

INITIAL QEP DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Vernon College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), named VConnected, is to increase student learning through improved engagement by fostering an environment of collaboration and connectivity between students, faculty, and support personnel. The College will improve student learning by focusing on engagement through a three-part plan: transform curriculum and instruction, provide innovative professional development opportunities, and create a technology rich environment for instructional and student support services. Faculty and staff will be provided the necessary training for successful QEP implementation. The initial focus of professional development activities will be to create a base of new knowledge about assessment tools such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), engagement techniques, and innovative technologies. The next emphasis will be placed on providing strategies for incorporating engagement into courses and services which will lead to higher achievement of student learning outcomes. Vernon College will target student learning outcomes on a project-by-project basis using established competencies from course syllabi. As engagement techniques are integrated into a course or project, specific student learning outcomes will be tracked and assessed to determine if increased learning did occur due to increased engagement techniques. Adjunct faculty, distance learning courses, and online courses will receive the same attention and training as face-to-face courses.

Following approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, formal implementation of the Vernon College QEP began Fall 2009. Pilot projects have been conducted since the spring 2008 semester as a means of testing the applicability of progresses, collaboration and connectivity will remain the foundation for success in high achievement of student learning outcomes.

INITIAL GOALS & INTENDED OUTCOMES

Initial Goals

The goal of VConnected is to increase student learning through improved engagement.

Engagement will be increased by:

- Transforming curriculum and instruction,
- Training faculty and staff in engagement techniques through professional development opportunities, and
- Creating a technology-rich environment for instructional and student support services.

Intended Outcomes

The following intended outcomes are outlined in the QEP with the intention of incorporating collaboration and connectivity into every aspect of the students' collegiate experience. They fall into one of four categories: engagement methodologies, professional development, assessment, and support for the project.

Engagement Methodologies

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- Offer comprehensive educational programs and student support services with a continued focus on quality improvement.
- Improve the learning environment.
- Increase engagement by addressing the College's communication process.

Professional Development

- Create base of new knowledge about CCSSE and engagement as well as new technologies.
- Provide strategies for incorporating engagement into courses and services.
- Improve teaching strategies with the overall goal of increasing the level of student engagement.

Assessment

- Address College and student accountability – culture of evidence built to support claims about student learning.

Support

- Provide financial and physical resources to support QEP implementation and continued success.
- Learning Resource Centers – support and reinforce professional development.
- Provide ability to manage documents that fuel College actions.
- Address College process management – provide an environment that supports efficiency and transparency.
- Integrate the QEP into the infrastructure of the college by incorporating collaboration and connectivity into every aspect of the students' collegiate experience, including instruction and student support services. It is the goal of the project to infuse active learning strategies in all courses and student support services by 2014.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES & REASONS

2011-12

The QEP Implementation Committee formalized the feasibility review process to recommend technology tools for the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory (QERI) on an annual basis. In addition, enhancements to the QEP Assessment Cycle were recommended and approved by the Committee. Overall QEP Assessment, QEP Implementation Feasibility Review, Recommendations for Feasibility, QEP Annual Progress Report, College Effectiveness Committee, President, and Board of Trustees were added to the end of the cycle to more accurately reflect the assessment process. This assessment process was compared to the Assessment Cycle -Appendix XI to ensure original intent.

The Vernon College Innovation Center (VCIC) at the Century City Center location was relocated due to the expansion of the campus. The VCIC is setup as a small classroom conducive to

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offering professional development sessions to faculty and staff. This new space will help to further ensure the opportunity for college-wide integration.

2010-2011

The learning resource centers were further defined to ensure the opportunity for college-wide integration. The Faculty Innovation Centers (FIC) were renamed “Vernon College Innovation Center” (VCIC) to help facilitate participation.

The Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory process was approved and implemented by the QEP Implementation Committee. In an effort to continue to provide the most up-to-date technologies while being mindful of budgetary concerns, resources are checked out and returned each year for future use.

The original plan identified each of the College libraries to house an engagement section for all QEP reports and information. However after completing learning management system and website upgrades, Vernon College chose to utilize Blackboard Learn 9.1 and the College website as the primary source of information for students, faculty, and staff. This process provided equivalent access to QEP resources for students, faculty, and staff from all geographic locations.

2009-2010

An additional student engagement survey, the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), was administered at Vernon College. The SENSE was developed specifically to provide colleges with a systematic approach to understanding entering students’ earliest experiences. The data paints a clear picture of both student behaviors in the earliest weeks of college and the institutional practices that affect students during this critical time. The addition of this survey has allowed Vernon College to assess entering students’ perceptions. This is in addition to the perceptions of current students who have been in college at least one semester gathered through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Alternating the SENSE with the CCSSE, one each academic year, has proven to be cost efficient and assists with minimizing data overload.

SENSE serves as an additional student engagement tool for the Quality Enhancement Plan by:

- Identifying the areas in which entering students thrive and those in which they consistently struggle;
- Planning and examining the impact of interventions aimed at improving students’ earliest collegiate experiences;
- Documenting and improving institutional effectiveness over time; and
- Demonstrating institutional results and progress in supporting entering students.

As the QEP progressed and the College budget needs were taken into consideration, several changes were made to the originally proposed budget. Information resources were adequately funded through the Vernon College Library and therefore removed from the QEP budget line. The addition of the SENSE survey required a cost adjustment to the budget in alternating years.

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Computer labs have been readily accessible for all required professional development sessions and trainings. The utilization of the Faculty Innovation Centers and the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory have proven to be a more cost efficient and effective method of providing the necessary tools to faculty and staff. Therefore, the line item for computer labs and computer lab proctors were not necessary and were removed. The total annual budget including Supply, Technology, Travel, Salaries Other, and Salaries was reviewed and approved by the QEP Implementation Committee. All areas were sufficiently funded to accomplish the goals as outlined in the QEP.

2008-2009

When the VConnected plan was first submitted, the cause and effect relationship between student engagement and student learning was not articulated clearly. “Engagement is good, but it is only a means to a more important end—student learning—and not an end in itself.” (Response Report 13). For this reason, the QEP was enhanced to put emphasis on: (1) identifying student learning outcomes in each course or student support service area, and (2) implementing assessment tools to determine the success of each outcome. Beginning with the 2009 fall semester, these changes became a reality as Vernon College transitioned from piloting the project in the preparation phase to implementing the project.

- “The plan relied too heavily on a single measure of success, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). CCSSE measures the extent to which students perceive they are engaged in the classroom and elsewhere in the institution. Although CCSSE provides a wealth of detailed information regarding student perceptions of engagement, it is nonetheless an *indirect* measure of student learning. If the overall goal of the project is to improve student learning, then the college had to couple CCSSE with *direct* measures of student learning.” (Response Report 13).
- “The plan assumed that an increase in the number of student engagement activities would produce an increase in learning. The college had to articulate how it would evaluate whether or not student learning had improved and thus whether or not the project was successful.” (Response Report 15).

To provide support, the QEP included two Instructional Services positions: Director of Quality Enhancement Plan and Instructional Designer. The Director of Quality Enhancement Plan position was moved to report to the Office of the President. This shift helped to ensure the opportunity for college-wide participation and integration of the project. To more accurately reflect job responsibilities, the Instructional Designer job description and position title was amended to Instructional Design and Technology Coordinator and the Director of Quality Enhancement Plan was renamed Director of Quality Enhancement.

A Pilot Project Reporting Template was developed to report individual VConnected team member project results. The template was derived from the Annual Action Plan Template to align with the College’s existing planning process. The QEP Implementation Committee

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ensured that the original intent of the QEP was maintained and that the template and the QEP Assessment Cycle were cross-walked.

DIRECT QEP IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

2011-12

Vernon College targets student learning outcomes on a project-by-project basis using established competencies from course syllabi or objectives as identified by student support services. As engagement techniques are integrated into a course or project, specific student learning outcomes are tracked and assessed to determine if increased learning did occur due to increased engagement techniques. Each project was reviewed to determine the feasibility of incorporating the activity/project in additional courses or student support service areas.

During the first three years of implementation and the initial year of piloting the QEP, twenty-two pilot project proposals were submitted and approved to test the applicability of VConnected. Four of these projects were piloted during the 2011-12 academic year. Brandi Brannon, Director of Student Relations incorporated video technology into her New Student Orientation (NSO) sessions to provide an engaged experience for students. The second project, piloted by Stacy Lallmann, Student Billing Accountant, included implementing chat technology on the website to answer student's billing questions. Angela Walker, PASS (Proactive Assistance for Student Success) Center Coordinator used Wimba LiveClassroom and the Genius Tablet to offer online tutoring in Math and Accounting. Michelle Wood, Director of Continuing Education piloted the fourth project which integrated student response systems or clickers into the Certified Nursing Aide program certification review process. Each VConnected team member researched and developed their projects in the Fall 2011 semester and began implementing them in the Spring 2012 semester.

Brandi Brannon – Director of Student Relations

Brandi Brannon recorded and produced 8 student/alumni video testimonials. In each testimonial the student highlighted a support service that benefited them while at Vernon College such as the PASS Center, Special Services, relationship with a faculty member, advising, counseling, financial aid, or work study. Videos were presented to new students as part of the New Student Orientation (NSO) program in the Fall and Spring semesters. These groups were asked to answer a questionnaire regarding student support services. The responses were then compared to corresponding control group responses who did not view the videos each semester.

The group of NSO students who viewed the videos was not able to identify a greater number of support services than the control group who did not see the testimonial videos. The majority of students reported that it would be helpful to learn about support services from their peers. The questionnaire responses highlighted both the well-known services and those not as easily recognized. This should be helpful when selecting what services to highlight in future videos.

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College-wide integration should be very feasible with the simple addition of the videos to the Vernon College website. This will allow prospective and current students to learn about student support services from their peers. Mrs. Brannon recommends the videos be updated or added to annually. The videos will be a good “selling point” for the college to prospective students.

Feasibility: In order to complete the originally reported assessment of this project, further assessment is scheduled for 6 months and 1 year. A reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2012-13 academic year.

Stacy Lallmann – Student Billing Accountant

A LiveChat feature was introduced as an additional method of communicating with students in the Business Office in April 2012. Stacy Lallmann answers student questions concerning tuition and fees, due dates, payment options, etc. in a more convenient way via LiveChat on the website rather than the student searching through the VC catalog, course schedule, or calling the College. During peak times, the Business Office staff receives increased student traffic in-person and on phones. This additional method of communication attempts to address a need for increased support from Administrative offices and personnel and the need to build stronger relationships between the staff and the students as indicated in the CCSSE and SENSE surveys.

To date, the use of LiveChat has proven to be effective and appears to be a communication tool that will be feasible college-wide. Of the questions that have been asked, at least half have pertained to other offices.

Feasibility: Further assessment is needed and a reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2012-13 academic year.

Angela Walker – PASS Center Coordinator

Angela Walker observed a need for providing an online tutoring option for those students unable to visit or return to campus for an in-person tutoring appointment in the PASS Center. Online tutoring was made available for Accounting and Contemporary Math students using Wimba LiveClassroom. Peer tutors also incorporated the use of a Genius Tablet technology tool that provided a visual aide to simplify the exchange between tutor and tutee when solving numerically based problems.

Instructors and students were surveyed to determine the level of engagement and learning that occurred. All instructors viewed the service as a valuable addition to tutoring services offered by the PASS Center. They also indicated that this service helped test scores, grades, and fostering connectedness in the class. The majority of students reported a positive experience with online tutoring. They indicated that they will be able to apply the knowledge learned and would recommend online tutoring and/or participate in online tutoring in other classes if available.

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Feasibility: The use of Wimba Live Classroom as a technology tool was recommended as a source to provide student engagement activities outside of the traditional face-to-face tutoring sessions. Additionally the use of the Genius Tablet as a technology tool was recommended to provide the ability to write, draw or sketch as needed in a course or program.

Michelle Wood – Director of Continuing Education

Vernon College offered Certified Nurse Aide programs in 6 different high schools, several contracted agencies, and monthly at the Century City Center in 2011-12. With a multitude of program locations, the CNA program employs numerous instructors. Each instructor is tasked with preparing students for success on the state certification exam and in the nursing home. Michelle Wood incorporated Student Response Systems or Clickers into the certification reviews that were uniform for all CNA locations and instructors. The use of this technology added program consistency and allowed instructors to pinpoint areas of weakness and implement intervention/remediation strategies prior to the certification exam.

The clickers were easy for the students to use and proved to be an effective engagement tool. The students viewed using the clickers as more of a fun activity and therefore they were more interactive. Of the classes using the clicker training methodology, there was an increase in the numbers of students passing. In 2010-2011 the cumulative pass rate was 84% and in 2011-2012 the pass rate was 90%.

Feasibility: The use of Student Response System (Clickers) as a technology tool was recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in both career and technical programs and academic courses.

Two additional feasibility recommendations were made and approved pertaining to technology tools piloted in 2010-2011.

- The use of virtual computers as a technology tool is not recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in courses or student support service programs.
- The use of WidgetCast Pro and CrazyTalk as a technology tool is not recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in a course or in student support service programs.

2010-2011

Katrina Brasuell – Pharmacy Technician Coordinator/Instructor

Katrina Brasuell produced training videos, for her Pharmacy Technician Program students, in the areas of pharmacy practice that could not be demonstrated in laboratory settings. This was most often due to budget and space limitations or could not be obtained in clinicals due to rules and regulations at various facilities. The ability to show students visually better trains them in their profession.

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Mrs. Brasuell has raw footage of several practices but is currently in the final editing stage. She recently became aware that she would have to implement the use of video editing software in addition to Camtasia for areas of privacy when filming in pharmacies. This will address a concern many of the facilities have expressed. Once the appropriate software has been identified and purchased, the videos will be produced and used in the Fall 2011 classes. A positive result has been student participation in the training videos and the fact that the videos will be a useful resource for several years.

Feasibility: The use of a camcorder and Camtasia software to create and edit videos proved to be effective. However, due to privacy concerns, additional software may need to be purchased and implemented before this type of video can be recommended by the QEP Implementation Committee as a best practice for other faculty and staff. Further training and assessment is needed and a reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2011-12 academic year.

Melissa Elliott – Director of Financial Aid

Financial aid CCSSE benchmarks were well below the mean in two critical areas. In the 2009 CCSSE survey, Vernon College students were asked how much Vernon College emphasized its ability to provide the financial support students needed to afford their education. The Vernon College mean was 2.14 which was well below the cohort mean of 2.42. Melissa Elliott decided to create Chap Assistance TV (CATV) where students could learn about financial aid through viewing short video clips. She also created a student loan video tutorial to assist students with accepting, reducing or declining their student loan awards as well as completing the entire student loan process with greater confidence.

The videos have not been posted to the website due to a college-wide migration to a new server and content management system. A control focus group of students was given 10 minutes to complete a quiz consisting of 10 frequently asked questions. Once CATV is launched and a second, comparable focus group is formed and quizzed, the results will be compared to the original focus group for accuracy and completeness. Feedback given through CATV will be reviewed and analyzed to determine future CATV clips and/or resources. A similar assessment will be applied to the student loan tutorial once posted.

Feasibility: The use of a camcorder and Camtasia software to create and edit videos proved to be effective. However, due to the fact that Vernon College upgraded their web server and content management system at the time of the initial pilot, further assessment will need to be accomplished before this project will be recommended to other faculty and staff. A reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2011-12 academic year.

Deana Lehman – Director of Special Services

Deana Lehman observed that most new faculty are unaware of the services available at VC for students with disabilities. They are also unaware of the steps necessary to provide accommodations to students with disabilities. Mrs. Lehman chose to create a brief orientation

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video explaining the procedures for providing accommodations or services for VC students with disabilities to help educate faculty. She also produced a video tutorial detailing how to interpret the information on the Special Accommodation Request to Instructor Form.

Mrs. Lehman administered an ADA Pre-Test, constructed in Google Documents, to a group of nine instructors. These nine instructors functioned as the control group for the pilot project. Posting the videos to the server has been delayed due to a college-wide migration of the website to a new server and content management system. Once available, the control group will watch both videos, take the post-test, and the percentage of correct answers will be calculated. Approximately 65% of all instructor calls during the year pertained to the Special Accommodations Request to Instructor Form in 2010-2011. Instructor questions regarding this form are expected to decrease once these resources are made accessible.

Feasibility: The use of a camcorder and Camtasia software to create and edit videos proved to be effective. However, due to the fact that Vernon College upgraded their web server and content management system at the time of the initial pilot, further assessment will need to be accomplished before this project will be recommended to other faculty and staff. A reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2011-12 academic year.

Michelle Wood – Director of Continuing Education

Michelle Wood wanted to utilize technology to make information available to Vernon College students easier and more effective. Using Camtasia software Mrs. Wood will strategically place instructional videos on each of continuing education web pages to help students navigate the website to find necessary information. Additionally, explanation videos of each of the Continuing Education programs will be available to assist students in understanding program requirements.

One program video and one frequently asked questions video have been created and are ready to be posted to the website: Certified Nurses Aid and Shot Records. Due to a college-wide migration of the website to a new server and content management system, the videos have not been posted. Mrs. Wood has been gathering website statistics and will compare visitor data before and after the posting of the videos. She has also logged the number of students who call or visit the Continuing Education Office with program questions. The addition of the video resources should minimize the need for students to visit campus for frequently requested information.

Feasibility: The use of a camcorder and Camtasia software to create and edit videos proved to be effective. However, due to the fact that Vernon College upgraded their web server and content management system at the time of the initial pilot, further assessment will need to be accomplished before this project will be recommended to other faculty and staff. A reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2011-12 academic year.

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Michelle Alexander – Adjunct History Instructor

History 1302 U. S. History since 1865 students were having difficulty successfully researching and completing the required research paper for their class. Michelle Alexander decided to create a historical research methods video using an avatar to review historical research methods necessary to be successful in the assigned research project. Students will be required to view the video prior to beginning the research within three weeks of the beginning of the semester.

There are several software programs necessary for the creation of this project and learning them has taken longer than anticipated. However, to overcome this, Mrs. Alexander increased face-to-face time with students both in group sessions and individually to help them develop quality research papers. In addition to in-person communication, Mrs. Alexander used Blackboard for communication and organization of the sessions. There was an increase in most scores in the Spring 2011 History 1302 class research papers as compared to those submitted by the Spring 2010 History 1302 class. Two Saturday sessions were held in the Midwestern State University Library for students. During these sessions, areas of the library were toured that held the collections necessary to enable students to gather their information and be successful with this project. Those students who participated were more successful on the assigned history paper than those who did not. Sequential deadlines were established for turning in a thesis statement, an outline, a preliminary literature search, and paper draft. After each turn-in, extensive feedback was provided to help strengthen their final result.

Feasibility: It was discovered the use of avatar software to create a tutorial for students required two additional software programs. Therefore, further training and assessment is needed and a reevaluation of feasibility will occur in the 2011-12 academic year.

Richard Warren – Computer Information Systems Instructor

COSC1301 Microcomputer Applications students will be accomplishing assigned tasks on a virtual machine image, not a physical machine. By using a virtual computer they will be able to access all operating systems options, applications, and settings thereby obtaining a thorough understanding of the operating system and office applications. The current computer system offers very limited access to restricted areas of the operating system and associated applications. Consequently, the scope of tasks that Richard Warren can teach and demonstrate to his students is limited. Students will work in teams of 2-3 assisting in a joint effort to complete the installation processes.

Mr. Warren has successfully installed and configured the necessary equipment and software. The final step is to install operating systems and necessary software, however, the licensing required is not supported by Vernon College. He is working to resolve the licensing issue and anticipates being able to use the six virtual machines in his COSC1301 class during Fall 2011.

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Feasibility: Although the installation and setup of the virtual computers has been successful, the project has yet to be tested in the classroom setting. This project will also be reevaluated in the 2011-12 academic year.

College Integration Feasibility

2011-12

Based on the results, the QEP Implementation Committee made the following recommendations:

- The use of Wimba Live Classroom as a technology tool is recommended as a source to provide student engagement activities outside of the traditional face-to-face tutoring sessions.
- The use of the Genius Tablet as a technology tool is recommended to provide the ability to write, draw or sketch as needed in a course or program.
- The use of a Student Response System (Clickers) as a technology tool is recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in both career and technical programs and academic courses.
- The use of virtual computers as a technology tool is not recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in courses or student support service programs.
- The use of WidgetCast Pro and CrazyTalk as a technology tool is not recommended as a source to provide student engagement opportunities in a course or in student support service programs.

2008-2011

During the 2008-2011 academic years, the QEP Implementation Committee recognized and recommended the following as standardized best practices for college-wide feasibility.

Six of the eighteen VConnected team members successfully piloted Wimba Live Classroom technology to enhance different aspects of a course or process. These include: Cindy Coufal, English Instructor; Greg Fowler, Criminal Justice Instructor; Marian Grona, Director of Library Services; and Renee Wooten, Spanish Instructor. In each scenario student's utilized technology to actively participate in class activities, collaborate with fellow students, and increase communication between classmates and the instructor. In each instance, students performed better than previous years' counterparts on identified assessments. Lynn Kalski – Director of LVN Program also piloted Wimba Live Classroom. The involvement of all faculty in the Wimba faculty meetings and the inclusion of cameras for each faculty member have extended the use of WIMBA to other vocational nursing faculty endeavors. Departmental briefings and smaller group meetings via WIMBA have been successfully conducted as well as communication with students. The addition of this technology tool has increased the frequency of communication and allowed staff to discuss/debate issues in real time as opposed to delaying decisions and input regarding these issues.

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Student Response Systems, or clickers, were incorporated into the mathematics classroom and financial aid high school night student support program. In both cases Paula Whitman, Mathematics Instructor, and Melissa Elliott, Director of Financial Aid, found this project increased the student's retention and understanding of the information presented. Response results of the clicker participants were compared to a control group and the anticipated project results were achieved. The clicker participants scored higher when compared to the control group.

Instructors Teresa Ramos and Chad Mueller piloted projects involving small learning communities or groups. Technology tools were used to facilitate group interaction, student communication with classmates and instructors, and collaboration on course content. When students were compared to those in previous courses without the use of the identified technology tools, they scored higher on the identified project.

The QEP Implementation Committee did not recommend the following tools or strategies as a standardized best practice for college-wide feasibility. Student group collaboration for research and information gathering, presentation of materials, and test preparation and evaluation piloted by Larry Jordan, Government Instructor, did not yield the intended student learning results. Dina Neal, Psychology Instructor, provided lecture podcasts as a supplement to the written course content materials. However, the results were inconclusive as to whether the podcasts actually increased student learning. Finally, Industrial Automation Systems Instructor Mark Holcomb did not find an increase in student performance as a result of the use of virtual/simulated lab software in the online course. Adjustments have been made to the project and further assessment will be completed once the course is taught again in the Spring 2012 semester.

Anticipated Outcomes

2011-12

Under the direction of Vernon College President, Dr. Dusty Johnston, a college-wide Data Day was conducted in the Fall 2011 semester. The purpose of this professional development session was to share the results of the CCSSE 2011 data with each component of the College. Each component was also challenged to take the information and use it to drive decision making to improve or create interventions to be included the 2012-13 Annual Action Planning process.

Additionally, CCSSE Data Facts were sent via email on a weekly basis to all faculty and staff and presented to students on TV Monitors on all campuses. The results were also shared and feedback gathered from the Student Government Association and Student Forum groups.

All college components focused on quality improvement college-wide by participating in the QEP pilot project program.

2008-2011

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In order to determine an initial benchmark for student support services, a report was requested from each component. The component of instructional services also submitted a report that included initiatives outside the piloted QEP projects. These reports detailed current student engagement projects as well as instances of student interaction and future projects in which student learning outcomes could be applied and assessed.

Instructional Services incorporated an End of Semester Course Review (ESCR) as a self-assessment tool that requires each instructor to review their courses at the end of each semester. Instructors use the data to enhance the quality of their courses which includes student engagement with the end goal being increased student learning.

The Library (Instructional Services) incorporated the use of a student response system (clickers) to help encourage student interaction and engagement in library classroom orientation presentations. Developing effective strategies for promoting library services remains a priority. Initiatives have included the development of an email flyer sent to all students at the beginning of each semester and the publication of a print brochure for distribution in the libraries, lobbies, and advising centers. A faculty orientation to library services was developed in Camtasia and posted online in August 2010.

Also under Instructional Services, the Library has continued to embrace the concept of quality enhancement with several new initiatives. In an effort to improve student access to library services, the library launched a new homepage design on May 27, 2009. Features included an orientation video and message board for promoting library services. The orientation used screen capture video and webcam recordings to illustrate how to access library resources including online databases, the library catalog, reference assistance, and interlibrary loan services. To appeal to a variety of learning styles, the library also developed video clips to help illustrate the concepts covered in the database tutorial.

Administrative Services reported that after two years, the Business Office is the only department utilizing the student ID card program. Therefore after further assessment, the project has become less of a student engagement project and more of a process enhancement or best practice. To address student engagement, an online chat feature will be piloted through the QEP in the 2011-12 academic year to allow staff to answer student questions in a more student friendly, effective manner.

The Admissions and Registrar's Office has made improvements to the registration process by allowing online registration during on-site registration thus allowing more time to address student's needs.

Student Services reported that the New Student Group Advising program was renamed "New Student Orientation". The name change more accurately reflects the content of the program and helps define the type of service Vernon College students are receiving. Another service that was enhanced is the New Student Checklist which is traditionally made available to students in print

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and as a printable PDF online. A video version of the checklist explaining each step to the student has been created and posted under the “Getting Started” tab on the website for prospective students. Multimedia message boards were installed on all campuses to communicate activities and services available to students. Finally, Student Services piloted a QEP project in 2011-12 to inform potential students about available support services prior to their enrollment to help them develop a support system & plan for success.

The Office of the President, through Institutional Advancement, implemented two new projects aimed at increasing student communication and participation. First social networking sites were created and used to push college announcements, events, activities, and photos to our students, faculty, and staff. These sites have facilitated communication with students on many of the College’s frequently asked questions. Second, the Scholarship Tracking and Review System (STARS) was implemented. This program permits and encourages students to apply for all Vernon College scholarships online. Through the use of a questionnaire, STARS then sorts and assigns the student’s applications to those scholarships they have been identified as eligible for. The number of applicants has increased from approximately 200 in the 2008-2009 academic year without STARS to approximately 500 in 2009-2010 with STARS.

As Vernon College worked to establish a quality enhancement plan that could be maintained and supported, while being mindful of SACS criteria, several processes were developed and enhancements of current processes were made. Four areas became the focus: promotion, communication, assessment, and support.

To promote and communicate the goals of the QEP, established outlets were identified to provide ongoing or frequent communication. These include: faculty/staff development presentations, monthly President’s College Update, the Quest newsletter, pilot application promotional materials, student orientations, and new employee orientations.

To ensure integration and assessment, the QEP has been incorporated into the College’s annual planning cycle which includes the Priority Initiatives and Annual Action Plans. Further, the Office of Quality Enhancement uses individual pilot reports, the QEP Annual Progress Report, and the End of Semester Course Review as additional assessment tools. National surveys continue to be the primary engagement assessment and include the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE).

Student engagement data (CCSSE, CCFSSE, SENSE) was presented to the College community including the Board of Trustees, president, deans, and faculty and staff on all campuses. The benchmark data was the primary focus of the presentations for all audiences. In addition to the benchmark data, presentations to the faculty and staff were tailored to each division or department and included specific questions that indicated a significant difference. Data was also made available through the Quality Enhancement monthly newsletter.

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The VC Innovation Center (VCIC) provides ongoing support and instruction for existing and emerging technologies appropriate to the instructional environment. Technology learning and support is made available through the VCIC, where all faculty and staff members can comfortably experiment with instructional technology. VCICs are located at each of the Vernon College campuses. The VCIC offers a variety of training options: individualized consultations, small group training sessions, as well as departmental training sessions. The sessions are delivered face-to-face or online. This department is charged with assisting faculty in identifying and integrating technology tools for excellence in a learning-centered instructional environment.

Unanticipated Outcomes

2011-12

Due to the increased focus on using CCSSE and SENSE data to create a culture of evidence to drive the planning process and student success agenda, Vernon College applied and was selected to participate in the Student Success by the Numbers (SSBTN) project through the Center for Community College Student Engagement. The project aims to strengthen the colleges' abilities and inclinations to gather, analyze, communicate and use data in work to improve student success. It includes the objective of helping the institutions build a culture of evidence—engaging the people of the college in the continuing process of understanding their strengths and needed improvements, targeting strategies and evaluating their impacts.

At the direction of the QEP, the Director of Quality Enhancement and the Instructional Design and Technology Coordinator have implemented a professional development program to include the use of technology tools and instructional strategies. Further, these positions have had a role in planning faculty and staff development weeks conducted biannually by the President and Dean of Instruction. As a result, President Dr. Dusty Johnston created a Professional Development Committee to oversee the program at Vernon College. Specifically the Committee was charged with formulating and maintaining an active in-house professional development program for faculty, professional staff, and classified staff. The responsibilities include:

- Identify the professional development needs each year for different employee groups.
- Recommend and evaluate a professional development program in keeping with the identified needs.
- Recommend to the President's Administrative Council budgetary needs for the implementation of the professional development program.
- Develop a schedule of professional development topics and secure appropriate providers.
- Promote and monitor participation in professional development opportunities.

Using CCSSE data as a driving factor, Vernon College President, Dr. Dusty Johnston, created a Retention and Completion Task Force to identify barriers and make recommendations for improvement. CCSSE and SENSE data will be used as an assessment tool to help determine the effectiveness of the recommended interventions. These recommendations include the elimination of late registration, enhancing the process of informing prospective students and

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their families about the availability, benefits and ramifications of federal and state financial aid programs, and expanding student engagement opportunities to include both on and off campus activities.

2008-2011

Using CCSSE data as a driving factor, Vernon College President, Dr. Dusty Johnston, created an Academic Advising Task Force which was charged with:

- Reviewing current policies, procedures, processes, practices, timelines, and functions.
- Making suggested additions, deletions, and changes to ensure effectiveness, student friendliness, and compliance with state and federal regulations where applicable.

The task force began in February of 2010 and has continued through the 2010-2011 academic year. The most significant recommendation that has been implemented this year is a requirement that all new students to Vernon College meet with a Course Schedule Advisor (CSA) prior to registration. To assist with this implementation, all full-time faculty have been trained and serve as CSA's. Additionally, a CSA Resource Guide has been created as a training tool and daily resource for CSA's. The CSA Resource Guide includes strategies, tools, and tips for effective student engagement during the course scheduling process.

Also using CCSSE data as a driving factor, Dr. Johnston created a Retention Task Force to identify barriers and make recommendations for improvement. CCSSE data will be used as an assessment tool once recommendations are reviewed and implemented.

Further QEP support was added in the creation of the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory, Pilot Mentor Program, and a professional development program through the Vernon College Innovation Center.

The Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory is a collection of hardware and software that is available for checkout or downloads by any faculty or staff member. The list is standardized for certain products in an effort to provide more effective and efficient training and support. The Pilot Mentor Program was established to offer additional training and support for those hardware, software or engagement methods deemed a best practice by the QEP Pilot Project Program. Each individual who volunteered for the Pilot Project Program also serves as a mentor through the Pilot Mentor Program.

The QERI offers over 50 technology tools that includes hardware, software, and books available to the college community through the Quality Enhancement Plan. In 2010-11, Wimba Live Classroom, Camtasia software, Qwizdom Student Response System (Clickers), and Google Online Surveys were the most utilized tools. The QEP Implementation Committee approves resources to be added to the QERI based on the feasibility of each pilot project. Resources may also be added based on necessity and/or best practice. Individual or group trainings on these resources are offered through the Vernon College Innovation Centers.

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QEP SUMMARY

Based on the review and assessment of quality enhancement activities conducted since 2008, the following have been accomplished:

- The goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan have continued to be integrated into the planning and effectiveness process of the college. It is identified as a priority initiative and included as a statement of need, objective, and/or strategy in the annual action planning process. As a result, each component of the college addresses attaining the goals of the QEP on their annual action plans. Through this method, the QEP continues the process of college-wide integration into the infrastructure of the college.
- The VConnected pilot project program has approved, tracked, and reported 22 pilots during the initial pilot year and 3 years of implementation.
- The “direct impact on student learning” results illustrate the importance of VConnected Team member’s pilot projects and review of results before recommending technology tools or instructional strategies for college-wide integration.
- Significant QEP enhancements were established including the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory and the Pilot Mentor program. Over 50 technology tools are currently in use and available to all faculty and staff. Each tool has been successfully piloted and deemed a best practice for use in incorporating student engagement strategies to increase student learning. Pilot mentors have been instrumental in providing training and support for their colleagues.
- The Quality Enhancement Plan Implementation Committee was structured to assess and evaluate the progress of the Quality Enhancement Plan and to ensure completion of each initiative. The Committee continues to provide oversight for the implementation of the QEP as written in the February 27, 2009 Revised QEP document.

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COMMITTEE REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This QEP Annual Progress Report was reviewed and approved by the QEP Implementation Committee on this 29th day of October, 2012.

Committee Members:

Criquett Lehman, Committee Chair/Director
of Quality Enhancement

Kristin Harris, Associate Dean of Student
Services/Director of Counseling

Greg Fowler, Division Chair: Behavioral &
Social Sciences

Stacy Lallmann, Student Billing
Accountant and 11-12 Pilot Participant

Joe Johnston, Division Chair:
Communications

Brandi Brannon, 11-12 Pilot Participant

Karen Gragg, Division Chair: Math & Science

Michelle Wood, 11-12 Pilot Participant

Mark Holcomb, Division Chair: Information
& Technology

Angela Walker, 11-12 Pilot Participant

Shana Munson, Division Chair: Allied Health
& Human Services

Marian Grona, 12-13 Pilot Participant

Roxie Hill, Instructional Design and
Technology Coordinator

Kathy Peterson, 12-13 Pilot Participant

Melissa Elliott, Director of Financial Aid

Jason Scheller, 12-13 Pilot Participant