student engagement.

SI – Supplemental Instruction, a program of peer assisted study groups.

SLOs – Student Learning Outcomes, what a learner knows or can do as a result of learning.

SPH – Abbreviation for Speech.

Strong to the Core – Pellissippi State’s QEP, a focus on General Education Core Competencies.

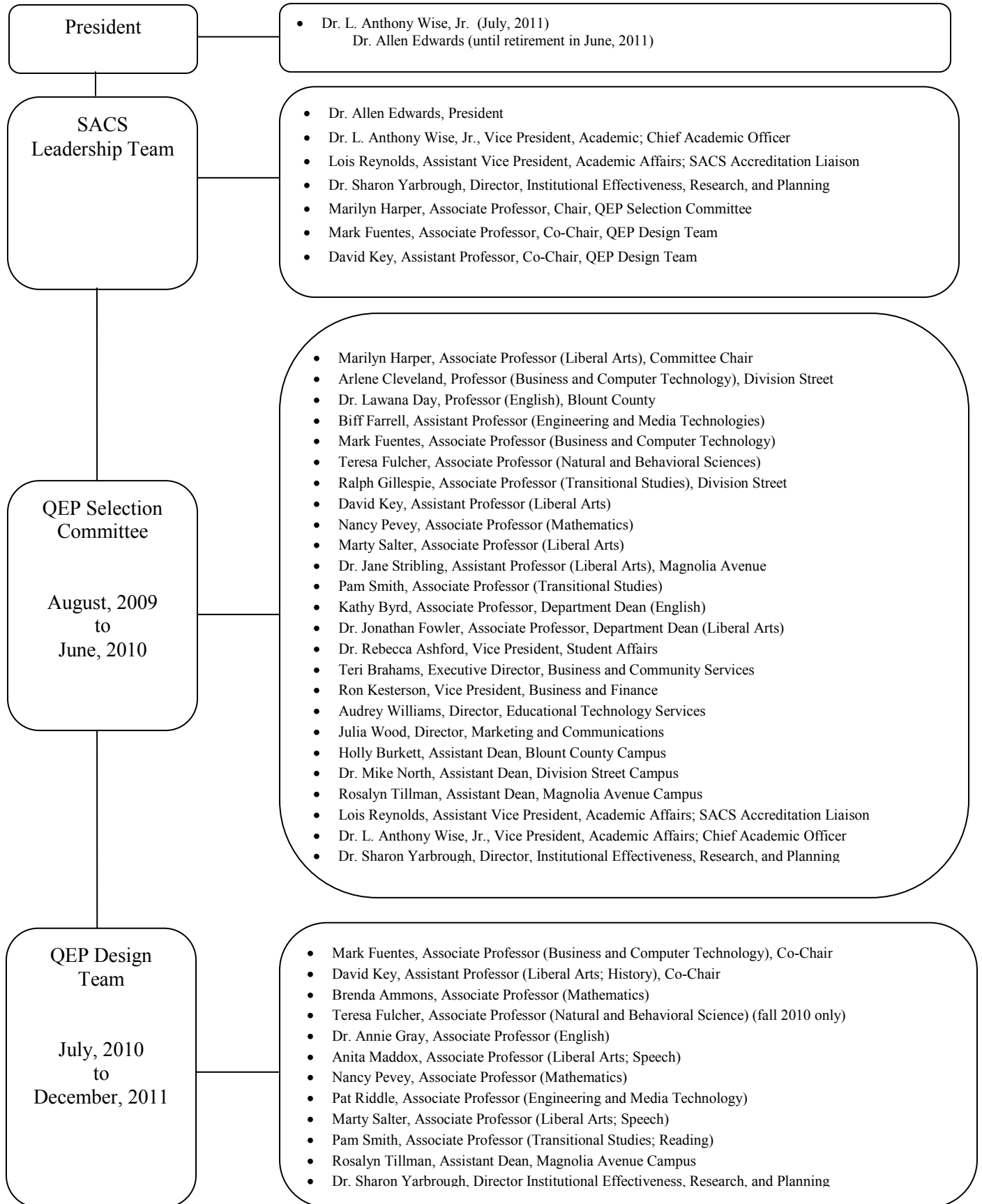
SWOT – Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for a given organization.

TBR – Tennessee Board of Regents, Pellissippi State’s governing body.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

QEP Planning and Development Teams



Appendix B

QEP Design Team Focus Group Script (Page 1)

Purpose: The purpose of the focus group is to elicit information from PSCC students that will be used to develop four college-wide learning strategies.

Context: PSCC faculty are developing a Quality Education Plan which includes strategies to enhance teaching methods and to improve student learning.

Objectives: Identify types of interactions that positively impact students' learning.
Name and define several learning strategies.

Arrive early, have room set up (refreshments/food set out, arrange seating)

Welcome the group

Introduce self and other facilitators

State the purpose and context of the focus study

Explain what a focus group study is and how it will flow

Questions:

- 1) Can you describe a learning strategy that works for you?
 - A) What methods of learning have been used in your classrooms?
 - What worked best?
 - What didn't work?
 - B) How would interacting with others in the classroom affect your learning?
 - What experiences have you had that worked?
 - What experiences have you had that didn't work?

Background:

CCSSE student-faculty interaction topics

Used email to communicate with instructor

Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class

Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance

Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework

CCSSE active & collaborative topics

Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions

Made a class presentation

Worked with other students on projects during class

Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments

Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)

Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course

Discussed Ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class

2) What does it mean to be "engaged" with your learning?

A) What is most likely to keep you engaged?

B) What is most likely to disengage you?

Focus Group Script (Page 2)

Background:

CCSSE student effort topics

Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in

Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources

Came to class without completing readings or assignments

Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment

Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)

Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)

Frequency: Computer Lab

3) Since starting at PSCC,

A) What is the best learning experience that you have had? Why?

B) What is the worst learning experience that you have had? Why?

Closing:

Thank participants

Give avenue for further input

Tell how the data will be used

Materials:

Notepads and pencils

Computer with presentation

Flip chart or easel paper

Focus group script

List of participants

Markers

Masking tape

Nametags

Refreshments

Watch or clock

Reference Link: <http://www.cse.lehigh.edu/~glennb/mm/FocusGroups.htm>

Appendix C
QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 1)

Notes taken from Blount County Focus Group – February 14, 2011

1) Can you describe a learning strategy that works for you?

- Student's need to determine what type of learner they are and instructors need to touch the majority of learning styles in some way in their classes.
- Students don't like to be told to read the book, especially if a power point slide presentation is going to be used and it hits the high points of the reading, what is the use of reading the material?
- Students with auditory/processing disorder need to be able to see the teacher; in that, the instructors are talking toward the board and not to the class.
- Developmental math – Carnegie is a tool but it is being used as an educator. Teachers need to teach; students can't read and teach themselves. Students would benefit if there were options with respect to developmental math.
- When an instructor has finished a chapter or unit have the students teach the teacher and/or students teach students.
- Instructor led discussion group and/or study sessions.

2) What does it mean to be “engaged” with your learning?

- Be a part of the learning process.

A) What is most likely to keep you engaged?

- Make students speak.
- Make the class a group effort.
- Interaction with group debate.
- Treat students with respect.
- Point at a student and ask: “What do you think?”
- Be treated as a responsible adult.
- Respect for each other.
- Make the class dynamic.

B) What is most likely to disengage you?

- Instructors that are monotone.
- Instructors that just read their notes that they have had for 10 years.
- Instructors taking the easy way out. No homework or discussion is given. This is not beneficial to students.
- Instructors that are boring.
- If the class average is real low, then the instructor is NOT doing something right. There needs to be some intervention.
- Classes with no unity – students don't know each other. Students could help each other if they could get to know one another.
- Some instructors can actually teach, but others just don't have the ability.

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 2)

Since starting at PSCC what was your best learning experience that you have had on-line and/or in-class?

Instructors who:

- are friendly,
- ask questions,
- are respectful,
- learn students names,
- can break-down material into simpler terms,
- are interactive using eye contact and working one-on-one,
- help the student believe they can learn,
- are there for you,
- go out of the way to help you understand,
- are able to engage students,
- use activities that relate back to lesson that is being taught,
- are creative,
- have no favorites,
- show equal caring of all students,
- make learning fun,
- make themselves available for private discussion or for individual help,

What can faculty do to get you more engaged?

- Make sure to ask every student a question every day.
- On the first day of class – pass out note cards and have students write something unique about themselves.
- Have group discussions to draw students into the class and the topic of the day.
- Show the student that their not in high school anymore. Get the student to take responsibility.

Since starting at PSCC what has been your worst learning experience that you have had on-line and/or in-class?

Instructors who:

- ramble on about material and things that is not relevant to either the class or the topic,
- have ADHD,
- are unorganized – they lose tests, papers, don't keep accurate attendance,
- interrupt students when the students are giving presentations,
- teach using pure lecture,
- are boring,
- have no interaction with students,
- read their lectures to students,
- are disrespectful,
- don't know the material and are not qualified to teach the class,
- don't speak clearly,
- use power point slides that have grammatical errors and misspelled words,

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 3)

- use slang that student's are not familiar with,
- test over 5+ chapters of material,
- look at you like your stupid when you ask a question,
- are unapproachable,
- have office hours, but don't keep them.

Notes taken from Division Street Focus Group

Facilitators: Annie Gray, David Key, and Pamela Smith

Students:

Q: Describe a learning strategy that works for you.

A: Open discussion where teacher and students speak freely. It works because students get to hear peers. Students see that others have the same questions one might be afraid to ask. Peers may say it in a way the teacher wouldn't think of but that is more meaningful than how the teacher said it. It helps to remember when studying for a test. Peers ask questions one may not think to ask. Open discussion keeps one focused and helps one relate to the subject. Engaged is better than being told what to learn.

Q: Describe some projects or activities that were a good learning experience.

A: Group marketing plan, doing what you're learning in class. Projects that model rather than irrelevant research paper. Research papers are never discussed with someone else. Doing math problems as homework is a good example of doing what you're learning. Students learn better when everyone is working on the same idea. Practical application projects and activities prepare students for the real world of work.

Q: Describe some projects or activities that are not good learning experiences.

A: In DSPW math, the classroom instruction is on certain pre-arranged topics when everyone is on different topics because of individualized work in lab time. Instruction for each individual would be better or instruction for a group who are on the same topic. Learning completely on your own. Teachers treating adults as high school students, known as the "mommy syndrome." It is perceived as disrespectful to students. When teachers make students feel stupid when they express opinions, it causes everyone to shut down and not participate. One professor got in the face of a student because the student didn't have a pen. Monotone lecturing is not effective. Teachers who have the "my way or the highway," just regurgitate what I said doesn't work. One teacher won't review for a test during regularly scheduled class times, but does hold review sessions on Saturdays. This is a hardship for students and unfair because it doesn't fit their schedule and may not be able to participate. Not giving test review or giving students time to go over a paper a few days before it's due. Teachers who know a subject but can't teach it. Telling personal experiences that aren't relevant to the topic, that don't illuminate the topic but are perceived as bragging. Telling the same stories in every class. Too few grades, like one exam, group project, and a final. Impossible to recover if you fail the first test.

Internet requirements are a hardship for some students who don't have it at home and may live in an area where it's impossible or very expensive to get it. Teachers who use D2L should train and know how to use it. Also should know how to use software they expect students to use. Teachers abuse D2L by changing test dates or giving new assignments without proper notice. They expect students to login 10 times a day.

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 4)

We hate group projects especially when students have to meet outside of class. It is much too inconvenient. Sometimes group members are creepy. For example, one DSPW group met at a group member's house. That person drank 24 beers, a second member got drunk with him, and the third person did all the work while the other two got the grade. Sometimes the group members are cliquish and the one who does the work may be penalized if it doesn't work out. Sometimes there is retribution by other group members. One member who cares may have to redo work of another member who doesn't care. Worry and hassle of group interaction problems may even distract from getting work done in other classes. If students are asked to evaluate each other's participation, they don't tell the truth, won't tell on slackers for fear of retribution. Teachers sometimes blame the one who is working for not working it out with the group.

Q: How can teachers help to make group projects work better?

A: Teachers should be the leader of the group, take more supervisory role and assign specific piece of work to specific students and hold them accountable for that, rather than expect students to be group leaders. Better preparation and training for team work.

Q: What are some examples of good qualities of a teacher?

A: Teachers who are knowledgeable, competent and confident.

Q: Interpersonally, what are some good qualities?

A: Be prepared for class, be on time. Be there for scheduled classes or give advance notice that class will be cancelled. Model the same expectations that teachers have for students.

Q: What does it mean to be engaged? What causes you to disengage?

A: Disengagement: Irrelevant open discussions when instructor doesn't keep self and students on the topic. Instructor telling the same personal stories or examples. It's hard to know what to write down in notes, what is most important from straight lecture. It would be helpful if instructor would give template/outline for student to fill in main points or make it obvious in some way what is important to write in notes. Study guides that make you study everything, but very little of it is on tests. When the teacher says you won't make an A. When the teacher says "I expect you to make a C so it will be alright." Teachers should update their approach and lecture content. A teacher who says I ask too many questions.

Engagement: interaction with teacher. Positive reinforcement. Students should be able to choose their teachers. Teachers should make videos of themselves teaching so students can choose the best teachers.

Q: Describe your best learning experience.

A: I have a history of failing math. I put off taking my math class until the last semester before I got my Associates. My math teacher was from Kenya and I could barely understand him. But I made an A. He said the class was like a bus and he wouldn't go any faster than the slowest student. He wanted everyone to learn.

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 5)

My math teacher really cares—answers questions and doesn't mind that you ask a lot of questions. Makes sure when you leave you really know it. Doesn't have an attitude, knows the subject well and makes the class interesting.

Enthusiastic, nice tone to start the semester, lots of positive feedback. Teachers who respect student's opinion if it's different from their own.

Q: Describe a bad learning experience.

A: British Lit and Early American literature class. Teacher was late every day, changed the syllabus frequently. Teacher said some off-putting things like: The English Department has tradition of having lowest midterm grades as if the teacher expected the students to have low grades. The student suggested it was a teaching problem, not a student problem and the teacher should reevaluate.

A teacher had a family emergency and had to change the final time. Teacher sent email to wrong classes. Teacher got very irritable when students couldn't make the changed time and needed to know what to do.

Q: What doesn't work well?

A: Two email systems (webmail and D2L) are bad. D2L email needs to go. When students go to the Writing Center to get help with a paper, the teacher marks wrong what student got help with and says that's not my way.

During placement testing another student was talking and distracted me so badly that I didn't do well in class and got placed in developmental classes. The test proctor didn't do anything about the talking student and said I would miss enrolling that semester if I wanted to take the test over. Now I'm in classes that I don't need and that are boring.

Q: What technology works well?

A: DSPW Carnegie software. It allows you work at your own rate and accelerate. Smartboards help students to follow process of solving problems.

Notes taken from Magnolia Avenue Focus Group – March 4, 2011

Attending: Rosalyn Tillman, Nancy Pevey

Students: Tara Willoughby, James Boman, Stephanie Fry-Thomas, Tonya Dick, Anthony Frazier, Matthew Eubanks, Lynn Bussell, Drishaud Hall, James Ward

The meeting began with introductions around the table to put the students at ease. Nancy Pevey opened the meeting by thanking the group for coming to help develop a QEP topic. She explained to the students the QEP process and its emphasis on improving student learning outcomes.

Responses (items stated by several students in **bold**)

Question 1 concerning “a learning strategy that works for you”:

A. Does work: **Repetition** of actual content information; repeating the lesson; **groupwork**; making

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 6)

connection between content and applications; understanding what you missed; giving answers to test questions after the test; Dropbox feedback; **immediate personal feedback** (English does, using assignment notes and Carnegie does not. Smarthinking does not); **on campus tutoring** (reason for success in Carnegie); **want to feel comfortable with their instructor**; office hours of instructors; information from instructor on what is wanted and what is not; visualization (some powerpoint good, others boring); Live better vs. TWAV class that is boring; students didn't relate to "Bliss" book; open discussions; **give time to ask questions**; **preview-lesson-summary structure**.

B. Does not work: same **students walking in late and disrupting everyone**; **talking in class**; **instructor doesn't care about them or their class and is just biding time until retirement**; TR classes too much time between R and the next T; Carnegie does not give time to learn the format of answers—took several weeks to learn this and finally did with the help of a tutor; Carnegie intimidates students; Carnegie doesn't talk to you and doesn't have interaction they are looking for; History notes on board very unorganized and confusing; TWAV Anatomy powerpoints not enough time; Sociology study guides good; History too much time in course material—15000 yrs in 25 questions.

Question 2 concerning "what it means to be engaged" in learning:

A. Keeps you engaged: Have to like your instructor; have to have **internal motivation** to be successful; have to be dedicated; have to feel comfortable with instructor; "it's in the book" not good; more tutors in certain areas with expanded Smarthinking; "engaged" means verbally talking; give yourself a pep talk; "am doing this for..."; checklist needed for course materials; organize the delivery; use multiple resources for course; match up with others in the class; pair up—"instructor notices you're having trouble, so suggest you work with strong student". show interest in whether each individual student is successful; feedback helps; pretest good and be sure to follow up on results—Carnegie doesn't; Biology Concepts—quizzed early with no follow-up; liked Spanish warm-ups then with groups; question at beginning of day about day before and question at end of day about next day's material; topic and write paragraph, then later can see improvement; get work back and can make corrections for partial credit; revision is important; swapped papers; **spend time with other people you are at a higher level than you are**; D2L an effective way to turn in papers.

B. Disengages you: Instructors who are abrasive and act like they don't care—will have a job no matter what/how they teach; don't understand student responses; not prepared; comes in late; inconsistent with treatment of students; gets off topic; loses papers; doesn't keep up with papers—shows lack of respect for students (recommend D2L); COLL 1500 instructor didn't follow syllabus at all.

Question 3:

A. Best learning experience: Reading DSPR learned to analyze what you read; thanks to Plato because taught the student to think; lesson pre and post best experience; like John Smith (former coach who stays on his students); audio books are good; tutors in DSPM good; COLL 1500 helped see how a student learns; "Becoming a Master Student" book for COLL1500 good; Mr. Patton's class good because he asks questions; Spanish class good—also asks questions; having a choice of what to write about is good; PSYC Lusk's class good; his essay and multiple choice tests are good; like word problems because of critical thinking

B. Worst learning experience: Just because a student is in DSP doesn't mean they're stupid or slow; Carnegie starts and don't know what/how to do; hard to get Carnegie going; pure lecture not good—allow

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 7)

questions better; orientation needed for Carnegie; didn't understand Carnegie assignments; 2 hour class not good; teacher's discouraging comments like "we're moving on"; Financial aid problems with \$\$ slow for books and puts student behind and off-balance; Financial aid (HOPE?) doesn't cover the entire cost of books with \$650 limit, when book bill is more.

The session ended with Rosalyn and Nancy thanking the students for their input. The students would like to get together again and discuss the progress of the QEP.

Conclusions:

1. Students want more **positive** engagement with their instructors, with the computer as a supplement.
2. Students want to be able to ask questions and have a "conversation in the classroom", with their answers heard by the instructor and noted in the class (procedures, structure, etc).
3. Civility in the relationship between instructor and students is important.

Notes taken from Hardin Valley Focus Group

Through the cooperative efforts of Marty Salter and Pat Riddle, a series of questions based on Bloom's taxonomy was developed to guide discussions within two student focus groups on Hardin Valley campus. The first group meeting on the 24th of February, 2011, was a group of engineering students currently participating in a co-hort program. The second group meeting on the 14th of March 2011, was a speech 2100 evening class.

The two groups differed significantly in demographic makeup and in the kinds of programs in which their members are involved. The first group was an engineering cohort moving through their program as a set with very defined goals. The students in this group were all male, older, and either currently or recently employed in areas related to their current field of study. The other group was a mixed set of students enrolled in Speech 2100 to fulfill their general education core requirement for oral communications. They were diverse in age and gender. They also varied in terms of work experience or the lack thereof. Many majors were represented in this group, as well as several students who were undecided with regard to their academic path. There were many similar responses to the questions between the two groups but also some notable differences. Specifically, the group of engineers was precise and focused with regard to what they found useful in their learning environment. The second group was less clear in how to frame their discontents and satisfactions as well as having less idea of why they were in the process of going to college in the first place. That being said, both groups shared similar responses to the inquiries.

The engineers know exactly what they expect the college to provide and how. They also were very pleased with the structure of the cohort system and credited it with making it possible to overcome some of the weaker areas of their college experience. They think that need to *demonstrate personal experience* with the subject, *passion* for the subject, *patience* with the student and *respect* for the student. They also think the professor needs to *interact by re-focusing content, questions, and the direction of the class session when warranted*. They know *kinesthetic learning activities* are vital to their course of study. They mentioned that being a genius does not necessarily make you a great teacher. They find *tutoring*

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 8)

opportunities to be indispensable. They said that *small classes* make the *relationship with the instructor* better and made learning easier. They think the style of the *teacher's language* and the *act of listening* as demonstrated through a kind of *Socratic dialog*, along with the *teacher's willingness to say "I don't know"*, is very useful in encouraging students to *engage in problem solving* which they think is essential to learning. They think the professor is the core element to making a class successful in terms of effective learning and that the teacher should practice *reflective listening, flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness, good language choices, useful feedback in various forms, sincerity, trust in the students, and ownership of the process*. They said *the cohort* made it possible to adapt and overcome weaknesses that might arise in individual courses for any number of reasons. Most of the elements they think are necessary tend to be demonstrated in the language choices and class activities chosen by the professor.

The general education students in the speech class were a little less precise but they often came up with *the same basic list of ideas* for what, in their experience, had worked to help them learn. They brought in additional examples, which focused on the *instructor allowing and encouraging different perspectives, and allowing for alternative methods for achieving goals*. (This was not a focus for the engineers although they did value the creative problem solving promoted by instructors. This is probably a species of the same impulse.) Like the engineers, the speech class wanted instructors to *break down expectations and components of the class into manageable units*. They also want *"face to face"* time with the instructor. (This desire may not be represented to the same degree in a sampling of students who only take classes

online.) This group focused even more insistently on the idea that *multiple methods of covering material and being evaluated* are good for a successful learning experience. This group, again in common with the engineers, *found 'busy work' irritating and disliked anything where it wasn't clear how the activity or work fit in with the larger effort to master the skills required by the course*. Also, their responses reflect the same *distaste for the boring lecture coming from a professor*.

Unlike the engineering group, the speech class thinks that when there are *unfocused students in the class it makes it hard on everyone*. The cohort nature of the engineer's experience may be why this was not a concern for them. Also unlike the engineers, the speech class was *much more uncertain in general about what they expected of a college education and wanted assistance from the school and the teachers in figuring that out*. They also want *time spent explaining how assignments fit into the goals of the course and more explanation of how specific classes make a useful difference to their lives or careers*. Access to tutoring came as a surprise to some.

One thing that was a startling commonality to both focus groups was their experience in developmental math classes. Both groups kept circling back to this. The faculty leaders in the focus groups worked hard to keep the questions and answers on track, but in both cases, when asked about a 'worst experience', the developmental math was mentioned. In the speech class, the discussion became quite heated. *The concerns seem to be a combination of dissatisfaction with the computer based experience and concern with the disconnect between the quality of math practiced by the instructor and their subsequent ability to get that expertise across*. One memorable quote: "Sometimes it is like a fighter jet pilot trying to teach someone to fly a Cessna". From the other group with regard to computer driven experience: "Demoralizing; it's like kindergarten chairs: one size is supposed to fit all". *In both groups, their experiences in developmental math served as the metaphor to explain what they did not find effective*

QEP Student Focus Group Reports (Page 9)

when trying to learn. The absence of a connection between the student, a professor, and the content seemed to be the problem rather than the particular topic itself.

Overall, both groups found the instructor's willingness to interact with students on a meaningful interpersonal level to be the key to shaping a positive learning environment. From demonstrating adaptability, respect, passion, and expertise to a willingness to pull in additional non course specific resources on the students' behalf, the key to a good learning environment from these groups' point of view is enthusiastic instructor interaction.

Appendix D

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) In-class Activity Survey

Based on information gathered from students and faculty in focus groups, Pellissippi’s QEP team has designed a variety of activities to improve student learning. We would like your opinion of the activity in which you participated so that we may further design, improve, and test these kinds of activities. We appreciate your responding to the following and offering any comments that you may have.

Instructions: Make your ratings by checking the appropriate space. For example,

Knowledgeable : : : : : : Ignorant

engaging : : : : : : boring

useless : : : : : : beneficial

easy : : : : : : challenging

dull : : : : : : exciting

valuable : : : : : : worthless

complex : : : : : : simple

Comments:

Appendix E

Rubric for Evaluating Active Learning Strategy History 2010 spring 2011

Criterion	Below Average (1)	Average (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)	Notes
Description of Historical Material	Writer is unable to adequately describe material.	Writer sometimes uses examples from the lectures and readings.	Writer mostly uses good examples to substantiate description of historical events.	As a result of a complex understanding of material, writer identifies relevant issues. Writer uses thoughtful examples and resources to support insights.	
Application of Knowledge (Critical application of Historical Material)	Writer does not apply the material into a coherent and analytical essay.	Writer only partially <i>applies</i> the material into a coherent and analytical essay.	Writer applies material into a coherent and analytical essay. Writer supports her/his analysis by providing some examples.	Writer deftly analyzes the issues and events. Writer supports her/his analysis by providing multiple examples.	
Writing Style	Writing is unclear and disorganized. Lack of transitions between paragraphs. No logical flow to paper.	Organization and structure are sometimes unclear.	Demonstrates a clear understanding of how to organize and structure paper.	Paper is well structured and easy to follow.	

Appendix F

ENGL1010 Argumentative Essay Scoring Rubric

	Inadequate 0-10 1-5=F 6-10=D	Adequate 16-20 11-15=C 16-18=B 19-20=A
<i>Unity: essay has clearly stated or clearly implied thesis, and entire essay supports thesis.</i>	Inadequate essay fails to state a thesis, is unfocused, and contains irrelevant sentences or paragraphs.	Adequate essay states a clear arguable thesis, includes no paragraphs or sentences that do not directly relate to the argument.
<i>Development: essay effectively uses appropriate rhetorical pattern(s) to develop its ideas</i>	Inadequate essay is general, lacks details and examples, lacks quality examples, does not provide adequate evidence from source articles, exhibits elementary development, and/or lacks the addition and rebuttal of oppositional viewpoint(s).	Adequate essay features depth of thought; provides quality evidence from source articles; development is more sophisticated than in inadequate essay, including the addition and rebuttal oppositional viewpoint(s).
Organization: essay contains clear progression of paragraphs in a reasonable and convincing order based on an overall organizational principle.	Inadequate essay has no apparent organizational principle, and/or lacks sufficient transitions either within or between paragraphs.	Adequate essay has identifiable organizational principle and logical transitions within and between paragraphs.
Style & Mechanics: essay demonstrates no major pattern of error in diction, syntax, grammar, or mechanics.	Inadequate essay is characterized by frequent imprecise word choice & sentence structure and/or by a pattern of major grammatical or mechanical errors (CS, FS, frag, agr).	Adequate essay may have occasional errors, but exhibits no overall pattern of grammatical or mechanical errors.
Documentation: essay includes appropriately formatted and contextualized primary and secondary source information.	Inadequate essay does not use correct format for internal citations and/or Works Cited.	Adequate essay uses correct format for internal citations & Works Cited.

Appendix G

SPH 2100 – Public Speaking Evaluation Rubric (Page 1)

Speaker: _____ Time: _____ No: _____
 Speech Evaluation (Content)

A-4 Exceeds Standard	B-3 Meets Standard	C-2 Works on Standard	D-1 Not Done	Comments
Attention-getter grabs the audience, creates information hunger.	Attention-getter gets audience involved.	Attention-getter is present, but limited.	No attention-getter is used.	
A strong thesis that sets tone & direction for the speech is expressed in a complete sentence.	An acceptable thesis is expressed in a complete sentence.	Thesis is weak, overly general, bland.	No real thesis . Purpose statement is used instead.	
Preview clearly and comprehensively states the 3-5 main points.	Preview refers to 3-5 main points in one or more complete sentences.	Preview alludes to 3-5 main points.	Preview does not clearly state main points, or does not occur.	
Dramatic interest in topic is displayed, and the speech has obviously been adapted to the audience regarding their needs and interests.	Your interest in the topic is clear, and audience adaptation is noted briefly in the introduction or conclusion.	Briefly states choice or interest in topic. The audience's needs or interests are mentioned.	Interest in topic unclear or not mentioned; no audience adaptation or needs addressed.	
Each intriguing main point is clearly and strongly stated in a complete sentence.	Each main point is clearly stated.	Main points are mentioned weakly or in a confusing order.	Main points are confusing.	
Each main point is clearly organized and strongly developed with 3 or more subpoints (i.e., definitions, explanations, examples, analogies, statistics, etc.)	Each main point is well-organized and developed with 2 subpoints (i.e., definitions, explanations, examples, analogies, statistics, etc.)	Development of each of the main points is spotty.	Little development of main points .	
Review clearly and comprehensively summarizes the main points.	Review refers to the main points.	Review alludes to some of the main points.	No real review .	
The thesis is clearly restated with impact.	The thesis is restated.	The thesis is more or less alluded to.	The thesis is not restated.	
Residual message brings the speech to closure, referring back to attention-getter and meaningfully reinforcing the thesis. Exit clearly brings the speaker to closure.	Residual message ends the speech, referring back to attention-getter. Exit tries to bring the speaker to closure.	Residual message somewhat strands the speaker, offering no real sense of closure.	No real residual message ; no exit or closure.	
Sources are cited; proper credit is given to authors.	Sources are mentioned.	Some sources are mentioned.	No sources mentioned.	
Transitions are artfully used between each section and main point of the speech. At least one internal summary or preview is used.	Transitions are used here and there to aid movement through the speech.	Transitions are bland and/or scarce.	No transitions are used.	

SPH 2100 – Public Speaking Evaluation Rubric (Page 2)

Speech Evaluation (Form)

A Exceeds Standard	B Meets Standard	C Works on Standard	D Not Done	Comments
Speaker has strong, direct eye contact with each member of the audience.	Speaker has strong, direct eye contact during speech.	Eye contact is attempted, but not with each member of the audience.	No significant eye contact is made.	
Language choice (manner) and appearance increases the speaker's credibility and positively affects the attitude of the audience.	Language choice (manner) and appearance increases interest.	Language choice (manner) and appearance is correct but unexciting.	Language choice (manner) and appearance detracts from impression.	
Solid extemporaneous delivery, only subtly using notes for specific details.	Good extemporaneous delivery using notes as a guide	Somewhat extemporaneous delivery. Regular use of notes and some reading.	No meaningful extemporaneous delivery due to significant reading of the speech.	
Gestures, posture and movement complement and extend the message.	Gesture, posture and movement complement the message.	Gestures, posture and movement occasionally detracts from the message.	Gestures, posture and movement consistently detract from the message.	
Volume, rate and pitch enhance the message. (projection, normal rate, and conversational pitch). Vocal variety provides for an enjoyable speech. Keeps audience interested and involved. Lack of Disfluencies and effective articulation enhance the message. Flow & breathing are excellent without any choppiness or excessive pauses.	Volume, rate and pitch allow speaker to be clearly understood. Vocal variety provides for an enjoyable speech. Articulation is good with minimal Disfluencies . Flow & breathing allow for unencumbered speech.	Volume, rate and pitch sometimes distract from the comprehensibility of the message. Vocal variety is often monotone, losing audience interest. Disfluencies and articulation occasionally detracts from the message. Flow & breathing exhibit a bit of choppiness with excessive pauses.	Volume, rate and pitch consistently detract from the comprehensibility of the message. Vocal variety is nonexistent. Disfluencies and articulation difficulties consistently distract from the presentation. Flow & breathing create a choppy, abrupt speech.	
Visual aid(s) were used effectively and appropriately, enhancing the speech.	Visual aid(s) supplemented the presentation.	Visual aid(s) were used.	No visual aid(s) used.	
Between 5-7 minutes . Effectively and appropriately met the time limit .	Within 1 minute over or under 5-7 minutes. Appropriately met the time limit .	More than 1 minute over/under 5-7 minutes.	Significantly failed to meet the time limit . (Greater than 2 or more minutes over/under.)	
				Subtotals
4	3	2	1	Multiply by
				Totals

Appendix H

Pellissippi State Community College

Job Description

Quality Enhancement Plan Director (Page 1)

Reports to: Vice President of Division of Learning

Essential Job Functions:

1. Provide leadership for planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring the QEP, including developing short- and long-term goals, managing budget, and disseminating information to college community.
2. Coordinate and organize professional development related to the QEP.
3. Work with Marketing and Communications to plan and coordinate publicity and promotion of QEP to college community.
4. Prepare the QEP document for submission to the SACS on-site review team and provide appropriate follow-up, as requested, by SACS on-site review team.
5. Work in collaboration with Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Planning to develop evaluation and assessment measures to capture benchmark data; analyze data to ensure continued assessment is conducted through courses impacted by the QEP; and analyze learning outcome improvements during and at the end of each semester in order to make improvements to the QEP project and to disseminate assessment information to appropriate college personnel.

Minimum Job Standards:

1. Master's degree.
2. Three years college teaching experience.
3. Experience with assessment measures.
4. Experience in implementing student engagement strategies.

QEP Director Job Description (Page 2)

Critical Skills/Expertise/Experience:

1. Strong organizational and leadership skills.
2. Effective oral and written communication skills.
3. Ability to meet deadlines for reports and assignments.
4. A genuine concern and sense of responsibility for student success and student learning.
5. A commitment to the college's mission.
6. Ability to perform as a leader and as part of a team.
7. Ability to initiate and follow through on concepts and techniques related to increasing student engagement in order to improve core academic skills.

Appendix I



Planning Goal Outcomes and Uses 2009 - 2010 (Page 1)

Name of Person Completing Form: **Please enter your text here**

E-mail: **Please enter your text here**

Phone #: **Please enter your text here**

Reviewed by: **Please enter your text here**

Name of Department or Program:

Mission or Philosophy: **Please enter your text here**

Departmental Budget (please use your 2008 – 2009 budget as a basis for 2009 – 2010 annual planning): **Please enter your text here**

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 1:

Goal: **Please enter your text here**

Objective: **Please enter your text here**

Action Plan: **Please enter your text here**

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Please choose any [College Mission Section\(s\)](#) related to Goal 1:
 The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to:
 M-1 M-2 M-3 M-4 M-5 M-6 M-7 M-8

Please state the [General Education Goal\(s\)](#) related to Goal 1 (example: M-1, M-4):
Please enter your text here

Please state the [Performance Funding Standard\(s\)](#) related to Goal 1 (example: I-1, II-5):
Please enter your text here

Please state the [Strategic Planning Objective\(s\)](#) related to Goal 1 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1):
Please enter your text here

Please state the Learning Objectives (Master Syllabi) related to Goal 1 (example: Course Objectives II.A, Course Objective II.B):
Please enter your text here

If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 1:
Please enter your text here

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 2:

Goal: **Please enter your text here**

Objective: **Please enter your text here**

Planning Goal Outcomes and Uses (Page 2)

Action Plan: **Please enter your text here**

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Please choose any College Mission Section(s) related to Goal 2: The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to: <input type="checkbox"/> M-1 <input type="checkbox"/> M-2 <input type="checkbox"/> M-3 <input type="checkbox"/> M-4 <input type="checkbox"/> M-5 <input type="checkbox"/> M-6 <input type="checkbox"/> M-7 <input type="checkbox"/> M-8

Please state the General Education Goal(s) related to Goal 2 (example: M-1, M-4): Please enter your text here

Please state the Performance Funding Standard(s) related to Goal 2 (example: I-1, II-5): Please enter your text here
--

Please state the Strategic Planning Objective(s) related to Goal 2 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1): Please enter your text here

If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 2: Please enter your text here
--

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 3:

Goal: **Please enter your text here**

Objective: **Please enter your text here**

Action Plan: **Please enter your text here**

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Please choose any College Mission Section(s) related to Goal 3: The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to: <input type="checkbox"/> M-1 <input type="checkbox"/> M-2 <input type="checkbox"/> M-3 <input type="checkbox"/> M-4 <input type="checkbox"/> M-5 <input type="checkbox"/> M-6 <input type="checkbox"/> M-7 <input type="checkbox"/> M-8

Please state the General Education Goal(s) related to Goal 3 (example: M-1, M-4): Please enter your text here

Please state the Performance Funding Standard(s) related to Goal 3 (example: I-1, II-5): Please enter your text here
--

Please state the Strategic Planning Objective(s) related to Goal 3 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1): Please enter your text here

If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 3: Please enter your text here
--

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 4:

Goal: **Please enter your text here**

Objective: **Please enter your text here**

Action Plan: **Please enter your text here**

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Planning Goal Outcomes and Uses (Page 3)

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Please choose any College Mission Section(s) related to Goal 4:
The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to:
M-1 M-2 M-3 M-4 M-5 M-6 M-7 M-8

Please state the General Education Goal(s) related to Goal 4 (example: M-1, M-4):
Please enter your text here

Please state the Performance Funding Standard(s) related to Goal 4 (example: I-1, II-5):
Please enter your text here

Please state the Strategic Planning Objective(s) related to Goal 4 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1):
Please enter your text here

If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 4:
Please enter your text here

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 5:

Goal: Please enter your text here

Objective: Please enter your text here

Action Plan: Please enter your text here

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Please choose any College Mission Section(s) related to Goal 5:
The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to:
M-1 M-2 M-3 M-4 M-5 M-6 M-7 M-8

Please state the General Education Goal(s) related to Goal 5 (example: M-1, M-4):
Please enter your text here

Please state the Performance Funding Standard(s) related to Goal 5 (example: I-1, II-5):
Please enter your text here

Please state the Strategic Planning Objective(s) related to Goal 5 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1):
Please enter your text here

If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 5:
Please enter your text here

2009 – 2010 Action Plan Goal 6:

Goal: Please enter your text here

Objective: Please enter your text here

Action Plan: Please enter your text here

Outcomes Achieved with Evidence:

Source of Assessment (Analysis of Outcomes - What did you use to determine the outcomes):

Use of Outcomes (What are your future plans as result of these outcomes):

Planning Goal Outcomes and Uses (Page 4)

<p>Please choose any College Mission Section(s) related to Goal 6: The mission of Pellissippi State Technical Community College is to:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> M-1 <input type="checkbox"/> M-2 <input type="checkbox"/> M-3 <input type="checkbox"/> M-4 <input type="checkbox"/> M-5 <input type="checkbox"/> M-6 <input type="checkbox"/> M-7 <input type="checkbox"/> M-8</p>

<p>Please state the General Education Goal(s) related to Goal 6 (example: M-1, M-4): Please enter your text here</p>

<p>Please state the Performance Funding Standard(s) related to Goal 6 (example: I-1, II-5): Please enter your text here</p>
--

<p>Please state the Strategic Planning Objective(s) related to Goal 6 (example: Objective 1.1.1, Objective 3.4.1): Please enter your text here</p>

<p>If applicable, please describe the Division or Department Goal(s) related to Goal 6: Please enter your text here</p>
--

Instructions:

Upon completion:

1. Go to Tool Bar and pick "FILE" and then "SAVE AS"
2. Save it to your computer
3. Open saved Word file from local drive
4. From Tool Bar, pick "FILE"
5. pick "SEND TO" and then "MAIL RECIPIENT (AS ATTACHMENT)" (using another option may cause a virus warning to activate) and send to Dr. Sharon Yarbrough at slyarbrough@pstcc.edu

Questions or Comments? Please contact Dr. Sharon Yarbrough at slyarbrough@pstcc.edu.

Appendix J

**Pellissippi State Community College
Academic Assessment Rubric (Page 1)**

Program/Division Name _____ Planning Year _____
 Review Date _____ Program/Department/Division Preparer _____
 Assessment Committee Member: _____

	Goal #1		Goal #2		Goal #3		Goal #4		Goal #5	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Program/Department/Division Mission Statement										
a. Does the program/department/division mission support the college’s mission?										
b. Does the program/department/division mission describe the program/department/division and its characteristics and components?										
2. Budget Link										
a. Is the budget linked clearly for the program/department/division?										
b. Is there an amount specified?										
3. Strategic/Annual Plan Link										
a. Is goal with expected outcome linked to the College’s Strategic Plan, General Ed Goals, Performance Funding, and/or Program Learning Outcomes?										
4. Goals/Measureable Objectives with Expected Learning Outcomes/Action Plan										
a. Does the program/department/division plan state at least four desired goals?										
Does the program/department/division plan state at least four objectives with expected learning outcomes?										
b. Is/are expected outcome/s related to the stated objective?										
c. Is/are each stated objective/s measurable?										
d. Is/are expected outcome/s clearly stated?										
5. Action Plan										
a. Is the proposed Action Plan related to the stated goal?										
b. Is the proposed Action Plan likely to achieve the stated objective?										
c. Is the proposed Action Plan sufficiently detailed?										
6. Outcomes Achieved with Evidence										
a. Does the stated outcomes achieved relate to stated objective/s?										
b. Are outcomes clearly stated for specified goals?										

Academic Assessment Rubric (Page 2)

7. Source of Assessment										
a. Are assessment methods and instruments clearly identified?										
b. Are the assessment methods and instruments likely to yield the data needed to measure the expected outcomes?										
8. Use of Outcomes										
a. Is there clear and sufficient evident of the use of results for improvement?										

Appendix K

General Education Assessment (Page 1)

Pellissippi State has identified college-level competencies and measures the extent to which graduates have attained them:

Pellissippi State graduates should be able to write clearly, read proficiently, communicate orally, analyze and use quantitative information, solve problems, and use technology effectively.

Attainment of these competencies is assessed early in a student's career at the College in courses that focus on the particular competencies, throughout the curriculum in courses that demand use of the competencies, and at graduation from the College with results of the College Basic Academic Subjects Examination (CBASE). CBASE evaluates competence in English, including reading and writing; math; science; and social studies, as well as in interpretive, strategic, and adaptive reasoning. Its purpose is to help the College evaluate its academic programs, as well as the competencies of its graduates. Pellissippi State students typically score slightly above the national mean, as may be seen by examination of the Summary Reports for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010.

As a member institution of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) system, Pellissippi State adheres to General Education requirements established by TBR in 2003 when the Board implemented a system-wide common general education core to allow for seamless transfer among the 13 community colleges and 6 universities. Through the efforts of a system-wide Ad Hoc General Education committee, the following General Education subject categories were established for the system: Communication, History, Humanities/Fine Arts, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Social/Behavioral Sciences. Pellissippi State included Technological Literacy (Catalog & Handbook, p. 107). In order to determine the effectiveness of general education, TBR requires that institutions evaluate competence of students in communication, both oral and written; mathematics; and critical thinking through assessing their skills at the completion of ENGL1010 English Composition I, SPH 2100 Public Speaking, and MATH 1130 College Algebra (Assessing General Education in the TBR System).

Assessment of Writing and Oral Communication:

Thus, communication, both written and oral, is assessed in courses that focus specifically on those competencies. Students in ENGL 1010 write a final paper in response to a prompt based on an essay all students have read and discussed in class. A sample of these final writing assignments is assessed by a committee of faculty according to a rubric based on these communication outcomes:

- Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement.
- Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose.
- Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition).
- Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
- Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources.

The assessment reports on writing for the pilot reporting period of spring 2009 and for the academic year 2009-2010 are included in the TBR General Education folder below. The rubric used for scoring the

General Education Assessment (Page 2)

essays is included in the reports. In 2009-2010, student essays were assessed separately on the five outcomes, rather than being given an overall score of satisfactory or unsatisfactory, as in the pilot. Across the outcomes, the combined percentage of satisfactory and superior essays ranged from 65 to 70, falling short of the target percentage of 75. As a result, English faculty have made adjustments in the course and the rubric. Competence in writing is also assessed at the completion of ENGL 1020 Composition II. Percentages of adequate and inadequate ENGL1020 essays are shown in the ENGL 1020 Assessment Reports for 2008 fall through 2010 spring provided here, along with the rubric used for scoring the essays.

Oral communication is assessed through a capstone speech to actuate, required of all students who complete SPH 2100 Public Speaking. Designated full-time faculty visit classes of other faculty to assess the effectiveness of these speeches. This assessment is based on the same communication outcomes listed above, with two additional outcomes added by Pellissippi State speech faculty:

Students adapt the use of evidence, analysis, and persuasive strategies to the audience, purpose, and occasion of the speech, making basic distinctions among opinions, facts, and inferences.

Students effectively utilize a variety of oral presentation skills in a conversational style that includes eye contact; variety in rate, pitch, and volume; appropriate pauses; distinct articulation; correct pronunciation; effective gestures and movement; appropriate language choices; and effective note, lectern, and presentation aid uses.

The oral communication assessment reports for the pilot period of spring 2009 and for the academic year 2009-2010 are included in the TBR General Education folder. The rubric used for scoring, which was revised in 2009-2010, is included in each report. Overall, results were quite good for the seven speech outcomes, with from 84 to 95 percent of students scoring at or above expectations on the first five outcomes, and an average of 75 percent on the last two, which pertain exclusively to oral communication. The results from 2009-2010 represent an extremely small sample due to technical difficulties, which are being addressed for the next round of assessment.

Assessment of Math:

Students' mathematics skills are assessed in the final exam for MATH 1130 College Algebra, according to these outcomes:

- Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.
- Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.
- Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.
- Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.
- Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.

General Education Assessment (Page 3)

Competence is assessed by performance on selected test items on the standard comprehensive final exam for the course. The course instructors evaluate the final exam for their respective students. Test items are graded correct or incorrect; no partial credit is awarded.

MATH 1130 results are provided in the TBR folder for the pilot period in 2009 spring and for the 2009-2010 academic year. The target level of “satisfactory” achievement for each outcome was 70 percent. The average rate for the combined five learning outcomes for spring 2010 was 72 percent. Math competence is also measured through CBASE: the 2009-2010 CBASE math average of 289 is the highest score for Pellissippi State students and indicates that mathematics teaching and learning is a strength of the institution, according to the CBASE Interpretive Guide.

Assessment of Other Competencies:

Learning outcomes for critical thinking/problem solving are:

- the ability to solve problems.
- the ability to construct and present a cogent argument in support of one’s viewpoint.
- the ability to understand and evaluate arguments presented by others.

Assessment of these skills is accomplished through review and interpretation of data from the other three TBR assessments and from sections of CBASE, as explained in the critical thinking assessment reports for 2009 spring and for 2009-2010, included in the TBR General Education assessment folder.

Reading competence is judged through CBASE, which provides assessment of graduates’ skills in English, including writing and reading. The College does not rely on the writing score, since Pellissippi State students do not complete a writing sample on CBASE, but the reading score indicates reasonable competence in students’ ability to read accurately and critically by asking pertinent questions about a text, by recognizing assumptions and implications, and by evaluating ideas. The Reading and Literature average of 276 is approximately the same as the institutional mean of 277.

Assessment of technological literacy is accomplished through review of Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results and within program areas. Results from CCSSE questions relating to computer use in the 2009 report are provided below (question 9g, p. M3; question 12g, p. M5 ; question 13.1h, p. M6; question 13.2h, p. M7; question 13.3h, p. M8). They show Pellissippi State students to be at least as proficient and comfortable using technology as their peers and more so in some regards. The CCSSE Special Focus Questions dealt with students' use of social networking; these results show that many Pellissippi State students rely on social networking for communication with the College, as well as with other contacts, thus demonstrating again their proficiency with technology. All students with majors in Business and Computer Technology are required to take a computer literacy course, and almost every program in the curriculum requires students to have the ability to use computers for word processing, research, or specific applications within the major, so this competency is continually under assessment throughout the curriculum.