



QUEST: CRITICAL THINKING IN THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE



MOTLOW STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MSCC's Quality Enhancement Plan

Motlow State Community College
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I. Executive Summary

Motlow State Community College (MSCC) employed a deliberate, college-wide process, including meetings with and feedback from faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community constituents, to develop a data-informed Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that is timely, specific, sustainable, measureable, and achievable. These conversations enabled initially by the SACSCOC Leadership Team (reaffirmation steering committee) in January 2016 facilitated the development of a comprehensive QEP Steering Committee by August 2016. QUEST (Question, Use, Evaluate, Solve, and Test): Critical Thinking in the First Year Experience is a critical thinking QEP that reaches a significant number of MSCC students through the College's MSCC 1300: First Year Experience, a course "designed to empower students to reach their educational and career goals." An inclusive QEP Steering Committee, chaired by an MSCC faculty, examined feedback from presentations at each MSCC campus to focus on potential topics that could improve student performance, retention, persistence, progression to benchmarks, and graduation rates.

The QEP Steering Committee examined multiple years of ETS Proficiency Profile and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results, and coupled with feedback from the campus community, the Committee recognized a compelling need to emphasize and improve critical thinking skills of MSCC's graduates. For five academic years, culminating in 2016-2017, 4% or less of MSCC's graduates have scored "proficient" on the critical thinking component of the ETS Proficiency Profile, and MSCC's students have routinely scored below the mean for critical thinking questions on the CCSSE.

MSCC is committed to the successful implementation of QUEST in August 2017. As the QEP Steering Committee has evolved from the planning phase to implementation, the QEP Chair has become the QEP Director. The QEP Director also serves as the First Year Experience Coordinator, and in these dual roles, the QEP Director is poised, and well qualified, to oversee the QEP through its duration.

II. Process

MSCC's QEP evolved and developed through an institutionally inclusive approach that engaged faculty, administrators, staff, students, and community stakeholders. The process to cultivate MSCC's second QEP began when the SACSCOC Leadership Team facilitated a series of presentations and discussions for faculty, staff, and students in spring 2016 at each of the College's campuses. These sessions provided opportunities to share data collected by the Director of Institutional Research and the Academic Assessment Specialist (now one position titled Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment) that demonstrated areas in which the College could improve student learning and, therefore, improve student retention, progression to benchmarks, and graduation rates. Following the presentations, the SACSCOC Leadership Team disseminated a QEP topic survey with six broad categories for improvement (including advisement, First Year Experience, remedial/developmental education, student persistence, collaboration, and technology) to enable constituent commitment to the process and provide guidance to the QEP Steering Committee, a faculty-driven committee with representation from each College unit, students, alumni, and the community. Prior to the first QEP Committee meeting, the QEP Committee Chair reviewed the MSCC Mission Statement and 2015-2025 Strategic Plan to ensure that the forthcoming MSCC QEP aligns with both guiding documents. The MSCC Mission Statement specifically addresses critical thinking: "Motlow State encourages student success through critical thinking, clear communication, ethical behavior, respect for others, civic responsibility, problem solving, effective functioning in individual and team situations, and an appreciation of one's own heritage as well as that of others." In addition, through ETS Proficiency Profile assessment of critical thinking and identified CCSSE questions that measure students' perceptions of critical thinking, a critical thinking topic that expressly aligns with 3.1.1 of the 2015-2025 MSCC Strategic Plan: "The institution will annually exceed the comparative or college peer group scores for academic success measure including exit exams, major field tests, and licensure exams." The QEP Committee began

meetings in September 2016 and has worked continually since that time to develop a data-informed QEP, review appropriate Student Learning Outcomes and assessments, evaluate supporting literature, consider faculty development opportunities, and assess the integration of student support services. The Committee's work culminated in a critical thinking QEP called QUEST (Question, Use, Evaluate, Solve, Test): Critical Thinking in the First Year Experience.

III. Identification of QEP Topic

The QEP Committee was founded by August 2016 with a broad-based membership of 27 College constituents, including the SACSCOC Leadership Team, full- and part-time faculty representation from academic departments and campus locations, staff from each College unit, students, an alumnus, and a foundation trustee. Because of the emphasis on the improvement of student learning, the need of faculty commitment, and the necessity of a faculty-driven QEP process, a Department of Languages faculty was selected to serve as the QEP Committee Chair. The Committee met for the first time on September 2, 2016, and discussed the purpose of the QEP, institutional data, and feedback collected from the aforementioned topic survey. At this meeting, the Committee concluded that the QEP should incorporate critical thinking and First Year Experience in an effort to improve retention at MSCC. This motion passed unanimously, and the Committee met regularly thereafter to hone the topic and to create a meaningful project, aligned with the College's Mission and Strategic Plan, that is timely, specific, sustainable, measureable, and achievable.

On September 22, 2016, MSCC hosted its Strategic Planning meeting, and the SACSCOC Leadership Team, including the QEP Chair, presented its initial work on the QEP. The Strategic Planning meeting included faculty, curriculum chairs, deans, college-wide department heads, all unit vice presidents, foundation trustees, and a member of the Tennessee Board of Regents, MSCC's governing board. In the presentation, the team introduced the QEP Committee, defined QEP (including Core Requirement 2.12 and Comprehensive Standard

3.3.2), emphasized the college-wide nature of the project, and presented a timeline for Committee work, final topic selection, implementation, and QEP document submission, as well as an opportunity for questions and feedback.

The QEP Committee met for a second time on October 14, 2016; the committee focused on critical thinking and decided that a critical-thinking QEP would be best housed in MSCC’s First Year Experience course. The group debated whether First Year Experience should be required for all MSCC first-time freshmen or all first-time freshmen required to take Learning Support (remedial/developmental) coursework. Because approximately 75% of all MSCC first-time freshmen are required to take Learning Support in at least one category (English, reading, and/or mathematics) and because the Learning Support population is defined by the Tennessee Board of Regents as academically underprepared (at risk), the Committee decided to focus on all Learning Support students. The Committee also began to consider assessments, specifically considering existing measures of critical thinking, and the group identified the ETS Proficiency Profile (required for all MSCC graduates) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which would allow the College to utilize existing questions and questions specifically designed by the College for the QEP. The ETS specifically measures graduates’ critical thinking abilities. Historically, MSCC graduates have scored low on the critical thinking measure of the ETS: 4% of students proficient in critical thinking (2012-2013), 3% of students proficient (2013-2014), 4% of students proficient (2014-2015), 2% of students proficient (2015-2016), and 2% of students proficient (2016-2017).

Table 3.1: ETS Proficiency Profile

ETS Critical Thinking Proficiency Score 2012-2017		
Year	Proficient	Not Proficient
2012-13	4%	76%
2013-14	3%	78%
2014-15	4%	76%
2015-16	2%	77%
2016-17	2%	77%

MSCC students have historically scored below means for medium-sized colleges and MSCC’s cohort group on several critical thinking questions on CCSSE (Table 3.2). Means marked with asterisks in the following table are identified by CCSSE as significant differences. These questions, in addition to CCSSE add-on questions, are identified as an external assessment, as well. For “Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory,” “Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations,” and “Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill,” MSCC students scored below the means for each of the previous six years. For “Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways,” MSCC students scored below the means for five of the previous six years. For “Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods,” MSCC students scored below the means for four of the previous six years.

Table 3.2: Relevant CCSSE Scores

CCSSE Critical Thinking Means

Item 5: During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?

Item/Year	Motlow Mean	Medium College Mean	Cohort Mean
5b.	5b.	5b.	5b.
2012	2.80	2.90	2.90
2013	2.84	2.90	2.91
2014	2.81	2.91	2.92
2015	2.82	2.92	2.93
2016	2.80	2.93	2.94
2017	2.84	2.90	2.91
5c.	5c.	5c.	5c.
2012	2.80	2.77	2.78
2013	2.69	2.77	2.78
2014	2.73	2.78	2.79
2015	2.66	2.80	2.80
2016	2.71	2.81	2.81
2017	2.76	2.87	2.88
5d.	5d.	5d.	5d.
2012	2.56	2.57	2.61
2013	2.61	2.60	2.61
2014	2.62	2.62	2.62
2015	2.56	2.63	2.64
2016	2.60	2.64	2.65

2017	2.63	2.64	2.66
5e.	5e.	5e.	5e.
2012	2.61	2.70	2.71
2013	2.57	2.71	2.72
2014	2.66	2.72	2.73
2015	2.59	2.74	2.74
2016	2.55	2.74*	2.75*
2017	2.59	2.74	2.76
5f.	5f.	5f.	5f.
2012	2.68	2.83	2.83
2013	2.65	2.83	2.84
2014	2.77	2.86	2.86
2015	2.62	2.87*	2.87*
2016	2.69	2.87	2.87
2017	2.64	2.85*	2.86*

*1 = Very little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much

- **5b.** Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.
- **5c.** Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways.
- **5d.** Making judgements about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods.
- **5e.** Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.
- **5f.** Using information that you have read or heard to perform a new skill.

On December 9, 2016, the QEP Committee crafted a definition of critical thinking to guide the committee’s work. After review of various ways to define critical thought, the Committee selected the definition fostered by Critical Thinking Community, a website sponsored by the Foundation for Critical Thinking:

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.

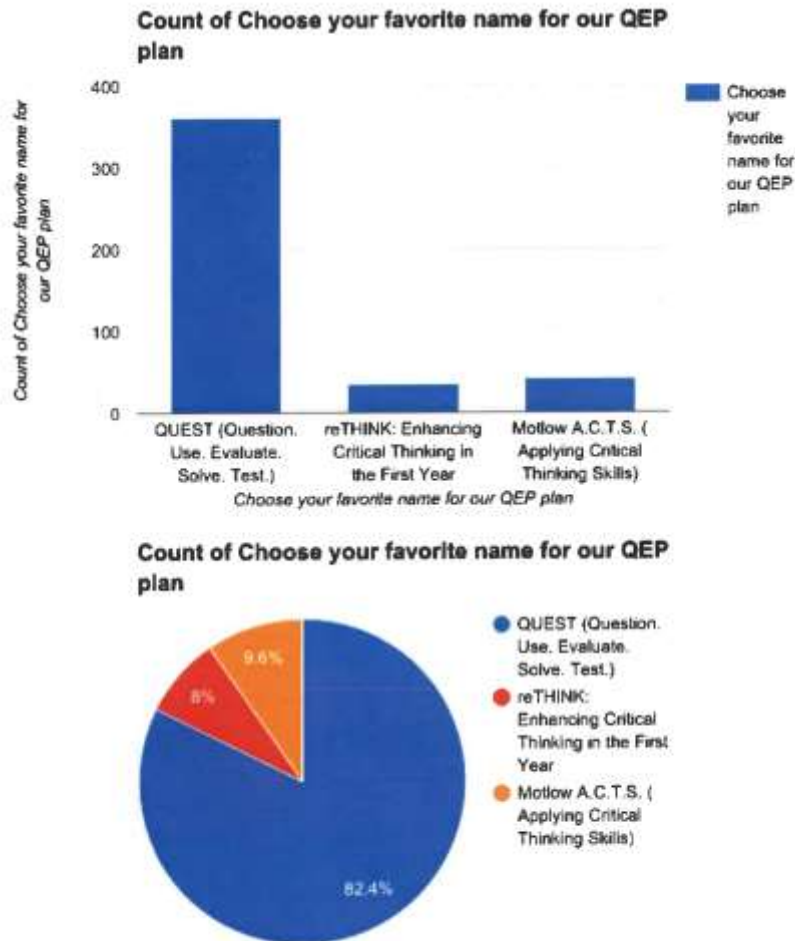
In addition, the Committee created six subcommittees: Literature Review, Internal Assessment, External Assessment, Faculty Professional Development, Marketing, and Student Affairs. The chair tasked each subcommittee to work on its focal area during January and report work and findings to the QEP Committee during the February meeting.

At the February 24, 2017, meeting, each subcommittee presented its findings. First, the Internal Assessment Subcommittee recommended an ePortfolio internal assessment as part of the First Year Experience course and suggested an existing critical thinking rubric for assessment. Second, the External Assessment Subcommittee recommended the ETS Proficiency Profile and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) with college-specific add-on questions as external assessments. Next, the Faculty Professional Development subcommittee suggested the creation of an online shell through the College's course management system (Desire2Learn) to facilitate faculty training opportunities and recommended Dr. John Eigenhauer, Critical Thinking professor at Taft College in California, to present to MSCC faculty. The Marketing Subcommittee suggested a campus-wide contest to name the QEP and the creation of videos, t-shirts, signage, and a website. The Student Affairs Subcommittee discussed how co-curricular events, mentoring, tutoring, and advising could support QEP efforts (See Appendix).

At the Committee's March 17, 2017, meeting, the Committee created catalog revisions, approved by Academic Affairs Committee (curriculum committee) at its May 2017 meeting (See Appendix), to reflect First Year Experience as a requirement for all incoming freshmen with Learning Support requirements. The Committee also made plans for the "Brand the Plan" campaign, which solicited electronic suggestions for a name for a critical-thinking QEP. The electronic link accepted submissions from students, faculty, and staff between March 27, 2017, and March 31, 2017; to garner interest and excitement, the QEP Committee offered gift cards for finalists and an iPad for the contest winner (See Appendix). The SACSCOC Leadership Team reviewed all submissions and voted to select three finalists: QUEST (Questions, Use,

Evaluate, Solve, and Test), reTHINK, and Motlow ACTS (Applying Critical Thinking Skills). A second link opened through April 12, 2017, that allowed the campus community to select the QEP title, and QUEST was the clear choice, garnering in excess of 82% of the vote. In addition, the QEP Chair presented the Committee’s work, including budget estimates, on March 30, 2017, to the President’s Cabinet. The Cabinet commended the work of the Committee and concurred with the Committee’s recommendation for a Fall 2017 QEP implementation. As the work of the QEP Committee transitioned from steering to implementation, the Committee Chair became the QEP Director for MSCC.

Table 3.3: Brand the Plan Contest



The Committee met again on April 21, 2017. While the Chair/Director announced the official name of the QEP as QUEST and provided updates to the Committee about the naming contest, revisions for the catalog, and marketing, the Chair/Director discussed curricular changes for the First Year Experience course to incorporate the emphasis on critical thinking. For example, argument mapping and a common novel were added to the course and are part of the summative assessment that assesses students' critical thinking skills within the course.

QEP Committee work continued through summer 2017, but because of the distance among MSCC's campuses and the nature of faculty contracts, the Committee worked electronically during summer 2017. On June 1, 2017, the QEP Chair/Director started an electronic (email) meeting to vote on an alumni-designed logo for the QEP. The logo was adopted without opposition. The Chair/Director held a second electronic meeting, commencing July 10, 2017, to update the Committee regarding faculty training, First Year Experience curricular revisions, and QEP marketing materials. To train First Year Experience faculty regarding critical thinking curricular changes, the QEP Chair/Director held six-hour training sessions on June 22, 2017; August 11, 2017; and August 14, 2017. The QEP Chair/Director, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison met with consultant Dr. Kevin Krahenbuhl, a First Year Experience and educational assessment expert at Middle Tennessee State University who currently serves as Program Director for the Doctor of Education in Assessment, Learning, and School Improvement, to assist with the development of critical thinking Student Learning Outcomes and assessments on July 13, 2017.

The QEP Chair/Director has coordinated with the Vice President for Marketing and Campus Activities to develop a comprehensive advertising campaign to ensure that students, faculty, administrators, staff, and vested community constituents know MSCC's QEP. The Chair/Director purchased marketing materials to disseminate to MSCC faculty, staff, and students. On August 24, 2017, a presentation detailing the implementation of the QEP occurred during fall convocation, which included all staff, faculty, and administrators, and the Vice

President for Marketing and Campus Activities and the QEP Chair/Director worked together to provide gift bags with QEP informational cards, QEP lip balm, and QEP bottles at the event.

Table 3.4: QEP Marketing Allocation for Fall 2017

Item	Quantity	Cost
QEP Shirts for Students, Faculty, and Staff	570	\$3,100
iPad for winner of QEP naming contest	1	\$900
QEP bracelets for Students, Faculty, and Staff	6000	\$3,340
QEP Bottles for Faculty and Staff	274	\$1,780
QEP Mascot Knight Costumes	5	\$530
“Brand the Plan” flyers	125	\$30
Featured Spot on MSCC Website	1	\$0
Social Media	Multi	\$0

The culmination of twelve months of data-informed, broad-based discussions (including reviews of the MSCC Mission, the 2015-2025 MSCC Strategic Plan, CCSSE results, and ETS Proficiency Profile scores) effected a sustainable QEP that aligns with the MSCC Mission and the 2015-2025 Strategic Plan and promotes improved Student Learning Outcomes. The

Student Learning Outcomes, along with the overall design of this QEP, promote and support the QEP Goal to improve MSCC students' critical thinking skills.

Key Terms and Definitions

- *Critical Thinking*: “Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness” (Critical Thinking Community).
- *Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)*: According to the Center for Community College Student Engagement, the CCSSE is “a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement [. . .] is a well-established tool that helps institutions focus on good educational practice and identify areas in which they can improve their programs and services for students. Administered during the spring to mostly returning students, *CCSSE* asks about institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention.”
- *ETS Proficiency Profile*: The ETS Proficiency Profile is used by Motlow College as the general education assessment of graduating sophomores. The ETS Proficiency Profile is a test based on college-level skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, and mathematics, designed to measure the academic skills developed through general education courses. It is recommended that students complete the test during the last semester prior to graduation, and the test is available on each of MSCC's four campuses.

- *ePortfolio*: Each student taking the MSCC FYE course is required to compose an electronic portfolio. Eynon and Gambino (2017) define ePortfolio as, “the platform that provides a mechanism to gather, save, and use artifacts of student work (p.129).
- *First Year Experience Course*: This course is a class “designed to empower students with the essential skill set necessary to reach their educational and career goals. Students will become familiar with college resources, policies, and procedures, while also improving their time management, study, research, and technology skills. Collaborative learning opportunities are designed to improve critical thinking, problem solving, and reading comprehension skills and abilities” (MSCC Catalog).
- *Learning Support*: The Tennessee Board of Regents defines Learning Support (remedial/developmental education) “as academic support needed by a student to be successful in college level general education courses and/or to meet minimum reading, writing, and mathematic competencies as required by faculty in programs that do not require general education courses in reading, writing and/or mathematics. The purpose is to enhance academic success in college level courses and increase the likelihood of program completion that will prepare students for career success in their chosen field of study.”

IV. Desired Learning Outcomes

The Director of the QEP, with collaboration with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, is responsible for the comprehensive assessment plan for the QEP and its overall goal to improve MSCC students’ critical thinking skills. The Director of the QEP, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, and QEP Committee members met in the summer of 2017 to compose measurable specific student learning outcomes that are evaluated during the five-year plan using various forms of internal and external assessments. Out of this meeting, the group composed three Student Learning Outcomes that align with the MSCC

Mission Statement: “Motlow State encourages student success through critical thinking, clear communication, ethical behavior, respect for others, civic responsibility, problem solving, effective functioning in individual and team situations, and an appreciation of one’s own heritage as well as that of others.” These outcomes are assessed by nationally recognized assessments (the ETS Proficiency Profile and CCSSE) that align with 3.1.1 of the 2015-2025 MSCC Strategic Plan: “The institution will annually exceed the comparative or college peer group scores for academic success measure including exit exams, major field tests, and licensure exams.” The QEP Committee has identified three Student Learning Outcomes.

Students will be able to:

- I. Analyze claims and supporting evidence of arguments
- II. Reflect and make connections between their educational and personal experiences
- III. Ask pertinent questions to solve authentic problems

These Student Learning Outcomes will assess the extent to which MSCC achieves its global QEP goal to improve students’ critical thinking skills.

V. Literature Review and Best Practices

Critical thinking is a topic that has many definitions and potential applications. While critical thinking is often presented as an abstract idea, much of the current literature on the topic strives to provide a precise definition of critical thinking. Other work expands on the way critical thinking can be used in educational settings, as well as beyond the classroom. Some studies of critical thinking and education also examine the ways critical thinking can be taught, applied, and evaluated among college students. The following summarizes some of the major works on critical thinking and the importance of teaching this skill at the college level and identifies best practices for critical thinking curriculum.

Defining Critical Thinking

In order to understand how to circumscribe critical thinking more effectively and how its curriculum affects college students, a definition of the term must first be established. There is no consensus on any one definition of critical thinking, but some current research aims to clarify what critical thinking is in regard to college learning. In a summary of the American Philosophical Association's findings, Facione (1990) presents the findings of a panel of experts involved in compiling the Delphi Report on critical thinking and education. The report provides a definition of critical thinking, ways that critical thinking can be applied, and recommendations for teaching and assessing critical thinking in the educational milieu. In describing and defining critical thinking, this panel of experts identifies "cognitive skills in (1) interpretation, (2) analysis, (3) evaluation, (4) inference, (5) explanation and (6) self-regulation" as crucial elements of critical thinking" (p. 4). For the application of critical thinking by students, the Delphi experts emphasize that critical thinking skills can be used in a variety of ways and should be incorporated with other technical and thinking skills to experience fully the benefit of critical thinking; thus, the recommendation is that critical thinking skills be taught in conjunction with other, broader skills to enhance critical thinking (p. 5). This approach serves as a best practice for critical thinking instruction. Additionally, the report focuses on the disposition and general abilities of an effective critical thinker. Describing critical thinkers as being "able to make such judgments in a wide range of contexts and for a wide variety of purposes," the experts recommend that critical thinking education practices should include instruction regarding how to find and evaluate sources of information, how to consider various points of view, and how to interact with others regarding opinions and ideas (pp. 12 & 14). Finally, to ensure that critical thinking skills are honed effectively among college students, the report outlines recommendations that include incorporating critical thinking skills into a variety of curricula and assessing critical thinking application often to evaluate and ensure effective use and improvement (pp. 16-17).

After explaining some ways critical thinking has been previously defined as applied and assessed, Gabennesch (2006) also offers his own definition of critical thinking: “Critical thinking is the use of national skills, worldview, and values to get as close as possible to the truth. Here, critical thinking is conceived as consisting of three essential dimensions: skills, worldview, and values” (p. 38). For the skills dimension, Gabennesch argues that information must not simply be absorbed but rather evaluated, interpreted, and applied (p. 38). The worldview aspect of critical thinking requires a better understanding of challenging and new information, and critical thinkers must “be disinclined to take things at face value” and skeptical of information and sources (p. 39). Finally, Gabennesch explains that values must be applied to the critical thinking process and that critical thinkers must be open to ideas but also willing to admit when something is not understood (p. 40). Among the benefits of possessing effective critical thinking skills, Gabennesch touts a tendency to understand and accept diversity better, as well as a necessary skepticism of “ideologies that justify illiberal practices” (p. 40). Ultimately, Gabennesch uses his understanding of critical thinking in educational settings to suggest that these skills can only be taught effectively in an educational setting when instructors first understand the process of critical thinking, incorporate it into a larger curricula, and are willing to teach critical thinking despite the challenges and occasional controversy surrounding this way of learning and understanding.

Teaching Critical Thinking

Critical thinking can be applied in a variety of ways. For the purpose of this research, studies that examine critical thinking in an educational setting and how it can be taught to college students were the focus. van Gelder (2005) outlines six lessons that can be learned from teaching critical thinking. The first lesson, that “critical thinking is hard,” draws on the research of Kuhn (1991), which found that most people “cannot. . . reliably exhibit basic skills of general reasoning and argumentation” (p. 42). Overall, “humans are not naturally critical,” and the skills of skepticism and questioning sources and information do not come easily to most

people (van Gelder, 2005, p. 42). Furthermore, critical thinking is considered a “higher order skill” that requires understanding of things other than just what critical thinking is and how to achieve it (van Gelder, 2005, p. 42). van Gelder also explains that critical thinking skills must be practiced, and it is not adequate simply to teach students what critical thinking is and how to do it. Students must be engaged in activities that allow them to exercise their critical thinking skills, a critical thinking best practice (p. 43). This practice, however, is not always effective when students are unable to use the skills they practice as part of a specific assignment in class. Most students have difficulties applying their critical thinking practice to activities or situations outside the classroom (p. 43). van Gelder also examines the importance of teaching critical thinking in a practical way, not just as a concept. He argues, “Knowledge of the theory allows you to better see what is going on,” and if students are familiar with the vocabulary and ideas associated with critical thinking, it will be easier for them to apply the theory (p. 44). The importance of arguments is also a key finding of van Gelder’s work, and he expresses his support for teaching critical thinking using argument maps, which facilitates students’ understanding the basis of an argument, as well as its outcomes, an additional best practice. Finally, van Gelder notes that teachers of critical thinking must be aware of students’ biases, or “blindspots,” that may affect students’ judgment and ability to think critically (p. 46).

van Gelder (2001) further examines critical thinking in his work with the Reason!Able project at the University of Melbourne. In this work, van Gelder (2001) focuses primarily on the practice of critical thinking skills and asserts that practice should be “motivated,” “guided,” “scaffolded,” “graduated,” and discussed (p. 2). Using a computer program, students participating in the Reason!Able project practiced their critical thinking skills in an interactive way and, then, were evaluated. This indirect way of teaching critical thinking was found to be significantly more effective than other approaches previously used, thus confirming van Gelder’s ideas that critical thinking skills should be taught as part of a broader learning experience, that critical thinking skills can and should be practiced, and that computer software can assist

students in learning critical thinking skills by allowing them to work at their own pace, get more information when needed and receive feedback about their use of critical thinking.

van Gelder, Bissett & Cumming (2004) also studied the application of a critical thinking-specific course at the college level to determine its impact on student outcomes. Findings showed that students who participated in the class had an overall gain in informal reasoning skills compared to their level of skill before taking the course (p. 147). The results also revealed a correlation between the practices of critical thinking skills and gained knowledge of critical thinking application and use. These correlations were positive, with students who practiced their skills more seeing a larger gain of knowledge (p. 148). These findings led to the overall recommendation that critical thinking as an educational tool should focus more on practice for students instead of relying heavily on teaching what critical thinking skills are and how they can potentially be used, an example of best practices in teaching critical thinking. Instead, “educational programs or institutions hoping to cultivate high-level informal reasoning ability ought to include some explicit instruction in informal reasoning, based on deliberate practice” (p. 150).

Using a survey of and conducting focus groups with first-year political science students at the University of Adelaide in Australia, Beasley and Cao (2014) also focus on how students understand and apply critical thinking. The study particularly focuses on the teaching of critical thinking as an integrated part of a political science course, instead of a distinct, separate curriculum or class. Findings showed that students both understood and valued critical thinking as part of their college education, that students felt instructors were an important part of their critical thinking education, and that critical thinking was best learned when integrated in other curricula.

Cavdar and Doe (2012) specifically examine writing as a tool for improving critical thinking abilities in college students. Using the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal and its five levels of intellectual activity (inference, recognition of assumptions, deductions,

interpretation, and evaluation of arguments), the authors assigned their participants to linked writing assignments. In the first writing assignments, students simply gave a description of the political debate surrounding healthcare. In the second assignment, using feedback they were given, the students rewrote their papers to identify better implicit assumptions made by both political parties about healthcare, compare political ideologies, and examine the strength of arguments made by both parties. Findings showed that critical thinking skills outlined by the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal could be applied most effectively when specific instructions were given to students regarding the assignment and when learning outcomes were better expressed beforehand.

Fitzgerald and Baird (2011) examine the role of the instructor in developing and implementing critical thinking education strategies while also providing students with information about a specific topic. This article also focuses on the role of critical thinking education as part of a larger subject, specifically political science. With proposals regarding how to teach the difference between facts and opinions and the merit of arguments, the authors argue that vague instruction that encourages critical thinking as a self-taught skill does not help students and that specific instructions and assignments that encourage individual aspects of critical thinking are the most effective ways to build critical thinking skills.

The findings of Tsui's (2002) four case studies in four different schools showed that an emphasis on writing, editing and rewriting, and peer evaluation were linked with increased critical thinking skills among students. Schools that encouraged self-evaluation and reflection (best practices) also showed stronger critical thinking abilities overall. Two-step writing assignments with revisions and class discussions were other factors shown to increase critical thinking among students who engaged in these activities. Some teachers from the participating schools expressed concern that adding activities that enhance critical thinking, such as class discussions and writing assignments, took too much time away from their regularly planned lessons. Because of this, Tsui (2002) argues that critical thinking approaches should be added

in gradually, be incorporated into regular course content, and be used through interdisciplinary approaches.

Assessment of Critical Thinking

Bers (2005) draws on many previous studies of critical thinking skills and means of assessment to understand critical thinking at the community college level. Using the knowledge of these studies, Bers identifies some of the issues facing community colleges in regards to teaching critical thinking, such as the lack of motivation students feel when taking a course or participating in an assignment that they do not see as relevant to their majors or career goals, funding, and a lack of understanding of critical thinking or its necessity on the part of instructors (p. 22). Given these limitations and setbacks, Bers concludes that community colleges do see critical thinking as an important skill to teach, that assessment and evaluation are most likely to take part at the classroom level, and that critical thinking is often taught as part of a broader curricula (p. 23). These findings led to Bers' final determination that critical thinking remains a crucial part of a community college education but that measuring the outcomes of critical thinking education still needs improvement, "despite the fact that critical thinking is a primary learning objective in many institutions" (p. 24).

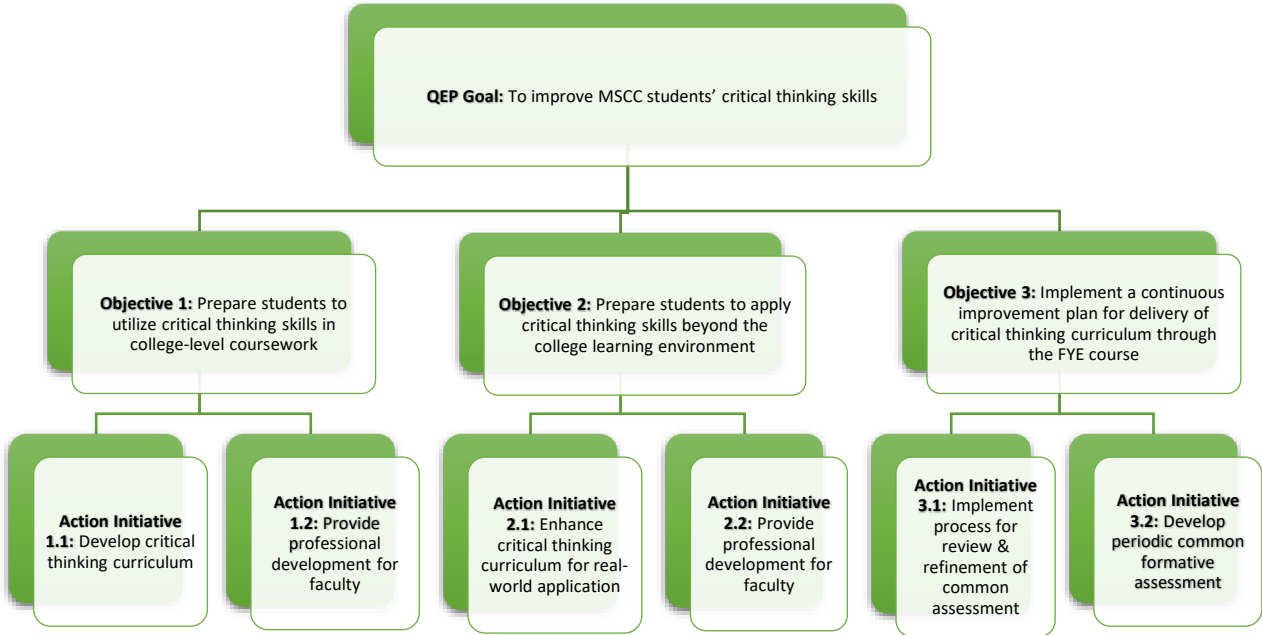
In order to assess higher levels of learning integral to critical thinking, scholarship identifies the application of critical thinking skills across curricula and through reflection as essential components to developing student understanding of and ability to transfer those skills to a larger educational or professional context (Beasley & Cao, 2014). According to Eynon and Gambino (2017), ePortfolios allow students to connect their learning with broader personal and professional contexts by "advancing higher order thinking and integrative learning" (p. 17). Eynon and Gambino (2017) highlight key principles for effective ePortfolio pedagogy: inquiry, reflection, and integration (p. 32). Eynon and Gambino (2014) cite Kolb's definition of inquiry as a practice which "involves asking questions about authentic problems, analyzing relevant evidence, creating and presenting evidenced-based solutions, reflecting on the learning

process, and developing new questions and plans for further inquiry” (p. 33). These authors go further to point out that reflection through ePortfolios “can prompt, intensify, and share students’ reflections on their learning”; integrative learning, however, “involves making connections and transferring knowledge across courses, disciplines, and semesters” (p. 34).

VI. Actions to Be Implemented

Prior to the submission of MSCC’s QEP, the QEP Director and members of the SACSOC Leadership Team met to draft and revise a QEP goal statement and corresponding objectives. These items were subject to revision as necessary. In order to identify specific and measurable goals for the QEP, the workgroup reached consensus regarding the following QEP goal statement, objectives, and action initiatives. Each of these aligns with the College’s Mission Statement, the QEP assessment plan, and the Student Learning Outcomes.

Table 6.1: QEP Goal Chart



Measurable Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Analyze claims and supporting evidence of arguments;
- 2) Reflect and make connections between their educational and personal experiences;
- 3) Ask pertinent questions to solve authentic problems.

VII. Timeline

Person(s) Responsible

SACSCOC Leadership Team *	Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment ∩
FYE Coordinator ~	FYE Faculty •
QEP Director ∞	Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment ∇
QEP Committee ♦	SACSCOC Liaison σ

Internal assessments are identified in green font.

External assessments are identified in blue font.

YEAR	DATE	ITEM
2016-2017	Fall	QEP Planning Committee Presentation to MSCC Full-Time Employees *
	Spring	Brand the Plan: QEP Naming Contest and College-Wide Vote ∞
	Spring	QUEST Presentation to MSCC Leadership Team ∞
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data to Develop Plan for Critical Thinking Integration ~•
	Summer	QUEST Presentation to MSCC Completion Coaches (Student Success Division) ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
2017-2018	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	QUEST Marketing Plan to Entire College (Full Implementation) ♦
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSEE ∇
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 1 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ

	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
2017-2018 (continued)	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
2018-2019	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSE ▽
	Spring	ETS Assessment ▽
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 2 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
2019-2020	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSE ▽

	Spring	ETS Data ▽
	Summer	Faculty Review FYE Year 3 Assessment Data, Revise Learning Activities ~●∩
2019-2020 (continued)	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞◆
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ◆
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
	2020-2021	Fall
Fall		QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ◆*
Fall		Pre/Post-test ●
Fall		ePortfolio Assessment ●
Fall		FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
Spring		QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞◆
Spring		QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
Spring		Pre/Post-test ●
Spring		ePortfolio Assessment ●
Spring		CCSSEE ▽
Spring		ETS Data ▽
Summer		Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 4 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~●∩
Summer		QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞◆
Summer		QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
Summer		Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ◆
Summer		QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
Summer		Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
2021-2022		Fall
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ◆*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test ●
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment ●
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞◆

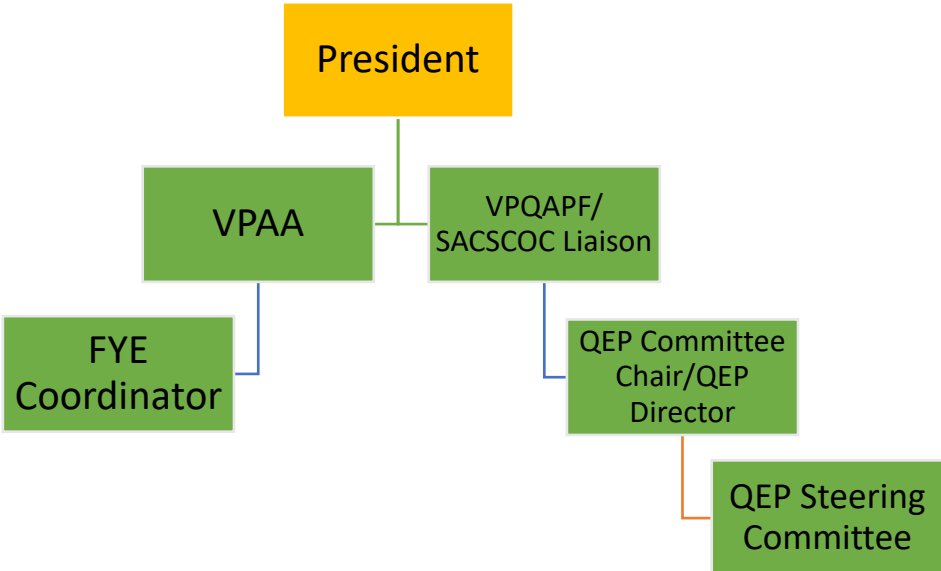
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
2021-2022 (continued)	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSEE ∇
	Spring	ETS Data ∇
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 5 ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments ∞◆
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Summative Assessment of QEP *∇
	Summer	QEP Impact Report Submission to SACSCOC *

VIII. Organizational Structure

The MSCC QEP developed through a college-wide, inclusive process that involved representation from each unit of the College and support of the President and the President's Cabinet (all MSCC Vice Presidents and the Executive Director of Human Resources). Planning, implementation of the QEP, and oversight of its progress is the responsibility of the QEP Steering Committee Chair/QEP Director, whose schedule reflects redistributed time to provide administrative oversight, training and faculty development, and coordination with College constituents. At the recommendation of the SACSCOC Liaison, the President appointed Asst. Prof. Meagan McManus as QEP Committee Chair/QEP Director. Prof. McManus holds a Master of Arts in English and is ABD in a Doctor of Education in Assessment, Learning, and School Improvement program for a SACSCOC accredited university, currently writing her dissertation. In addition, Prof. McManus serves as MSCC First Year Experience Coordinator (See Appendix) and has six years of higher education teaching experience and three years of managerial experience in a business field. Thus, she is an exemplary candidate to facilitate MSCC's QEP. The QEP Chair/Director facilitates collaborative efforts among the Vice President for Quality Assurance and Performance Funding/SACSCOC Liaison, the Vice President for Academic

Affairs, other members of the President’s Cabinet, deans, and college-wide department heads. The QEP Director works closely with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment to coordinate execution of internal and external QEP assessments and the reliability and validity of those assessment results throughout the duration of the five-year plan. The QEP Director provides QEP progress and data checks to the QEP Committee and the President’s Cabinet after the conclusion of each fall and spring semester, as well as to all faculty and staff each fall, providing meaningful feedback after reviewing the data and participating in the implementation of the continuous cycle of improvement.

Table 8.1: QEP Organizational Chart



IX. Resources

Motlow State Community College is dedicated to the cycle of continuous quality improvement and to provide fiscal support to implement and sustain the QEP. An itemized, six-year budget (years 0 through 5 of the QEP) that details allocations for personnel, faculty development, marketing, assessment, and operating expenses follows.

Table 9.1: QEP 5-Year Budget

<i>Planning Funds</i>	
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Description	Year 0 (FY 16-17)
Faculty Stipend	4,500.00
SACSCOC Annual Meeting for QEP Director (from SACSCOC budget)	2,000.00
Marketing/Promotional Items	10,000.00
Training	1,750.00
Supplies	700.00
Equipment	1,000.00
Total One Time Funds	19,950.00

<i>Recurring Funds</i>					
Description	Year 1 (FY 17-18)	Year 2 (FY 18-19)	Year 3 (FY 19-20)	Year 4 (FY 20-21)	Year 5 (FY 21-22)
Personnel					
QEP QUEST Director	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
QEP QUEST Director 6 Hours Course Release	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00
FYE Coordinator	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
Instructors (from Academic Affairs Funds)*	141,000.00	149,000.00	157,000.00	165,000.00	174,000.00
Temporary Support Staff	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00
Total Personnel	167,300.00	175,300.00	183,300.00	191,300.00	200,300.00
Professional Development					
QEP Consultant	850.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Stipends for Instructor Training (from Academic Affairs Funds) **	3,375.00	5,000.00	6,750.00	8,500.00	10,375.00
Instructor Training (from FYE funds)	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00
SACSCOC Summer Institute for QEP Director	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
SACSCOC Annual Meeting for QEP Director	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total	10,325.00	12,100.00	13,850.00	15,600.00	17,475.00
Marketing					
Giveaways and promotional materials	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Total	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Operating					
Office Supplies	6,050.00	5,900.00	5,900.00	5,900.00	5,900.00
Equipment	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00

Stipend and travel for speaker(s) or to support faculty travel for professional development	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total	9,050.00	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,900.00
Assessment					
CCSSE	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
ETS ***	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
Total of Recurring Funds by FY	205,675.00	215,300.00	225,050.00	234,800.00	245,675.00
Total of Recurring Funds Over 5 Years					1,126,500.00
Total of Planning and Recurring Funds Over 5 Years					1,146,450.00

**Includes estimated 5% enrollment growth*

***Instructors that are eligible (27 persons) receive a \$125.00 stipend for FYE training. The following years have been calculated including an estimated 5% enrollment growth. Current enrollment is approximately 6,000 students for the upcoming academic year. The student to instructor ration for FYE is 24:1. For every 24 students within the 5% enrollment growth estimation, a \$125 stipend is being added to this category for an instructor. In the event the 5% enrollment increase estimation results in a fraction of a person, the value has been rounded up to allow for the nearest whole number representation of students and instructors.*

****ETS is included; therefore, a value of zero is entered for this assessment.*

X. Assessment

Internal Assessment

The QEP Director, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, members of the QEP Committee, and additional First Year Experience faculty developed two internal assessments to evaluate the QEP Student Learning Outcomes: an ePortfolio and a pre- and post-test. The ePortfolio, the culminating project for First Year Experience, includes assignments that specifically assess critical thinking skills, such as concept mapping, reflection of service learning, and letter to a freshman, and the relationships among the Student Learning Outcomes, the ePortfolio, and the ePortfolio assignments are illustrated in the Student Learning Outcome chart below.

The pre- and post-test is administered each semester. The Director of Institutional

Effectiveness and Assessment compiles the data and submits results to the QEP Director, who uses the data to provide updates to the President’s Cabinet and the QEP Committee to facilitate curriculum changes and course redesign in consultation with First Year Experience faculty.

Table 10.1: Outcome Assessment Matrix

Student Learning Outcome	In-Class Assignment	ePortfolio Rubric Assessment Component	External Assessment(s)	QUEST Component
1) Analyze claims and supporting evidence of arguments.	Concept Map	<p>Critical Thinking: Assessment of content, insight, and analysis of arguments and information.</p>	<p>CCSSE Question 5d: "Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods;"</p> <p>ETS Analytic Skills Section: "Analyzing and evaluating arguments, including understanding or assessing the structure of the argument independent of the evidence offered, such as identifying stated and unstated premises, conclusions and intermediate steps;"</p> <p>ETS Synthetic Skills Section: "Understanding implications and consequences, including identifying unstated conclusions or implications and consequences that go beyond the original argument."</p>	Use; Evaluate
2) Reflect and make connections between their educational and personal experiences.	Service Learning Reflection; Letter to a Freshman; Common Novel Reflection	<p>Reflections: Assessment of connections between educational and personal experiences.</p>	<p>CCSSE Question 5b: "Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory;"</p> <p>CCSSE Question 5c: "Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways."</p>	Use; Test
3) Ask pertinent questions to solve authentic problems.	Academic Plan	<p>Connections: Assessment of connections to course topics and solutions to authentic problems/situations.</p>	<p>CCSSE Question 5e: "Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations;"</p> <p>CCSSE Question 5f: "Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill."</p>	Question; Use; Solve

**The ePortfolio serves as an internal assessment.*

***The FYE pre/post- test also provides internal assessment data.*

External Assessments

In spring and summer 2017, the QEP External Assessment Subcommittee met to examine nationally recognized, reliable, and valid assessments that could measure growth of critical thinking skills within the First Year Experience milieu, considering institutional capability. The Subcommittee recommended, and the QEP Committee adopted, the ETS Proficiency Profile and the CCSSE, based on the charts below. Although MSCC had offered CCSSE every second year, alternating with SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement), the QEP budget allows CCSSE assessment each year for the next five years. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment arranged for Center of Community College Student Engagement to include specific, institutionally designed questions to address students' perceptions regarding their experiences regarding critical thinking within coursework at MSCC as part of the annual CCSSE.

Table 10.2: Relevant CCSSE Scores

CCSSE Critical Thinking Means

Item 5: During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?

Item/Year	Motlow Mean	Medium College Mean	Cohort Mean
5b.	5b.	5b.	5b.
2012	2.80	2.90	2.90
2013	2.84	2.90	2.91
2014	2.81	2.91	2.92
2015	2.82	2.92	2.93
2016	2.80	2.93	2.94
2017	2.84	2.90	2.91
5c.	5c.	5c.	5c.
2012	2.80	2.77	2.78
2013	2.69	2.77	2.78
2014	2.73	2.78	2.79
2015	2.66	2.80	2.80

2016	2.71	2.81	2.81
2017	2.76	2.87	2.88
5d.	5d.	5d.	5d.
2012	2.56	2.57	2.61
2013	2.61	2.60	2.61
2014	2.62	2.62	2.62
2015	2.56	2.63	2.64
2016	2.60	2.64	2.65
2017	2.63	2.64	2.66
5e.	5e.	5e.	5e.
2012	2.61	2.70	2.71
2013	2.57	2.71	2.72
2014	2.66	2.72	2.73
2015	2.59	2.74	2.74
2016	2.55	2.74*	2.75*
2017	2.59	2.74	2.76
5f.	5f.	5f.	5f.
2012	2.68	2.83	2.83
2013	2.65	2.83	2.84
2014	2.77	2.86	2.86
2015	2.62	2.87*	2.87*
2016	2.69	2.87	2.87
2017	2.64	2.85*	2.86*

*1 = Very little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much

- **5b.** Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.
- **5c.** Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways.
- **5d.** Making judgements about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods.
- **5e.** Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.
- **5f.** Using information that you have read or heard to perform a new skill.

At the end of each entering student's sophomore year, he or she will be required to take the ETS Exit Exam. This exam measures students' ability to use critical thinking skills and provides proficiency scores for the institution.

Table 10.3: ETS Proficiency Profile

ETS Critical Thinking Proficiency Score 2012-2017		
Year	Proficient	Not Proficient
2012-13	4%	76%
2013-14	3%	78%
2014-15	4%	76%

2015-16	2%	77%
2016-17	2%	77%

MSCC’s QEP title QUEST is an acronym that stands for question, use information, evaluate data to solve problems, and test solutions. Each of these elements is a skill needed for critical thinking. As evident in the table provided, each element of the QEP acronym corresponds with a Student Learning Outcome and subsequently aligns with assessments.

10.4: Outcome Assessment Matrix

Student Learning Outcome	In-Class Assignment	ePortfolio Rubric Assessment Component	External Assessment(s)	QUEST Component
1) Analyze claims and supporting evidence of arguments.	Concept Map	Critical Thinking: Assessment of content, insight, and analysis of arguments and information.	CCSSE Question 5d: "Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods;" ETS Analytic Skills Section: "Analyzing and evaluating arguments, including understanding or assessing the structure of the argument independent of the evidence offered, such as identifying stated and unstated premises, conclusions and intermediate steps;" ETS Synthetic Skills Section: "Understanding implications and consequences, including identifying unstated conclusions or implications and consequences that go beyond the original argument."	Use; Evaluate
2) Reflect and make connections between their educational and personal experiences.	Service Learning Reflection; Letter to a Freshman; Common Novel Reflection	Reflections: Assessment of connections between educational and personal experiences.	CCSSE Question 5b: "Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory;" CCSSE Question 5c: "Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways."	Use; Test
3) Ask pertinent	Academic Plan	Connections: Assessment of	CCSSE Question 5e: "Applying theories or concepts to practical	Question; Use; Solve

questions to solve authentic problems.		connections to course topics and solutions to authentic problems/situations.	problems or in new situations;" CCSSE Question 5f: "Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill."	
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*The ePortfolio serves as an internal assessment.

**The FYE pre/post- test also provides internal assessment data.

XI. Revisions

The following revisions were made after the college received the QEP Response Report.

Revised Budget

Table 11.1: QEP Revised 5-Year Budget

<i>Planning Funds</i>	
Description	Year 0 (FY 16-17)
Faculty Stipend	4,500.00
SACSCOC Annual Meeting for QEP Director (from SACSCOC budget)	2,000.00
Marketing/Promotional Items	10,000.00
Training	1,750.00
Supplies	700.00
Equipment	1,000.00
Total One Time Funds	19,950.00

<i>Recurring Funds</i>					
Description	Year 1 (FY 17-18)	Year 2 (FY 18-19)	Year 3 (FY 19-20)	Year 4 (FY 20-21)	Year 5 (FY 21-22)
Personnel					
QEP QUEST Director	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
QEP QUEST Director 6 Hours Course Release	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00
FYE Coordinator	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
Instructors (from Academic Affairs Funds)*	141,000.00	149,000.00	157,000.00	165,000.00	174,000.00
Temporary Support Staff	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	13,500.00
Total Personnel	167,300.00	175,300.00	183,300.00	191,300.00	200,300.00
Professional Development					
QEP Consultant	850.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Stipends for Instructor Training (from Academic Affairs Funds) **	3,375.00	5,000.00	6,750.00	8,500.00	10,375.00

Motlow State Community College

Instructor Training (from FYE funds)	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00
SACSCOC Summer Institute for QEP Director	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
SACSCOC Annual Meeting for QEP Director	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total	10,325.00	12,100.00	13,850.00	15,600.00	17,475.00
Marketing					
Giveaways and promotional materials	7,000.00	10,000.00	3,500.00 [~]	10,000.00	2,500.00 [~]
Total	7,000.00	10,000.00	3,500.00	10,000.00	2,500.00
Operating					
Office Supplies	5,050.00	5,900.00	3,100.00	5,200.00	3,100.00
Equipment	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Stipend and travel for speaker(s) or to support faculty travel for professional development	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total	8,050.00	8,900.00	6,100.00	8,200.00	6,100.00
Assessment					
CAT*	4,000.00	8,800.00	9,300.00	9,700.00	10,200.00
CCSSE	9,000.00	0.00 [®]	9,000.00	0.00 [®]	9,000.00
ETS ***	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	13,000.00	8,800.00	18,300.00	9,700.00	19,200.00
Total of Recurring Funds by FY	205,675.00	215,100.00	225,050.00	234,800.00	245,575.00
Total of Recurring Funds Over 5 Years					1,126,300.00
Total of Planning and Recurring Funds Over 5 Years					1,146,250.00

*Includes estimated 5% enrollment growth

**Instructors that are eligible (27 persons) receive a \$125.00 stipend for FYE training. The following years have been calculated including an estimated 5% enrollment growth. Current enrollment is approximately 6,000 students for the upcoming academic year. The student to instructor ration for FYE is 24:1. For every 24 students within the 5% enrollment growth estimation, a \$125 stipend is being added to this category for an instructor. In the event the 5% enrollment increase estimation results in a fraction of a person, the value has been rounded up to allow for the nearest whole number representation of students and instructors.

***ETS is included; therefore, a value of zero is entered for this assessment.

®CCSSE will be paid through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment in implementation years 2 and 4 as part of their regular assessment schedule; therefore, a value of zero is entered for this assessment where noted.

~Marketing for implementation years 3 and 5 has been reduced to offset the costs of increased spending for assessments; however, implementation years 2 and 4 have higher marketing budgets to ensure sufficient marketing materials are purchased in advance of years 3 and 5.

Revised Timeline

Person(s) Responsible

SACSCOC Leadership Team *	Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment ∩
FYE Coordinator ~	FYE Faculty •
QEP Director ∞	Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment ∇
QEP Committee ♦	SACSCOC Liaison σ

Internal assessments are identified in green font.

External assessments are identified in blue font.

YEAR	DATE	ITEM
2016-2017	Fall	QEP Planning Committee Presentation to MSCC Full-Time Employees *
	Spring	Brand the Plan: QEP Naming Contest and College-Wide Vote ∞
	Spring	QUEST Presentation to MSCC Leadership Team ∞
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data to Develop Plan for Critical Thinking Integration ~•
	Summer	QUEST Presentation to MSCC Completion Coaches (Student Success Division) ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
2017-2018	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	QUEST Marketing Plan to Entire College (Full Implementation) ♦
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSEE ∇
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 1 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦

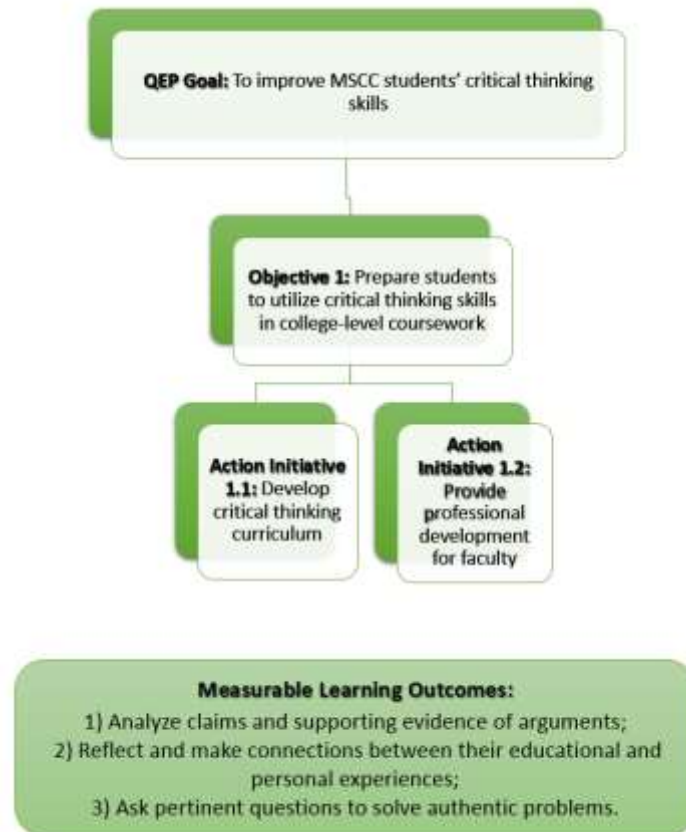
	Summer	CAT Pilot ∇∞
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum ~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum (Includes Grade Norming Session for ePortfolios) ~
2018-2019	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSE ∇
	Spring	ETS Assessment ∇
	Spring	CAT ∇∞
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 2 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum (Includes Grade Norming Session for ePortfolios) ~
2019-2020	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦

	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSE ∇
	Spring	ETS Data ∇
	Spring	CAT ∇∞
2019-2020 (continued)	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 3 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~
	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum (Includes Grade Norming Session for ePortfolios) ~
2020-2021	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSEE ∇
	Spring	ETS Data ∇
	Spring	CAT ∇∞
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 4 and Revise Learning Activities as Needed ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Additional Marketing Materials Disseminated to New MSCC Constituents (Including Students and Employees) ♦
	Summer	QUEST Training for all MSCC Completion Coaches ∞~

	Summer	Professional Development for FYE Instructors on Critical Thinking Curriculum (Includes Grade Norming Session for ePortfolios) ~
2021-2022	Fall	QUEST Presentation to Adjunct Faculty ∞
	Fall	QUEST Presentation at Fall Assembly to MSCC Full-Time Employees ♦*
	Fall	Pre/Post-test •
	Fall	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Fall	FYE Instructor Survey Administered ~
2021-2022 (continued)	Spring	QUEST Review of Fall Assessments and Address Areas for Improvement ∞♦
	Spring	QUEST Presentation of Fall Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Spring	Pre/Post-test •
	Spring	ePortfolio Assessment •
	Spring	CCSSEE ▽
	Spring	ETS Data ▽
	Spring	CAT ▽∞
	Summer	Faculty Review of FYE Assessment Data for Year 5 ~•∩
	Summer	QUEST Review of Spring Assessments ∞♦
	Summer	QUEST Presentation of Spring Assessments and QEP Progress to President's Cabinet ∞σ
	Summer	Summative Assessment of QEP *▽
	Summer	QEP Impact Report Submission to SACSCOC *

Revised QEP Goal

Table 11.2: QEP Revised Goal Chart



XII. References

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XIII. Appendices

Appendix 1 – QEP Committee Meeting Minutes

Appendix 2 – Academic Affairs Committee Minutes

Appendix 3 – Brand the Plan Flyer

Appendix 4 – First Year Experience Coordinator Job Description

Appendix 5 – ePortfolio Rubric

Appendix 6 – QEP Steering Committee Roster

Appendix 7 – MSCC Strategic Plan 2015-2025

Appendix 8 – MSCC Mission Statement

Appendix 1

QEP Meeting 2/24/2017

In attendance: Elizabeth White, Meagan McManus, Stephen Guerin, Nicole Reeves, Heather Koller, Kristienne Brandon, Cammie Stafford, Brenda Cannon, Nancy Dodson, Paige Hendrickson, Terry Durham, Cathy Simpson, Dayron Deaton-Owens, Ken Thomas, Cheryl Norris, Davis Seal. **Absent:** Scott Cook, Sid Hill, Rhonda Cotham, JuliAnna Dykes, Kirsten Moss, Bertha Smith, Melody Edmonds, Nathan Sweeton, Sylvia Collins.

Meagan requested that the subcommittees report on what each group determined would be the best way to move forward for the QEP.

Elizabeth White spoke on behalf of the Internal Assessment Subcommittee. She made the following recommendations:

- No multiple choice to assess CT
- Existing Letter to a Freshman assignment could serve as the internal assessment.
 - Read texts and write reflection
 - Grade with rubric
 - Needs development

We have a sample rubric from the Chattanooga critical thinking workshop.

Terry Durham spoke on behalf of the External Assessment Subcommittee. He made the following recommendations:

- ETS
 - Questions to consider: Timeline issues since FYE students will not complete the ETS exam in the first year of the QEP?
 - Are we sure current data is skewed with students not taking the test seriously?
 - Do we offer extra credit? Graduation cords?
- CCSSE
 - Questions to consider: Add on questions? We will need add-on questions.
 - How quickly do we get results?
 - CCSSE results are available in June and ETS in October. (per Sylvia)
 - Funding? The QEP budget will have to pay for the CCSSE in the off years for IR.

Dr. Stephen Guerin spoke on behalf of the Faculty PD Subcommittee. He made the following recommendations:

- Assessment metrics and use
- CT module implementation in the classroom, technology use (D2L)
- Faculty beyond FYE instructors
 - Create videos for pd (D2L)
- Questions to consider: Use John Eigenhauer (Chattanooga Critical Thinking Workshop presenter) for a visiting PD session?

Brenda Cannon spoke on behalf of the Marketing Subcommittee. She made the following recommendations:

- Potential July 1st roll out for marketing.
- Campus-wide contest for a name
 - Winner receives a prize and reserved parking spot
 - Winner may win free textbook rentals for a semester (would have to partner with bookstore)
 - Launch contest in March
- Need a hashtag to be used on all ads and social media
- Social media presence needed
- 2 videos: 1 cheer squad and 1 drama students' commercial
- T-shirts
- Banners and yard signs on campus
- Computer screensavers on campus
- Slideshows on campus monitors
- Present at new student orientations
- Fall convocation
- Trustees Strategic Planning Meeting
- Website
- Stall fliers

The name of the Student Affairs Subcommittee was changed to the Student Support Resources Subcommittee. Paige Hendrickson spoke on behalf of this committee, and she made the following recommendations:

- Weeks of Welcome (WOW)
- Library resources
- Scavenger hunt (with selfies as evidence)
- Required attendance at co-curricular events, followed by a reflective paper
 - Could be tied to the eportfolio assignment in the course
- Different services could develop specific PPTs for FYE classes
- Create transfer or returning student orientations
- Student Services presentations throughout the semester
- Peer mentoring
- Tutoring services
- Intrusive advisement model

Meagan stated that at this point, we must receive approval from administration before we can move forward with the drafting process. Dr. Cook has requested that Dr. Kinkel add Meagan to an agenda for an upcoming Leadership Team meeting to present the current plan. Cathy voiced concerns about the timeline, given that some faculty would not be working over the summer. Meagan shares this concern, but until admin. approves, we cannot finalize a timeline. Meagan referenced the committee back to the tentative timeline presented in December.

Appendix 2

Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 5, 2017, 8:30 a.m., MT155, FC071, MC137, SM112

The Academic Affairs Committee met on Friday, May 5, 2017 in MT155 at 8:30 a.m. with Melody Edmonds, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs as chair, and Camilla Daniel as secretary.

Voting Members in Attendance:

Bowlby, David	Durham, Terry	Sand, Paul
Claxton, Keith	Forde, Janet	Rascoe, Fred
Cleveland, Debbie	Hendrix, Pat	Sweeton, Nathan
Cook, Scott (for Cheryl Norris)	Hill, Sid	Fitch, Elizabeth
Cotham, Rhonda	McManus, Meagan	White, Elizabeth (for Fitch, Elizabeth)
Craig, Lucy	Mitchell, Brian	Whiting, Charles (for Phyllis Adams)
Dodson, Nancy	Palmer, David	
	Sanders, Mae	

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Brown, Michele
Gilbreath, Shawn
White, Elizabeth

Members Absent:

Adams, Phyllis
Buchanan, Shane
Crownover, Brittany
Fisher, Lori
Logan, Cindy
Norris, Cheryl
Smith, Lisa

ACTION ITEMS

BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Revise copy in the 2017-18 catalog: replacing BUSN 2310 with MATH 1530 in the A.A.S. in Business, Management Concentration Degree to give students more selections and opportunities to take the course. (Attachment 1)

Business Major

Business and Technology Department
Associate of Applied Science

6. Revise copy in the 2017-18 catalog: updating the course description in MECH 2600 to clarify the course prerequisites and corequisites. (Attachment 5)

MECH 2600 - Manufacturing Processes

4 sem hrs cr (3 hours lecture-2 hours lab)

This course is a study of the overall manufacturing process. Topics covered will include process management and design. Students will be exposed to a factory simulation and will be required to complete a design project. Prerequisite/**Corequisite**: This course requires the successful completion of **or enrollment in** all other mechatronics courses or permission of the appropriate curriculum chair/director.

Shane Buchanan made the motion to approve of the proposed revision to the MECH 2600 course description.

Paul Sand seconded the motion.

All approved; no opposition

LANGUAGES

1. Revise copy in the 2017-18 catalog: revising the course description in MSCC 1300 – First Year Experience to align with the new QEP to expand MSCC 1300 by requiring students in any learning support class to take MSCC 1300. Additionally, MSCC 1300 will move from the Humanities Department to the Languages Department. (Attachment 6)

MSCC 1300 - First Year Experience

3 sem hrs cr

This course is designed to empower students to reach their educational and career goals. Students will become familiar with college resources, policies, and procedures while also improving their time management, study, research, and technology skills. Collaborative learning opportunities are designed to improve critical thinking, problem solving, and reading comprehension abilities. ~~Corequisite: READ 0810~~ **This course is also mandatory in the first semester of enrollment for any degree seeking student required to complete ENGL 0810, MATH 0101, MATH 0530, MATH 0630, MATH 0810, and or READ 0810.**

There was a suggestion to change “and” to “or” in the last sentence of the course description.

There was a question regarding certificate students who do not take Learning Support courses in the first semester. The course description was amended, adding “degree seeking” student required to complete...

Lucy Craig moved to accept the proposal as amended.

Scott Cook seconded the motion.

The motion passed; one opposed

2. Revise copy in the 2017-18 catalog: revising the course description in ENGL 0810 – Learning Support Writing, to align with the new QEP to expand MSCC 1300 by requiring students in any learning support class to take MSCC 1300. (Attachment 7)

ENGL 0810 - Learning Support Writing

3 sem hrs cr

This course emphasizes the development and use of writing skills within the context of collegiate-level courses and employs computerized, self-paced study plans. Upon completion, students will demonstrate adequate competency in writing expository essays. Corequisite: ENGL 1010

Students enrolled in ENGL 0810 must also be enrolled in an ENGL 1010 course during the same semester and having the same starting and ending dates as the 0810 course. **Any student enrolled in a Learning Support course must also enroll in MSCC 1300: First Year Experience during his or her first semester.**

Rhonda Cotham moved to approve of the proposed ENGL 0810 course description revision.

Pat Hendrix seconded the motion.

All approved; no opposition

MATHEMATICS

1. Revise copy in the 2017-18 catalog: revising the course descriptions in MATH 0101 – Learning Mathematics for General Studies, MATH 0530 – Learning Probability and Statistics, MATH 0630 – Learning Support for Finite Mathematics, and MATH 0810 - Learning Support Mathematics for Intermediate Algebra to align with the new QEP to expand MSCC 1300 by requiring students in any learning support class to take MSCC 1300. (Attachment 8)

MATH 0101 - Learning Support for Mathematics for General Studies

3 sem hrs cr

This course is a study of the properties of the real number system, arithmetic operations with rational numbers and order of operations; evaluation and simplification of variable expressions; determining solutions of linear equations in one variable; graphing linear equations; evaluating logarithmic expressions; solving logarithmic equations; problem solving; logical thought and reasoning; polynomial arithmetic; operations with integer exponents.

DEGREE PROGRAMS

All...majors who are required to take Learning Support must also complete MSCC 1300, and the degree program will require 64-65 credit hours.

All...majors who are Honors Scholars are required to take HONS 1001: Service Learning and an Honors seminar (HONS 1020, 1021, 1022, or 1023), and the degree program will require 65-66 credit hours.

There was discussion of adding the statements to all programs instead of only those with electives.

There was a question of how this could affect the Nursing and Mechatronics programs. After discussion it was decided to add the statement to all programs **except** the Nursing program.

Sid Hill made the motion to accept with the recommended changes.

David Palmer seconded the motion.

All approved; no opposition

Update: TBR had previously approved of requiring the FYE course to add up to three credit hours to a degree program. However, this did not include adding an Honors course. Dr. Scott Cook and Melody Edmonds are working with TBR to clarify.

5. Add copy to Academic Affairs/Learning Support section of the 2017-18 catalog to comply with the requirements of Federal Financial Aid. (Attachment 19)

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

MSCC 1300: First Year Experience is a Learning Support requirement for all students who test into one or more Learning Support courses (reading, English, or mathematics) in the Learning Support Program. First Year Experience provides collegiate readiness skills designed to empower students with skills sets, including critical thinking, necessary to achieve their education and career goals. Students become familiar with college resources, policies, and procedures, while also improving their time management, study, research, and technology skills. The First Year Experience requirement for Learning Support students might change the number of credits required to complete certain degree programs. For additional information, please see the Program Checklist for your major.

Lucy Craig moved to accept the proposal.

Scott Cook seconded the motion.

All approved; no opposition.

Appendix 3

BRAND THE PLAN

Don't miss your chance to name MSCC's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)!

Submit a name for Motlow's QEP and you could...

**WIN A FREE
IPAD
OR A \$25 GIFT
CARD!**



Motlow's QEP focuses on:

- First Year Experience
- Developing critical thinking and problem solving skills

The QEP is a college-wide project to improve student learning.

Students, faculty, staff, & administrators can participate, and individuals can submit up to 3 names!

**Submissions
accepted: March
27-31**

**Finalists will be selected,
and a college-wide vote
will determine the winner!**

**Go to motlow.me/qep for more
information & to submit your QEP name!**

Appendix 4

MOTLOW STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE: FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

REPORTS TO: CURRICULUM CHAIR OF HUMANITIES

SUPERVISES: N/A

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in a college related discipline.
- Must have at least three years teaching experience at the post-secondary level or five years' combination of secondary/post-secondary teaching experience.
- Must be Full-time Faculty of Motlow State Community College.
- Must possess a working knowledge of student development practices and strategies, with an emphasis on those populations currently served by Motlow State Community College, including, but not limited to students enrolled in a Co-Requisite Learning Support course.
- Must be willing to work evenings and weekends to attend, host, and/or present at student events which are related to the First Year Experience program.
- Must have an understanding of current literature and research based on the best practices which support student persistence, retention, and success.
- Must have an understanding of the role and contributions of existing MSCC instructional and student support programs and services.
- Must have an understanding of and commitment to the community college philosophy and mission of MSCC.
- Must have excellent skills in the areas of: writing, technology, speaking, interpersonal relationships, and management.
- Must have considerable knowledge of effective project coordination techniques.
- Must have considerable knowledge of new students' program approaches, practices, and initiatives.
- Must have experience writing grants related to student success, engagement, and retention and/or course revitalization.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Educational Specialist Degree or advanced degree with a focus in curriculum and instruction.
- Project Director of a grant based on student success, engagement, and retention.
- Experience in course integration related to curriculum design using the Co-requisite model.

- Experience in curriculum design, implementation, and integration using a Pre-requisite and Co-requisite model in Higher Education.

GENERAL FUNCTION:

The First Year Experience Coordinator is responsible for providing oversight, implementation, and coordination of the First Year Experience program across Motlow State Community College. In conjunction with the Curriculum Chair of Humanities, the First Year Experience Coordinator will coordinate and facilitate efforts throughout the College in an effort to provide a unified approach to the First Year Experience curriculum, including, but not limited to aligned services, training workshops, orientation, as well as extra-curricular activities and events, specifically designed to assist first-year students in academic and career preparation, along with degree planning that will support their persistence, retention, and academic success at MSCC.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

(Duties and responsibilities listed are examples of work performed and may be modified as needs of the College may dictate.)

- Collaborates with a variety of faculty, staff, and support-staff throughout Motlow State Community College's campus and centers, including, but not limited to, Student Services, Completion Coaches, Student Success, Campus Deans, Assistant Deans, and the Curriculum Chair of Humanities.
- Researches best practices, including High Impact Practices, and make recommendations for improvements and changes to the First Year Experience program, in an effort to increase student success and retention.
- Works with the Curriculum Chair of Humanities to develop and implement retention strategies for the First Year Experience Program which will emphasize the value of college success courses.
- Works in collaboration with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research to track student enrollment, persistence, and retention statistics for the use of gathering data for writing reports and pursuing grant initiatives that promote program success and sustainability.
- Evaluates the progress of First Year Experience to ensure continuous improvement, growth, and return on investment.
- Maximizes and promotes MSCC's campus offerings of free student services, including but not limited to the Writing Center, the Math Center, Honor's Program tutoring, and Completion Coaches.
- Develops and implements retention initiatives promoted by TBR, including, but not limited to High Impact Practices, and the Co-requisite model for Learning Support Reading.
- Collaborates and maintains successful working partnerships with First Year Experience faculty, Non-First Year Experience Faculty, and Completion Coaches in an effort to promote and enhance student support structures throughout the College.
- Aware of current trends related to First Year Experience programs outside of the College.
- Designs and executes the curriculum for the First Year Experience program, including but not limited to also assisting in the curriculum development of any Co-requisite related courses.

- Travels to multiple campuses, if needed, to train First Year Experience instructors on curriculum best practices, as well as successful in-class pedagogical strategies.
- Serves on various committees as appropriate.
- Is knowledgeable in SACSCOC standards and their relation with the College.
- Plans emotional, social, cultural, service-learning, and academic programming which addresses new student needs.
- Strengthens and coordinates student retention efforts.
- Implements and tracks the results of curriculum practices that fulfill the requirements of the “Student Engagement, Retention, and Success Grant” for the 2016-2017 academic year.
- Fulfills and is knowledgeable of all aspects of the “Student Engagement, Retention, and Success Grant” of 2016-2017.
- Aware of student success strategies and retention techniques.
- Plans and organizes events related to the “Student Engagement, Retention, and Success Grant” of 2016-2017, including, but not limited to, High Engagement Activities.
- Organizes and effectively communicates large quantities of information to diverse groups of people.
- Represents MSCC in a professional manner to a diverse group of new students.
- Demonstrates an ability to handle multiple projects and meet required deadlines.
- Assists in the preparation of grant proposals for the First Year Experience program and other related initiatives.
- Participates actively in on-going professional development opportunities, including state and national forums, in an effort to ensure that the latest research and best practices related to student success and retention are effectively incorporated in the First Year Experience program.
- Maintains confidentiality of work-related information and materials for First Year Experience.
- Commits to assisting Motlow’s QEP Committee with any resources required for the five-year Motlow QEP Project.
- Provides weekly updates on curriculum resources to First Year Experience instructors.

Appendix 5

MSCC 1300 First Year Experience - ePortfolio Rubric

Criteria	A Outstanding	B Proficient	C Basic	D/F Below Expectations
Connections to Authentic Contexts	Clear connections to course topics; With explicit, developed solutions to authentic problems/situations (19-20 points)	Clear connections to topics, With limited/implied solutions to authentic problems/situations (18 points)	Clear connections to topics, With vague or no solutions to authentic problems/situations (16-17 points)	No explicit connection to the topics; With vague or only implied solutions to authentic problems/situations (0-15 points)
Critical Thinking	Rich in content, full of thought, insight, and analysis of arguments and information (19-20 points)	Generally competent , information lacks evidence of deep understanding of arguments and information (18 points)	Marginally competent, information is somewhat vague for arguments and information (16-17 points)	Rudimentary and superficial No analysis or insight is displayed (0-15 points)
Reflections	Detailed , concise, and direct connections between educational and personal experiences (19-20 points)	Clear connections between educational and personal experiences (18 points)	Educational and personal connections are confusing and lack clarity (16-17 points)	No connections between educational and personal experiences are evident (0-15 points)
Visual Presentation of ePortfolio	Effective & thoughtful use of a visual design that demonstrates a clear, coherent approach to the project (9-10 points)	Effective use of a visual design that demonstrates some aspect(s) of the project (7-8 points)	Limited use of a visual design that demonstrates some aspect(s) of the project (6 points)	Poor use of a visual design that demonstrates minimal aspect(s) of the project (0-5 points)
Stylistics	No more than 2 grammatical or stylistic errors (9-10 points)	Several grammatical or stylistic errors (7-8 points)	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors; Errors interfere with content (6 points)	Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors; Makes understanding unlikely or impossible (0-5 points)

<p>Goal Achievement</p>	<p>Clearly follows directions for assignment requirements and presentation skills. (9-10 points)</p>	<p>Mostly follows directions for assignment length and presentation skills. (7-8 points)</p>	<p>Somewhat follows directions for assignment length and presentation skills. (6 points)</p>	<p>Fails to follow directions for assignment length and presentation skills. (0-5 points)</p>
<p>Presentation</p>	<p>The presenter was consistently audible, effectively aware of his/her presentation demeanor, and exhibited appropriate tone and presentation behavior. (9-10 points)</p>	<p>The presenter was audible, aware of his/her presentation demeanor, and exhibited appropriate tone and presentation behavior. (7-8 points)</p>	<p>The presenter was audible at points, occasionally aware of his/her presentation demeanor, and inconsistently exhibited appropriate tone and presentation behavior. (6 points)</p>	<p>The presenter was not audible, was unaware of his/her presentation demeanor, and exhibited inappropriate tone and presentation behavior. (0-5 points)</p>

Appendix 6

QEP Steering Committee

Scott Cook	Vice President of Quality Assurance and Performance Funding; Honors Program Director
Elizabeth White	Assistant Dean of Smyrna; FYE Faculty and Project Director for SERS Grant: Smyrna
Sid Hill	Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
Rhonda Cotham	Director of Student Success/FYE Adjunct: Moore (has taught in Smyrna and McMinnville for FYE)
Meagan McManus	Languages Curriculum Chair & Faculty; FYE Coordinator; QEP Committee Chair: Moore
Stephen Guerin	Social Sciences Faculty; SACSCOC Leadership Team Member: Moore County
Melody Edmonds	Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Nicole Speelman	Natural Sciences Faculty: Smyrna
Michael Boatman	Data Center Manager
Heather Koller	History Faculty: Smyrna
JuliAnna Dykes *Graduated*	Study Representative/SGA President: Moore Co.
Kristienne Brandon *Graduated*	Study Representative/Adult: Smyrna Campus
Kirsten Moss	Student Affairs: Dean of Students
Dawn Landreth	Business Office: Moore County
Brenda Cannon	Trustee: Moore County
Nancy Dodson	Humanities Faculty: Fayetteville
Paige Hendrickson	Librarian 1: Smyrna
Bertha Reese Smith	Support Staff: Moore County
Terry Durham	Dean of Digital First Learning: Smyrna
Cathy Simpson	Nursing Faculty: Smyrna
Dayron Deaton-Owens	Social Sciences Faculty: McMinnville
Nathan Sweeton	Languages Faculty: McMinnville
Ashley Broadrick	Assistant Director of Institutional Research
Ken Thomas	Mathematics Adjunct Faculty: Smyrna
Cheryl Norris	Academic Dean of Moore County
Davis Seal	Webmaster
Lillie Hosler	Student Representative: Moore Co.
Lucy Craig	Faculty Council Chair; Social Sciences Faculty: Moore Co.
Erica Newman	Alumni Representative

Appendix 7

Motlow College Strategic Plan 2015-2025

Access Priority

1.1: Motlow State Community College will enhance access to higher education.

- **Objective 1.1.1:** By 2025, the institution will increase the total participation level of students and the level of participation of focus populations dual students, adults, academically underprepared and Pell eligible by 15%.

	Baseline (Fall 2014)	Goal (Fall 2024)
Total Headcount	4,793	5,512
Dual	876	1,007
Adult	1,025	1,282
Pell Eligible	2,437	3,046

Student Success Priority

2.1: Motlow State Community College will develop and implement programs and methodologies to enhance student persistence to the completion of the post-secondary credential or degree.

- **Objective 2.1.1:** By 2025, the institution will increase student indicators of timely progression (annual achievement of 12, 24 and 36 SCH) toward completion of all students and of focus populations adults, academically underprepared and Pell eligible by 25%.

	Baseline (Fall 2014)	Goal (Fall 2024)
Total 12 SCH Achieved	1,485	1,856
Adult	197	246
Pell Eligible	671	839
Academically Underprepared	904	1,130
Total 24 SCH Achieved	1,184	1,480
Adult	194	243
Pell Eligible	622	778
Academically Underprepared	759	949
Total 36 SCH Achieved	941	1,176
Adult	205	256
Pell Eligible	512	640
Academically Underprepared	631	789

- **Objective 2.1.2:** By 2025, the institution will meet or exceed its peers for threshold success rate of for courses most critical to student success.

2.2: Motlow State Community College will increase the number of students who complete associate degree or certificates.

- **Objective 2.2.1:** By 2025, the institution will increase the number of associate degrees by 25% and certificates by 10% for all students and for focus populations adults, academically underprepared and Pell eligible.

	Baseline (Fall 2014)	Goal (Fall 2024)
	708	858
Total Associate Degrees	597	746
Adult	224	280
Academically Underprepared	351	439
Pell Eligible	378	473
Total Certificates	111	122
Adult	49	54
Academically Underprepared	49	54
Pell Eligible	45	50

- **Objective 2.2.2:** By 2025, the institution will increase its 150% and 300% graduation rates by 5%.

	Baseline (F11 Cohort)	Goal (F22 Cohort)
150% Graduation Rate	21.8%	26.8%
300% Graduation Rate	23.0%	28.0%

Quality Priority

3.1: Motlow State Community College will monitor and improve the effectiveness of educational programs and services.

- **Objective 3.1.1:** The institution will annually exceed the comparative or college peer group scores for academic success measures including exit exams, major field tests, and licensure exams.
- **Objective 3.1.2:** By 2025, institution will meet or exceed its peers for annual percentage of courses implementing high impact practices and for annual student enrollment in high impact courses.
- **Objective 3.1.3:** The percentage of full-time faculty involved career furthering activities will annually exceed the comparative or college peer group percentage.
- **Objective 3.1.4:** The institution will annually evaluate and improve student support services to all students as determined by student satisfaction surveys including CCSSE and SENSE.
- **Objective 3.1.5:** The institution will acquire and/or maintain accreditation for creditable programs and maintain a satisfactory audit/review of non-accredited programs.

Resourcefulness & Efficiency Priority

4.1: Motlow State Community College will increase resources from external sources.

- **Objective 4.1.1:** By 2025, the institution will increase external resources by 5% per year.

4.2: Motlow State Community College will maintain a graduate job placement rate.

- **Objective 4.2.1:** The institution will exceed an annual job placement rate of 95% for AAS and technical certificate graduates.

4.3: Motlow State Community College will maintain peer comparable instructional costs.

- **Objective 4.3.1:** The institution will develop and maintain a comprehensive instructional index for academic disciplines that will equal or exceed that of its peers.

4.4: Motlow State Community College will preserve institutional financial health.

- **Objective 4.4.1:** The institution will maintain a composite financial index that will equal or exceed that of its peers.

Appendix 8

M.S.C.C. Statement of Mission

Motlow State Community College is a public, multi-campus college offering certificates, associate degrees, and flexible learning pathways for early transfer, college preparation, and workforce training. Students are prepared for employment, career advancement, and four-year college or university transfer. The College serves an eleven- county area comprised of full-time, part-time, traditional, and non-traditional age students from diverse socio-economic populations with disparate educational and cultural backgrounds. The College offers high quality accredited educational programs and a variety of support services emphasizing and promoting student success.

Mission Statement

Motlow State Community College, an institution governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents in the State University and Community College System of Tennessee, is a public, comprehensive, two-year, open-access college founded in 1969. The college awards the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Science in Teaching degrees and certificates of credit.

Motlow State strives to develop the cultural, intellectual, and career opportunities of the people in its Southern Middle Tennessee eleven-county service area, which includes Bedford, Cannon, Coffee, DeKalb, Franklin, Lincoln, Moore, Rutherford, Van Buren, Warren and White Counties. The college is committed to achieving a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. The college recognizes the significance of this diversity by providing a broad spectrum of services to respond to a variety of needs in the learning process and educational opportunities from developmental to advanced programs.

Motlow State is a multi-location community college providing:

1. degree programs designed for transfer to other colleges and universities;
2. degree and non-degree programs designed to develop immediate job readiness skills and competencies; and
3. public service, lifelong learning, and workforce development programs to promote personal enrichment and economic and community development.

To establish a firm foundation for liberal learning, the college requires a strong core curriculum in degree programs complemented by cultural, scientific, social, and community service activities. In particular, Motlow State is unique in that it provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary Honors Scholar Program integrated with a strong cultural series. The versatile curriculum, qualified faculty and staff, and related resources, strengthened by innovative technologies, prepare students for success in the global community. To support these initiatives, a continuous cycle of planning, evaluation, and response promotes institutional effectiveness and efficiency.

Motlow State encourages student success through critical thinking, clear communication, ethical behavior, respect for others, civic responsibility, problem solving, effective functioning in individual and team situations, and an appreciation of one's own heritage as well as that of others. Motlow State promotes and maintains alliances with business, industry, government agencies, and other educational institutions to enhance programs and services.

As a dynamic institution of higher learning, Motlow State enriches and empowers its students and the community it serves. Motlow State Community College remains committed to the education of a non-rationally identifiable student body and promotes diversity and access without regard to race, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status.