STEP: Strategies for Teaching Excellence Program

Current Version of STEP

June 2013

Northeast State Community College

On-site Visit: October 27 – 29, 2009

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Executive Summary

Characteristics of the Institution

Northeast State Community College is a comprehensive two-year community college located in upper east Tennessee. The College provides university parallel programs designed for students desiring to transfer to another college or university as well as career programs for students planning to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation. During the past decade, Northeast State has been recognized as one of the fastest growing community colleges in the State, with fall 2008 headcount exceeding 5,400 students. The average ACT score of entering freshmen who are under the age of 21 is 19.1. However, the average age of degree-seeking students is 27, with many students delaying entry a year or more after high school graduation. The student body is fairly evenly divided between males (48%) and females (52%). Likewise, student enrollment is fairly evenly split between full-time (52%) and part-time (48%) students.

Broad-based Process and Involvement of the Community in the Identification of Key Issues

To ensure that its QEP was founded on research and included the perspectives of all major constituents, Northeast State conducted focus groups and surveys to gain input from the College’s key stakeholders. All employees and currently enrolled students as well as institutional and program advisory groups, employers, and alumni representatives had an opportunity to provide input. This process encouraged broad based participation and yielded valuable information, with the results overwhelmingly indicating a key issue in that many students lack the knowledge and/or skills regarding “how to learn” which are necessary to be successful learners. The College discussed these results, carefully comparing them to institutional data and its mission and strategic plan. Northeast State noted a correlating concern emanating from institutional data as documented by lower than expected active and collaborative learning, college-level course success rates, and academic challenge scores. Thus, the key issue upon which Northeast State’s QEP was developed is that many students lack the knowledge and/or skills regarding “how to learn.” This issue was noted by the College’s key stakeholders and was substantiated by research.

The College affirms that addressing this key issue meets the requirement that the QEP focus on the environment supporting student learning and/or student learning outcomes, which are defined as changes in knowledge, behaviors, skills, and/or values.

Focus of the Plan

After a thorough assessment of qualitative and quantitative data, Northeast State identified a significant key issue relative to student learning in that many students lack the knowledge and/or skills regarding “how to learn.” Therefore, the College extensively researched various learning paradigms that, based upon best practices, had significantly increased student
learning through increased student engagement and awareness of the learning process. As a result of this learning paradigm and best practice research,

1. Constructivism was selected as the primary learning paradigm upon which the College’s QEP would be founded. Research noted that constructivism is a learner-centered paradigm in which the professor is the catalyst, or coach, with learner inquiry, learner autonomy, and self-motivation/self-regulation of the learner being critical elements to the success of the learning process (Leonard, 2002). As students construct meaning, they learn; and, the professor’s role is to facilitate learning. Additionally, constructivists contend that learning is an active, rather than a passive, process. Furthermore, learning is a social process, which uses conversation, interaction with others, and critical thinking as integral aspects of the learning process. This paradigm fit well in addressing the identified key issue. Constructivism places the responsibility on the student to learn, but also places responsibility upon the professor to provide an environment that facilitates learning.

2. The QEP topic/goal was established: Increasing Student Learning Through the Implementation of Student-centered Instructional Best Practices. This topic/goal dovetails with the constructivist learning paradigm that the professor is the facilitator, aiding the student as he/she constructs meaning. However, the College’s research also revealed a challenge for higher education professors in acting as the coach to facilitate student learning: faculty often lack training in instructional pedagogy (e.g., how to effectively present and transfer information to students). Therefore, professional development for faculty shall be an integral part of the QEP to ensure that faculty members have the skill sets necessary to carry out their duties as facilitators.

3. The QEP title Strategies for Teaching Excellence Program (STEP) was adopted with the tag line Step by step…we’re here to get you there!

4. The following four learner-centered instructional best practice themes that are associated with constructivism (and with the indentified key institutional issue) were selected as the foundational elements of STEP’s initiatives: self-regulated learning, active learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, and higher-order thinking. These themes will be implemented in a series of annual steps to build one-upon-another and to provide students with a strong foundation to be more engaged and successful learners.

5. The following three student learning outcomes were established:
   i. Students will be more self-regulated, active, and collaborative/cooperative in their learning processes,
   ii. Students will demonstrate improved success rates in classes utilizing selected instructional best practice initiatives, and
   iii. Students will demonstrate improved competency in higher-order thinking.
Table 3, details the identified institutional need and expected specific and measurable outcomes tied to each of these student learning outcomes.

The initial focus of the QEP shall be the development of a Center for Teaching Excellence and a pilot of the first student-centered instructional best practice theme, self-regulated learning. An early implementer pilot group, which consists of faculty and student advisors and leaders, shall research and pilot each student-centered instructional best practice theme and correlating initiatives one year in advance of implementation by all full-time faculty. The early implementers shall also aid in hosting workshops and divisional meetings to train the faculty at-large.

It is Northeast State’s belief that focusing on these themes of constructivism, in a purposeful and step-by-step manner, shall increase student learning success at the College by providing students with the skill sets necessary to be successful learners – regardless of their major. Furthermore, it will give faculty members the skill sets to be expert facilitators of learning in addition to being experts in their select fields of study. The accomplishment of this endeavor shall aid in the achievement of Northeast State’s mission and vision, which states *Northeast State Community College shall be recognized for excellence in teaching, learning, and service.*

**Institutional Capability for the Initiation and Continuation of the Plan**

Northeast State recognizes the importance of providing the appropriate human, physical, and fiscal resources necessary to initiate, implement, sustain, and see STEP through to its fruition. The Resources Section of this report delineates the College’s commitment to this initiative. STEP’s resource requirements shall be reviewed on an on-going basis as a normal part of the College’s strategic planning and budgeting process and additional resources shall be provided, as appropriate, to ensure the success of STEP.

**Assessment of the Plan**

Northeast State carefully developed its assessment plan to provide meaningful and comprehensive information, which will promote the success of STEP. To facilitate this, the College sub-grouped its STEP assessment plan into two distinct areas: outcome assessment and process assessment. Outcome assessments will measure progress toward the attainment of STEP’s overarching topic/goal and its three clearly defined student learning outcomes. Process assessments will track and document institutional activities involving the implementation of STEP. These are detailed in the *Actions to be Implemented* Section of this report.

The continuous and comprehensive assessment of STEP includes a triangulation of measurements, with the plan being specifically designed to capture information at multiple points in time. The on-going analysis of this information shall help to ensure that the institution makes steady progress toward the achievement of its overarching topic/goal and its three student learning outcomes. Tables 7 and 8 of this report detail the STEP assessment plan.
Process Used to Develop the QEP

In January 2008, Northeast State conducted a college-wide SACS kickoff meeting during which the SACS reaffirmation process was described and both the Compliance Certification and Quality Enhancement Plan components of reaccreditation were detailed. The co-chairs for the QEP topic development process, Dr. Carolyn McCracken, professor of Biology and coordinator of the department, and Dr. Susan Graybeal, vice president for Institutional Effectiveness, were announced. The concept of broad-based involvement in topic determination was stressed, and specific opportunities for input into the process from faculty, staff, and other College stakeholders were discussed.

Also in January 2008, the College’s SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team (Appendix A) identified the structure of the QEP Teams to ensure there was broad-based involvement from all aspects of its community, that a viable topic was isolated and developed, and that the plan was fully delineated and could effectively be implemented. This structure is visualized in Figure 1, below:

![Figure 1. QEP Leadership Teams Organizational Structure](image)

The SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team also identified members of the QEP Topic Development Team in January 2008. The QEP Topic Development Team consisted of representatives from all facets of the College, with particular emphasis placed on faculty representation (Appendix B). Charged with ensuring broad-based involvement in the development of the QEP topic, this Team was responsible for seeking out recommendations relative to significant student learning issues from the College’s key stakeholders. Information regarding the QEP was
disseminated to all pertinent constituents of the College. Participants were asked to thoughtfully consider significant issues related to student learning and to recommend viable, substantive strategies for the enhancement of student learning. Contributors to the process were apprised of the Commission on Colleges’ definition of student learning outcomes (e.g., changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors, or values). They were also advised of the following characteristics of a QEP:

1. It must focus on a significant issue related to student learning.
2. It should complement the institution’s on-going, integrated, institution-wide planning and evaluation processes; however, it is not intended to supplant or replace the processes of institutional effectiveness.
3. It must have the commitment and support of the College, with the proper allocation of resources to implement and sustain the QEP.
4. It must include broad-based participation in the identification of the topic or issues to be addressed in the QEP.
5. It must include baseline research to support the viability of the topic.
6. It must include clear definitions of the recommended topic.
7. It must include a well-established implementation timeline and clear assignments of responsibilities.
8. It must have clearly established assessment methodologies.

To initiate the topic development process, focus groups were held and/or surveys were distributed to all full and part-time employees at all locations of the College, as well as to employers, taskforces, advisory boards, and alumni. Due to the diversity of these groups, potential student learning improvement strategies and their feasibilities were considered from multiple perspectives (Focus Group Documentation, Appendix C). In addition, each enrolled student was given an opportunity to make recommendations for the enhancement of learning outcomes. The student survey was displayed daily on the College’s closed circuit campus cable system, and survey reminders were sent to students via general email distributions. Students also discussed and submitted possible mechanisms for the facilitation of learning at two Speak Out events, which were public student forums (Samples of student emails and Speak Out documentation, Appendix D). For data entry and tracking of the QEP topic development process, a QEP Web site was developed (Appendix E).
During its weekly meetings, the QEP Topic Development Team discussed various questions, concerns, and recommendations related to student learning outcomes that were identified by the College’s constituents. The Team carefully compared the constituents’ responses to a variety of institutional data (Appendix F) as well as to the vision, mission, and strategic plan of the College. Team members formed subgroups and further studied significant issues related to student learning in higher education (especially at the community college level) and best practices that had been implemented to affect change. Team members were routinely encouraged to report the activities of the QEP Topic Development Team to their divisions in order to increase campus-wide input and buy-in. The results of the QEP Topic Development Team’s assessment processes and the topic determination are detailed under the Identification of the Topic Section of this report.
Identification of the Topic

From its extensive survey of key stakeholders and its research and analysis of institutional data/needs, the QEP Topic Development Team noted a few broad themes, which are detailed in the Process Used to Develop the QEP Section of this report. These themes included students’ lack of knowledge and/or skills for success in a higher education setting, the use of technology in the learning process, and living in a global society.

Data Collection and Analysis

The QEP Topic Development Team compared the qualitative information gathered through its survey of campus constituents with the empirical data collected by the institution. Data including, but not limited to, the following were studied: persistence to graduation, retention, general education outcomes, job placement, program assessment, major field test, enrolled student survey (Community College Survey of Student Engagement [CCSSE]), alumni survey, and employer survey results.

The Team noted that the data and assessment results were for the most part very positive and demonstrated the effectiveness of the institution in attaining its mission and strategic plan. The Team also noted that Northeast State’s vision statement, the College shall be recognized for excellence in teaching, learning, and service, provided a strong foundation for the QEP. Notably, one of the College’s guiding beliefs is founded on a commitment to quality academic programs by ensuring continuous planning, assessment, and evaluation processes.

Emergence of Critical Issues

After a thorough assessment of the qualitative and quantitative data, the Team noted two recurring issues related to student learning: 1) students’ lack of knowledge and/or skills needed for success in a higher education setting and 2) students’ awareness of the global society in which they live and how it affects them. Focus group findings relative to students’ lack of knowledge and/or skills for success in a higher education setting indicated potential causes including the use of technology, student motivational factors, the academic preparedness of some students, and the ability of some students to traverse the higher education system. Focus group findings relative to living in a global society indicated that many students do not see a correlation between what happens in the world economy and life in eastern Tennessee.
Data analysis of college-wide evaluations, especially of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), supported these findings. The primary indicators that substantiated the focus groups’ findings are listed in the table below:

Table 1. Documented evidence of institutional need based upon data analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Instrument¹ (most recent results)</th>
<th>Finding/Institutional Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE</td>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning (benchmark score for full-time students): Northeast State: 54.2, Medium Colleges: 55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCFSSE</td>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning: How often do students in your selected course section ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions?: Very Often: Northeast State: 40%, CCFSSE Cohort: 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCFSSE</td>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class?: Often through Very Often: Northeast State: 45%, CCFSSE Cohort: 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCFSSE</td>
<td>Academic Challenge: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?: Very Much: Northeast State: 30%, CCFSSE Cohort: 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE</td>
<td>Academic Challenge: (benchmark score for full-time students): Northeast State: 54.9, Medium Colleges: 55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCBP</td>
<td>College-level course success rate: Northeast State: 80.29%, NCCBP Cohort: 84.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCFSSE</td>
<td>Global Society: To what extent do students’ experiences in your selected course section contribute to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds: Northeast State: 5%, CCFSSE Cohort: 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE</td>
<td>Global Society: How much has your experience at this college contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds: Northeast State: 2.31, Medium Colleges: 2.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How have other institutions used the topic in QEP designs?

Narrowing the Focus of the QEP

Based on the noted issues and their correlation to the assessment results, the Topic Development Team gradually narrowed the recommended potential QEP topic themes to five. Then team subgroups conducted extensive research and literature reviews pertaining to each topic theme. Each subgroup was required to prepare a presentation, which answered the following questions:

1. How have other institutions used the topic in QEP designs?

¹ CCSSE: Community College Survey of Student Engagement; CCFSSE: Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement; NCCBP: National Community College Benchmarking Project
Upon presentations of the literature reviews and additional research to the entire Team and extensive discussions concerning topic viability, the suggested topic themes were narrowed to four, all of which could be correlated to themes found in the information gleaned from Northeast State’s campus constituencies as well as from institutional research/data. The four proposed topic themes are listed below:

1. Enhancing Active Learning Through the Use of Technology
2. Enhancing Active Learning Through Learning Communities
3. Enhancing Student Learning by Increasing Student Engagement
4. Preparing Students to Live in a Global Society

The Team believed that each of the four suggested topic themes focused on a significant issue related to student learning, was based on institutional data, was viable, would lead to the long-term improvement of student learning, and would have the commitment and support of the College. However, the Team determined the one with the strongest tie to research was *Enhancing Student Learning by Increasing Student Engagement*.

In April 2008, the four topics were presented to the SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team. Members of the QEP Topic Development Team presented each theme and the justification for the initiative. They also fielded questions from the Leadership Team. As the research findings overwhelmingly supported *Enhancing Student Learning by Increasing Student Engagement* as the theme, this was selected as the overarching topic/goal for the QEP.

At that point, the responsibilities of the QEP Topic Development Team were complete, and the QEP Plan Development Team was named (Appendix G). Although the QEP Plan Development Team had cross-sectional representation from the College, the primary participants were faculty. Dr. Carolyn McCracken remained as co-chair of...
this new QEP Team, and for continuity, Ms. Nancy Forrester was named as a second co-chair. Ms. Forrester shall assume the lead responsibility role for the implementation phase of the QEP. Therefore, bringing her on as a co-chair in the plan development phase aided in her leadership and would help to facilitate the successful implementation of the plan. Dr. Graybeal, who had served as co-chair on the QEP Topic Development Team, remained on the QEP Plan Development Team as a resource person.

The SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team charged the QEP Plan Development Team with researching viable ways in which Northeast State could effectively and efficiently affect student learning by increasing academic engagement.

An issue raised during the topic development phase that also continued into the plan development phase was the fact that, as a commuter institution, most Northeast State students are on campus for a minimal amount of time. Often they come to campus for classes and immediately leave. In such instances, there are limited opportunities for the institution to affect student learning outcomes outside of the classroom.

A preliminary review of literature substantiated the importance of faculty-student relationships in higher education. When compared to traditional, four-year college students, these relationships are found to be even more significant at the community college level. As the vast majority of community college students commute, the primary and sometimes only contact these students have with faculty and/or staff occurs within the classroom. Considering the importance of classroom time, this lack of connection to the institution frequently puts community college students at risk of drop-out or failure (McArthur, 2005). Therefore, the Team focused on the crucial role of faculty in enhancing student learning.

Through an expanded literature review of instructional best-practices for achieving enhanced student learning, the Team drafted a proposed plan framework for the topic. The focus of the plan was announced to all employees at the 2008 Fall Convocation opening session. The presentation detailed the process for the selection of the topic theme and the next steps. Participants were also invited to ask questions and provide additional input.

**Refining the Focus of the QEP**

After the QEP Plan Development Team had an opportunity to gather feedback from their constituents, a two-day, off-campus retreat was held in late September 2008. During the retreat, the Team discussed mechanisms for the enhancement of effective student learning. The College also extensively researched various learning paradigms
that, based upon best practices, had significantly increased student learning through increased student engagement and awareness of the learning process. As a result of this learning paradigm and best practice research, constructivism was selected as the primary learning paradigm upon which the College’s QEP would be founded.

Constructivism is a learner-centered paradigm in which the professor is the catalyst, or coach, with learner inquiry, learner autonomy, and self-motivation/self-regulation of the learner being critical elements to the success of the learning process (Leonard, 2002). As students construct meaning, they learn; and, the professor’s role is to facilitate learning. Additionally, constructivists contend that learning is an active, rather than a passive, process. Furthermore, learning is a social process, which uses conversation, interaction with others, and critical thinking as integral aspects of the learning process.

This paradigm fit well in addressing the identified key issue. Constructivism places the responsibility on the student to learn, but also places responsibility upon the professor to provide an environment that facilitates learning.

Based on research, the Team agreed that the most effective methods for enhancing student learning are faculty driven (Eison, 2002; Fink, 2003; Nelson, et.al, 2008). Thus, a more narrowed and focused overarching topic/goal was developed of **Increasing student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices**. During its deliberations, the College noted, however, that while faculty members are trained in discipline-specific content they generally lack training in instructional pedagogy (e.g., how to effectively present and transfer information to students) (Diamond, 2002). Therefore, it was the consensus that a primary focus of the initiative should be on the provision of faculty professional development relative to select pedagogical strategies.

The SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team affirmed the selection of this more focused topic/goal and implementation approach. Furthermore, the Leadership Team and the QEP Plan Development Team affirmed that this refined topic for the QEP was appropriate to address the documented evidence of institutional need denoted in Table 2, below. The Team also noted that the QEP could directly improve student learning outcomes in relationship to each identified institutional need.
Table 2. Relationship of QEP topic to identified institutional need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Instrument</th>
<th>Finding /Institutional Need</th>
<th>Relationship to QEP topic</th>
<th>How QEP could directly improve student learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE/CCFSSE</td>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>Research has documented that there is a direct and positive relationship between engagement and student success: <em>When engagement in learning practices is heightened, students more fully and responsibly participate in academic processes associated with pursuits of higher education</em> (Schlechty, 2000). Addressing the active (including self-regulated) and collaborative learning institutional need, therefore, is directly related to STEP.</td>
<td>Implementing student-centered instructional best practices that increase student engagement should have a direct impact upon student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCBP</td>
<td>College-level course success rate</td>
<td>Research has also documented that there is a direct and positive relationship between the implementation of instructional best practices and student success: <em>As student learning is a shared responsibility between students and faculty, interaction between teachers and learners is among the most powerful factors for enhancing engagement</em> (Tinto, 2003), and, thus, success. Addressing the college-level course success rate institutional need, therefore, is directly related to STEP.</td>
<td>Implementing student-centered instructional best practices should have a direct impact upon student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE/CCFSSE</td>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>As documented by research and stated by an unknown source, <em>No one rises to low expectations</em>. Addressing the academic challenge institutional need, therefore, is directly related to STEP.</td>
<td>Implementing student-centered instructional best practices that increase intellectual challenge should have a direct impact upon student learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The consensus of the SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team was that the fulfillment of this refined topic was likely to directly improve student learning and institutional performance at Northeast State. Furthermore, as mandated by Core Requirement 2.12, the Leadership and the QEP Plan Development Teams also affirmed that:

- Broad-based institutional processes had been used to identify this key issue, which emerged from institutional assessment and planning efforts, and
- The topic of the QEP focused on learning outcomes (e.g., changes in knowledge, behaviors, skills, and/or values) and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission.

They also affirmed the institution’s commitment to the remaining tenets of Core Requirement 2.12:
Demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP,

Includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP, and

Identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

The Team also affirmed that the refined topic was directly relevant to the College’s vision, mission, and strategic plan and that it was sustainable.

To facilitate the plan development process, a steering committee was subsequently named for the QEP Plan Development Team along with several subcommittees, including the Literature Review, Editing, and Marketing Subcommittees. These subcommittees and ad hoc committees, provided support and resources in the full development of the QEP.

Additionally, the College’s QEP was named STEP: Strategies for Teaching Excellence Program. Tag lines of Step-by-step…we’re here to get you there! and Increasing student learning through the use of Self-Regulated Learning, Active Learning, Collaborative/Cooperative Learning, and Higher Order Thinking were developed to aid in branding and to promote interest and buy-in in the plan.
**Desired Student Learning Outcomes**

In developing its specific student learning outcomes, Northeast State focused on strategies that would significantly impact students’ knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values as the strategies related to the refined topic/goal of STEP. During this phase of the discovery/development process, the institution raised several questions for consideration:

1. What changes do we expect in our students’ behavior as a result of this initiative?
2. What skills do we expect they will possess?
3. What do we expect our students to value?
4. What gains do we expect in their knowledge base?

**Student Learning Goals with Related Specific, Measureable Outcomes**

As a result of this process, Northeast State established the following three student learning outcomes in support of the overarching topic/goal of the QEP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching topic/goal: Increase student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices.</th>
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</table>

**Student Learning Outcome 1**: Students will be more self-regulated, active, and collaborative/cooperative in their learning processes. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcomes: Behavior, Skills, and Values)

**Student Learning Outcome 2**: Students will demonstrate improved success rates in classes utilizing selected instructional best practice initiatives. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcome: Knowledge)

**Student Learning Outcome 3**: Students will demonstrate improved competency in higher order thinking. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills)

The SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team affirmed that these three detailed student learning outcomes are congruent with the following mission-specific Northeast State strategic plan goals and/or objectives:
- Strategic Plan Goal 2: Promote student success through enhanced retention and graduation efforts,
- Strategic Plan Goal 4: Provide quality programs and services which are recognized for excellence by students, faculty, staff, and the community-at-large,
- Strategic Objective 4a: Develop and implement a Quality Enhancement Plan designed to improve Northeast State student learning outcomes and fulfill SACS reaffirmation of accreditation requirements,
- Strategic Objective 4b: Improve the effectiveness of institutional programs and services through the implementation of continuous improvement processes, and
- Strategic Objective 4d: Provide development opportunities for faculty and staff to facilitate professional growth which results in the continuous improvement of the College’s programs and services.

Additionally, the Leadership Team affirmed that the three detailed student learning outcomes are directly tied to institutional need and will lead to specific, measurable outcomes, as noted in Table 3, below.
Table 3. QEP Student learning outcomes, identified institutional need, and expected specific and measurable outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Student Learning Outcome (SLO)</th>
<th>Related SACS Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Identified Institutional Need</th>
<th>Baseline Data</th>
<th>Expected Specific and Measurable Outcomes at Completion of STEP</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. CCFSSE: How often do students in your selected course section ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions?: Very Often: (2008) Northeast State: 40%, CCFSSE Cohort: 50%</td>
<td>CCFSSE: How often do students in your selected course section ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions?: Very Often: 40% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s very often response rate on the CCFSSE question: How often do students in your selected course section ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. CCFSSE: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class?: Often through Very Often: (2008) Northeast State: 45%, CCFSSE Cohort: 54%</td>
<td>CCFSSE: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class?: Often through Very Often: 45% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s often to very often response rate on the CCFSSE question: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 2: Students will demonstrate improved success rates in classes utilizing selected instructional best practice initiatives</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>a. NCCBP: College-level course completer success rate: (2008): Northeast State: 80.29%, NCCBP Cohort: 84.58%</td>
<td>NCCBP: College-level course completer success rate: 80.29% (2008).</td>
<td>Increase by 2% Northeast State’s College-level course completer success rate on the NCCBP. Note: NCCBP defines completer success rates as As, Bs, and Cs. Due to variations in grade scales nationally, however, there is no consistency in what constitutes an A, B, or C. Therefore, Northeast State expects to realize significant gains with regard to its NCCBP completer success percentage rate rather than to exceed the national norm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QEP Student Learning Outcome (SLO)</td>
<td>Related SACS Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Identified Institutional Need</td>
<td>Baseline Data</td>
<td>Expected Specific and Measurable Outcomes at Completion of STEP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. CCFSSE: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?: Very Much: (2008) Northeast State: 30% CCFSSE Cohort: 39%</td>
<td>CCFSSE: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?: Very Much: 30% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s very much response rate on the CCFSSE question: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways?</td>
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</tbody>
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Literature Review and Best Practices

Constructivism: STEP’s Conceptual Learning Theory

Northeast State extensively researched various learning paradigms, or learning theories, in its development of STEP. These paradigms included behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and organizational learning. Ultimately, constructivism was the learning paradigm upon which STEP was primarily founded. Leonard (2002), noted that constructivism is a learner-centered paradigm in which the professor is the catalyst, or coach, with learner inquiry and/or discovery, learner autonomy, and self-motivation/self-regulation of the learner being critical elements to success of the learning process. As individuals construct meaning, they learn; and, the professor’s role is to facilitate learning. Constructivism is grounded on the work of several scholars, including Piaget, Bruner, Dewey, and Vygotsky. In addition to being a learner-centered activity, constructivists contend that learning is an active, rather than a passive, process. Furthermore, learning is a social process, which uses conversation, interaction with others, and critical thinking, or the application of knowledge, as integral aspects of the learning process.

Inasmuch, Northeast State has identified the following four learner-centered instructional themes that are associated with constructivism as the foundational elements of its annual STEP initiatives: self-regulated learning, active learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, and higher order thinking. As noted previously, however, a challenge for professors in higher education settings in acting as the catalyst or coach to facilitate learning is that they often lack training in instructional pedagogy (e.g., how to effectively present and transfer information to students). Therefore, professional development for faculty shall be an integral part of STEP.

The following literature review and best practice information provides additional validation of the appropriateness of the College’s initiatives and provides the foundational elements upon which STEP was developed.

Literature Review and Best Practices

The whole future of our communities and of our country, not to mention countless individuals, depends significantly on the ability of community and technical colleges – along with their partners in education and the employer community – to do a far better job of moving students to and through our institutions, toward better jobs, toward continuing education over a lifetime (McClenney, from the Keynote Address at the College and Careers Transitive Initiative Summit, March 2006).
To meet the demands of the future, researchers have determined that colleges must move beyond traditional instructional techniques to new cognitive investments (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Fink, 2003; Tinto, 1993). Tagg (2003) suggested that higher education must enter into a new paradigm of learning, one which Fink (2003) described as a paradigm of significant learning, characterized by application, integration, retention, and promotion of self-regulated learning. Nelson, Shoup, Kuh, and Schwarz (2008) also added the concept of deep learning, which leads to understanding and long-term retention of concepts that can be applied in the future. Research has repeatedly shown that student engagement is fundamental to significant and deep learning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). When engagement in learning practices is heightened, students are known to more fully and responsibly participate in academic processes associated with pursuits of higher education (Schlechty, 2000), including learning how to learn (Fink, 2003). As a major indicator of learning quality (Kuh, 2007), the academic and personal benefits associated with student engagement (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2004) are also found to be consistent across academic disciplines (Nelson, et.al. 2008).

Contending that student learning is a shared responsibility between students and faculty, Eison (2002) postulated that interaction between teachers and learners is among the most powerful factors for enhancing engagement. As student engagement and learning are promoted through effective teaching (Eison, 2002; Fink, 2003; Nelson, et.al, 2008), reforms that broaden learning must begin with faculty efforts (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; McClenny, 2002; Tagg, 2003). Because effective teaching, student engagement, and student learning are so intricately intertwined (McArthur, 2005), Diamond (2002) insisted that best practices in teaching and learning should regularly be researched and implemented. By promoting student engagement, instructors can greatly facilitate cognition and significant learning (Umbach and Wawrzynski, 2004). Although Schlechty (2001) maintained that all instructors can create appropriate student engagement experiences aligned with desired outcomes and good instructional practices, Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) reported that scholastic engagement remains a challenge in higher education. To meet this challenge, Gardiner (2002) expressed the need for effective faculty development programs. Because instructional training is not usually required for college teachers, Diamond (2002) concluded that faculty development should be of highest priority.

Saroyan & Amundsen (2004) proposed that a faculty development program should begin with a team dedicated to the advancement of effective professional
development opportunities. To serve all disciplines, team members should be knowledgeable of instructional practices and learning theories; value existing and innovative pedagogies; have a learning-centered philosophy of education; and place importance on assessment. The Team should be charged with the development and/or presentation of well-researched and well-designed workshops, seminars, or tutorials. As technological practices can be effective student engagement tools, programs should also include faculty instruction in the use of technologies (Elbe, 2005). Eison (2002) suggested that student engagement can be promoted through faculty development programs pertaining to 1) Self-regulated learning, 2) Active learning, 3) Learning groups, and 4) Application of knowledge (higher-order thinking).

**Self-regulated Learning**

Unfortunately, the lack of self-regulation is considered to be a major indicator of scholastic underachievement and failure (Fink, 2003). Conversely, self-directed learners are known to be more academically successful and more likely to persist to graduation (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Self-regulation, which is an inherent consequence of increased academic engagement and significant learning, is associated with learners who establish and pursue individual learning goals, use more functional learning strategies, and actively monitor personal learning processes as well as progress (Schloemer & Brenan, 2006).

To foster self-directed learning, instructors should be encouraged to develop well-defined, course-specific learning outcomes, which support appropriate goal-setting and monitoring processes and acquaint students with new or more propitious self-directed learning strategies (Zimmerman, 2002). Schloemer & Brenan (2006) also posited that self-regulated learners have the ability to monitor personal performance and/or progress, then alter behaviors as needed. Through self-supervision, learning habits, styles, and methods can be identified, developed, and utilized in future academic pursuits. Having the confidence to find and use applicable resources or assistance to overcome weaknesses, a self-regulated student can assume a personal responsibility for learning (Gardiner, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002). By taking responsibility for learning, self-directed learners are known to be more persistent and successful in academic endeavors across all disciplines (Schloemer & Brenan, 2006).

**Active Learning**

To insure that student learning is broad and deep and available for transfer, students must be actively involved in the learning process (Gardiner, 2002, p. 91). As
active learning involves students actually doing things then thinking about those things (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Fink, 2003), such types of learning are known to greatly increase cognitive activity.

Knowledge is actively constructed by the learner through deep processing—practice seeing personal meaning and integrating new knowledge with knowledge already available in the brain’s cognitive structure. During active learning, physical changes occur in the brain. Synapses—connections among neurons—are differently established—synaptic remapping—and new patterns of relationships among neurons are set up, depending on what is being learned. The synapses are modified and the new knowledge is integrated with old knowledge into coherent and meaningful, and therefore useful, structures or wholes (Gardiner, 2002, p. 91).

Although all learning may have an active element, listening to a lecture or reading a textbook may lack the cognitive engagement necessary for deep learning (Fink, 2003). However, even minor active learning inclusions can facilitate cognition (Gardiner, 2002; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2004), student engagement, and learning (Bonwell and Eison, 1991). As multiple types of learning practices, or rich learning experiences (p. 111), can lead to more significant learning, Fink (2003) contended that courses should include diverse active learning activities. These may involve a broad range of doing or observing (Fink, 2003) experiences that may be direct or indirect, via actual participation or a demonstration, and may occur in the classroom or through other venues (Eison, 2002).

Without subsequent rumination and cogitation of learned concepts, students do not significantly assimilate, interpret, integrate, or apply knowledge. Fink (2003) contended that students who actively engage in reflective processes are more likely to relate, recall, and apply learned material in the future; however, simply reviewing for tests usually does not provide adequate reflection for deep learning. Although reflection may occur in various ways, Walvoord (2002) suggested that it is enhanced by instructor guidance. Through cognitive engagement, reflection, and/or reinforcement, knowledge can be applied and reapplied in deeper and more significant experiences (Fink, 2003).

When students are engaged in active learning, they learn more (Hannum, 2002, p. 184). Gardiner (2002) maintained that active participation in the processes of learning is required for student success. To this end, Umbach & Wawrzynski (2004) repeatedly emphasized the importance of faculty in developing active learning practices to increase student engagement and improve general education and practical competencies.
Collaborative/Cooperative Learning

Learning environments are enhanced when students work cooperatively (Hannum, 2002, p. 183). Literature has indicated that student interactions with both peers and faculty are important determinants of college outcomes (Kuh, 2007), and that students who work in small groups are more likely to complete programs of study (Tinto, 1993). Learning group activities, such as discussions, collaborative and collective learning, study groups, research teams, project design and completion, problem solving, tutoring, and/or analyses and interpretations, are known to collectively and interdependently engage students (Bruffee, 1999). Rather than completely relying on the authority of an instructor, students can maximize personal and group learning by sharing individual and team responsibilities (Eison, 2002). Although learning teams can provide students opportunities to master course materials along with practice in team and time-management skills, these groups are not designed to replace the instructor. In fact, Johnson (1992) contended that faculty guidance is crucial.

Informal learning groups are usually created during class time or as assignments to discuss or solve problems. Being temporary and somewhat random, they may be created at any time with any number of students (Davis, 1993). Informal groups, which promote individual learning and student camaraderie, can also help counter the lack of cognition that is often associated with traditional, note-taking lecture classes (Eison, 2002).

Assigned, formal learning groups are usually designed to complete assignments or tasks, and are typically maintained until the purpose is accomplished and the assignment is graded (Davis, 1993). Initially, group members should be advised of the group’s cooperative structure, objectives, and criteria for evaluation. Because instructor facilitation is vital, periodic teacher intervention may be necessary. Learning is based on both individual and group performances (Eison, 2002); therefore, the instructor must evaluate the activities within the group as well as the outcomes. As members work collectively and interdependently to fulfill team requirements, individuals must also be held accountable for given group functions. Learning is contingent on personal, interpersonal, and team engagement (Johnson, 1992).

Although study groups may or may not be assigned, these long-term teams are known to provide student support, instruction, and motivation. Studies have found group participants to be more academically successful, with groups being particularly effective in larger classes or in those with more complex subject matter. In order to benefit
students from peer teaching and instruction, the regularity of meetings is considered a key to success. As individual strengths and weaknesses are complemented, team members can assist others in intellectually organizing, understanding, and integrating course materials (Johnson, 1992).

Research has overwhelmingly shown that students who participate in cooperative learning activities are more academically engaged, learn more, have greater knowledge retention, develop higher levels of reasoning and critical thinking, feel more academic enjoyment and support, and display improved self-efficacy and responsibility (Eison, 2002; Davis, 1993). As a result, Johnson (1992) emphasized the need to establish professional training programs to assist college faculty with curriculum analysis, instructional goals, and construction of appropriate cooperative learning opportunities.

Higher-order Thinking

Higher education researchers, employers, government officials, and educated citizens have identified higher-order cognitive skills, such as critical thinking, principled ethical reasoning, and ability to solve real-world problems...as some of the most important competencies for college and university graduates (Gardiner, 2002, p. 90).

Such competencies are enhanced when faculties emphasize higher-order thinking and students become more cognitively engaged (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2004). As increased expectations are correlated with enhanced achievement, higher-order learning is also known to improve when instructors develop more mentally stimulating settings (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Because thinking skills are teachable, Eison (2002) contended that the balance of intellectual challenge and instructional guidance is crucial. However, both Eison (2002) and Fink (2003) agreed that higher-order thinking is founded in the learner’s willingness to engage in self-directed and deep learning. Responsibility and self-regulation are known to be basic components of these types of learning. Although multifaceted, three major components of higher-order thinking were identified by Fink (2002) and Nelson, et.al. (1995): integration, synthesis and application, and reflection.

Unfortunately, many studies have found students to be deficient in abilities to integrate previously acquired knowledge or skills into new contexts (Eison, 2002), but Fink (2003) maintained that relationship formations can be taught with time and practice. By using analogies, interdisciplinary connections, and rich learning experiences, instructors can assist students in transferring and applying knowledge to different
situations (Fink, 2003). Adding to foundational knowledge, instructors should emphasize the connections of course materials to those previously learned and to other areas of life (Laurillard, 1995).

As knowledge integration requires a progression of cognitive mechanisms, synthesis and application are viewed as natural culminations of such processes. According to Fink (2003), this is where thinking skills…come in (p. 80). Application might include many facets of learning, such as managing projects, critical evaluation, analysis, creation, design, and/or performance skills, during which higher-order thinking modes, including practical, creative, and critical thinking, may be required (Fink, 2003; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Through instructor-led rich learning experiences, students can incorporate higher-order thinking modes into learning endeavors (Gardiner, 2002).

Although there are no clear delineations of thinking modes, Gardiner (2002) contended that pedagogical approaches to each can be quite different.

Practical thinking is associated with hypothesis building, deductive reasoning, and problem solving. Sometimes referred to as common sense or logic, practical thinking is known to involve the skills of pattern recognition, comparison, reasoning, and understanding (Gardiner, 2002; Tagg, 2003; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2004). In addition, practical thinking may also require creative and critical thinking. Creative thinking may be used to find new ways of answering questions, to develop new perspectives, or to devise new solutions to old problems (Fink, 2003). However, Gardiner (2002) posited that critical thinking is perhaps the most beneficial cognitive skill. Often simply referred to as thinking, critical thinking is seen as an important component of analysis and evaluation, cause and effect relationships, and application of knowledge. Even though there are course-specific approaches, Fink (2003) emphasized the value of critical thinking in all disciplines. Positive relationships between faculty training in student engagement pedagogies and outcomes such as practical, creative, and critical thinking have been found (Nelson, et. al., 2006; Umbach and Wawrzynski 2005).

Due to its autonomous and internal nature, reflection often can be overlooked. However, only through cognition can new concepts be integrated with pre-existing knowledge and constructed into meaningful patterns and relationships. Although instructors frequently are unaware of the extent to which students privately contemplate subject matter, research has documented that reflection is important for the development of higher-order thinking skills (Laurillard, 1995). Even though internal regulation and
motivation are basic to these processes, instructors can engage students in reflective skills (Eison, 2002; Laurillard, 1995).

**Conclusion**

Quality enhancement of education doesn’t just happen; it must be fostered, nurtured, and practiced. Over the years, research has documented that quality education engages students in proven educational practices. Although learning is the mutual responsibility of students and faculty, the academic environment created by faculty has a significant effect on student engagement and the consequent quality of student learning. As a result, both students and faculty members need to become more engaged in learning processes (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2004). *Engaged pedagogy is really the only type of teaching that truly generates excitement in the classroom that enables students and professors to feel the joy of learning* (Hooks, 2003).
Actions to be Implemented

Overview

To promote success in post-secondary education, Northeast State’s research clearly identified a need for enhancement of student academic engagement. This was reflected in focus group research as well as in lower-than-expected scores related to active and collaborative/cooperative learning, academic challenge, and college-level course success rates. Related research has noted that community college students often do not have the same level of academic preparedness as their four-year counterparts, which can lead to lower rates of student engagement and success (McArthur, 2005). Research has also noted the importance of the faculty member-student relationship in affecting student engagement and ultimate student success in higher education settings (Eison, 2002; Fink, 2003; Nelson, et al., 2008). This relationship has been determined to be even more important to the community college student as compared to the traditional university or four-year college student because the vast majority of community college students commute. Therefore, the primary - and sometimes only - contact community college students have with faculty is in the classroom.

The challenge, however, for the faculty member in engaging the student in the classroom in a higher education setting is that, more often than not, faculty have not been trained in instructional pedagogy (Diamond, 2002). Therefore, while they have a mastery of the subject matter, faculty members may not know how to effectively engage the student in order to transfer that knowledge (McClenny, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Schlechty, 2001; Tagg, 2003). To address this, Northeast State has designed an action plan to help train the faculty in student-centered instructional best practices, with one best practice theme being introduced each year. The intent is that faculty will then be able to use this knowledge to facilitate student engagement, learning, and, ultimately, student success, regardless of the subject matter. Therefore, the topic/goal of Northeast State’s QEP is the implementation of selected instructional best practices in the classroom to engage the student and thereby improve student learning outcomes.

As visualized in Figure 2 below, it is expected that the implementation of this action plan shall lead to the fulfillment of Northeast State’s three QEP student learning outcomes and subsequently the institution’s overarching topic/goal. These student learning outcomes and the overarching topic/goal are outlined in the Desired Student Learning Outcomes Section of this report.
Northeast State recognizes that it must keep its QEP initiative sufficiently narrow in scope in order to increase the likelihood of success. Therefore, the College’s QEP is being limited formally to implementation by full-time faculty members. However, all training programs, instructional best practice materials, and faculty support shall be made available to adjunct instructors to support their instructional pedagogical practices and to increase the likelihood of success of students who are enrolled in courses taught by these instructors.

Furthermore, the College recognizes that the implementation of the initiative by all full-time faculty, while narrowed in scope, is still a substantial undertaking. Therefore, the institution has set additional delimiters within its action plan. For example, full-time faculty members will be given an overview of three best practices that are related to the specific theme for the upcoming year. Each best practice will have three specific initiatives (Figure 3).
Each full-time faculty member shall, in consultation with his or her academic dean, select one of the nine specific related implementable initiatives for additional training and subsequent implementation in one course section in the fall and spring. Through this process, the institution can maximize its opportunity to enhance student learning across all majors/programs while mitigating the risk that the project will become too large and unmanageable. Additional information is provided below in the College’s action plan.

**Definitions**

**Active Learning:** Fink (2003) defines active learning as actual student involvement in learning processes through performance and/or observation experiences that lead to reflection and thoughtful consideration of the learned concepts.

**Best Practice:** A methodology or technique that has been proven through research to produce the desired results. Three best practices that are related to the annual student-centered instructional theme shall be selected each year. Specific, implementable initiatives shall be developed around these best practices. The best practices shall be fully researched by pilot groups prior to full implementation. (See Figure 3)
**Collaborative/Cooperative Learning:** Learning group activities, such as discussions, collaborative and collective learning, study groups, research teams, project design and completion, problem solving, tutoring, and/or analyses and interpretations (Bruffee, 1999).

**Early Implementer Pilot Group:** The group that shall research and pilot the annual student-centered instructional best practice themes one year in advance of the full faculty body. They will help determine the student-centered instructional best practice initiatives and also aid in hosting workshops and divisional meetings to train the faculty at-large. There shall be eight early implementers annually: one full-time faculty member from each of the seven academic divisions along with the coordinator of Student Development and Activities.

**Higher Order Thinking:** In addition to the retained knowledge that can be applied to new situations, higher order thinking also refers to complex processes of cognitive engagement, including critical thinking, problem solving, analysis, reasoning, and integration (Gardiner, 2002).

**Initiative:** An implementable plan or project that is tied to a specific best practice. Three initiatives shall be developed around each best practice annually. Faculty members shall select only one specific initiative annually for implementation. The initiatives shall be fully researched by pilot groups prior to full implementation. (See Figure 3)

**Self-Regulated Learning:** It is associated with learners who establish and pursue individual learning goals, determine appropriate venues for acquiring knowledge and skills, actively participate in learning processes, and monitor personal learning progress (Schloemer & Brenan, 2006).

**Student Engagement:** Student engagement connotes an elevated involvement in learning practices, through which students participate more fully and responsibly in academic processes associated with pursuits of higher education (Schlechty, 2000).

**Student-centered Instructional Theme:** The annual topic upon which the related best practices and initiatives shall be developed. These topics (self-regulated learning, active learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, and higher order thinking) shall be fully researched by pilot groups prior to full implementation. (See Figure 3)

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**Action Plan**

**Center for Teaching Excellence**

In order to initiate STEP, Northeast State established an innovative teaching center, the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), and will continue the development of the Center and its activities as the first year’s focus (2009-10). The Center for Teaching Excellence is housed on the second floor in the Wayne G. Basler Library on Northeast State’s main campus. The strategic placement of the Center in the Library: 1) allows for easy access by faculty members on the main campus, 2) allows for conference meetings with faculty at off-campus locations via the College’s Interactive Television (ITV) system, located on the first floor of the Library, and 3) promotes the coordination of QEP efforts
with The Learning Center’s (TLC) tutoring efforts. The TLC is located on the first floor of the Library.

The institution considered the needs of all applicable stakeholders (e.g., faculty, students, and staff) as well as the allocation of adequate resources in the development of the Center. The Center functions in an oversight capacity for administration of the instructional best practice initiatives of STEP. The careful and thoughtful development of the Center shall provide the support infrastructure for the initiative. This infrastructure will help ensure that STEP action items are appropriate and help to facilitate the successful attainment of the student learning outcomes (Table 3).

In order to develop the CTE, Northeast State established a taskforce in fall 2008. As listed in Table 4, below, the taskforce included 12 members:

Table 4. Center for Teaching Excellence Taskforce Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Faculty Rank</th>
<th>Administrator/ Governance Role</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L. Becker</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Intern from East Tennessee State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Bowers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lab Assistant, The Learning Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Carriger</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Cope</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Demas</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Librarian; Chair of the Professional Development Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Fish</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>2008-09 Faculty Senate President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Forrester</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Dean, Mathematics</td>
<td>Taskforce Co-chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Merritt</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Neeley</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Wallace</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Director, Academic Computing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Williams</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Intern from Old Dominion University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Wilson</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Dean, Humanities</td>
<td>Taskforce Co-chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The taskforce identified several primary actions necessary to establish the Center. These actions included determining the design, location, needed fiscal and physical resources, and staffing of the Center:

1. Research the role, responsibilities, and structure of successful teaching centers, especially at the community college level.
2. Establish the organizational structure for the Center for Teaching Excellence.
3. Develop the CTE’s statement of purpose.
4. Determine the optimal location of the Center, given the primary (faculty members) and secondary (staff and students) stakeholders.
5. Determine and prepare the 2009-10 unit objectives for the CTE, stating the objectives in terms of expected outcomes and linking them to the College’s 2005-2010 Strategic Plan.
6. Determine the 2009-10 budget request for the Center based upon the unit’s objectives, including all fiscal resources necessary to establish and begin operation of the Center (Appendix H).
7. Determine the job description for the director of the Center, route a Personnel Requisition, and hire the director (Appendix I).

The Center consists of multimedia conference space for individualized and small group training as well as office space for the director and two faculty assistants. Furthermore, it shall be a repository for instructional best practice materials. Additional conference rooms and an ITV room as well as a professional development lab are available within the Library for larger instructional best practice training activities.

As mentioned previously, the creation of the Center for Teaching Excellence (also known as Center or CTE) is a precursor to the implementation of student-centered instructional best practice initiatives in support of STEP. These initiatives shall be developed around one specific best practice theme annually, with the first theme being introduced college-wide in 2010-11. To ensure a solid foundation upon which to build its QEP, the College established the Center in the summer of 2009 and will continue to refine its functions during academic year 2009-10. The Center will also research and direct a pilot for the first student-centered instructional best practice theme and corresponding initiatives in 2009-10.

**Annual Student-Centered Instructional Themes**

The CTE will oversee the implementation of student-centered instructional theme initiatives yearly. The four themes are a series of steps selected by the QEP Plan Development Team. They are self-regulated learning, active learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, and higher order thinking.

The Team specifically ordered these student-centered instructional themes so that each one would STEP to the next level, as displayed in Figure 4, below:
The yearly actions that shall be undertaken as a part of STEP include the following initiatives:

1. **Thoroughly research and pilot best practices** related to the student-centered instructional theme for the upcoming year (e.g., in 2009-10, research best practices related to *self-regulation*; in 2010-11, research best practices related to *active learning*; etc.).

   a. The CTE will develop a working definition of the annual theme by defining key terms and initiatives, as well as profiles of learners who personify the theme (Figure 2). A summary report, prepared by the staff, will include a bibliography, identification of key researchers, and the definitions. This report will be submitted to Academic Council each fall for review and approval, as appropriate.

   b. The CTE shall prepare a list of researched best practices and classroom initiatives related to the yearly theme for presentation to Academic Council for approval for pilot implementation. The QEP
Implementation Chair, Ms. Nancy Forrester, is a member of Academic Council.

c. The CTE shall train an early implementer pilot group who shall research and pilot each fall potential initiatives for the upcoming year. The early implementer pilot group shall consist of one faculty member from each of the seven academic divisions along with the coordinator for Student Development and Activities, who is the staff advisor for C.L.A.S.S., the Council for Leadership, Advocacy, and Student Success. Each academic dean shall recommend a full-time faculty member to participate in the early implementer pilot group.

d. The CTE and the early implementer pilot group shall evaluate the classroom initiatives for their appropriateness.

e. In late fall, the CTE director and the QEP Chair shall present to Academic Council for review and approval the group’s findings and recommendations as detailed above.

2. Develop and Implement a Faculty and Key Student Leader Orientation Program relative to STEP. In fall 2009, a QEP orientation will be required for full-time faculty and key student leaders. New full-time faculty and key student leaders shall participate in the orientation program each ensuing fall. The CTE will develop the orientation program with direction from the QEP (STEP) Implementation Team, which was established in summer 2009 (Appendix J). The orientation will inform faculty and key student leaders about the importance of the faculty member-student relationship in higher education settings, especially in community colleges. It will also recognize the institution’s responsibility in the provision of pedagogical professional development for faculty members so they can learn to more effectively engage students to promote the transfer of knowledge. Finally, the orientation program shall provide an overview of the QEP topic, themes, and faculty member and student responsibilities.

3. Provide professional development opportunities for faculty relevant to the best practices and related initiatives for the upcoming academic year.

   a. The QEP Implementation Team shall introduce the upcoming annual theme at the onset of each spring semester. The CTE, working with others on campus, shall provide relevant workshops throughout the
spring semester (e.g., in spring 2010 provide workshops related to self-regulated learning, the theme for 2010-11; in spring 2011 provide workshops related to active learning, the theme for 2011-12; etc.).

b. The QEP Implementation Team shall research and secure a keynote speaker to address campus constituents at Fall Convocation (e.g., in fall 2010 provide a keynote speaker who is an expert on self-regulated learning, in fall 2011 provide a keynote speaker who is an expert on active learning, etc.).

c. The College shall provide on-going professional development opportunities related to the annual theme through the CTE with support from the Professional Development Committee, the director for Academic Computing, The Learning Center lab assistant, and other specified trainers.

4. **Full-time faculty members shall select one specific initiative for the upcoming academic year and develop an individual objective related to its implementation.** The review and approval of the individual objective shall be an integral part of the faculty member’s annual evaluation with his or her academic dean each spring.

5. **Implement annual student-centered instructional best practice initiatives in the classroom.** Each full-time faculty member shall implement the initiative he or she selected in step 4, above, in at least one class during the fall and spring semesters (e.g., in fall 2010 and spring 2011, implement a student-centered instructional best practice related to self-regulation; in fall 2011 and spring 2012, implement a student-centered instructional best practice related to active learning, etc.).

6. **Assess the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the annual student-centered instructional best practice initiative.** The faculty member’s progress toward full implementation and successes and challenges shall be discussed during the fall mid-year review. The final achievement of this individual objective will be a part of the faculty member’s annual evaluation, held during the spring semester. The faculty member’s individual objective will be tied to the College’s Strategic Plan. This development, implementation, and assessment process is visually represented in Figure 5, below.
7. **Provide additional information and/or support to students.** Literature has shown that community college students spend very little time on campus outside of the classroom (McArthur, 2005). Therefore, the primary focus of Northeast State’s QEP is to provide student-centered instructional best practices *in the classroom* to support student engagement, increase student learning, and, ultimately, student success. However, additional support for students on becoming more engaged learners shall be available in The Learning Center and on the closed circuit campus cable system, should they wish to participate. Furthermore, the College already has in place an extensive new student orientation program, early alert referral system, and free tutoring in all subject areas to support the student outside the classroom.

8. **Evaluate the success of the initiatives and the institution’s progression toward the attainment of the three identified student learning outcomes.** The processes used to evaluate the success of the initiatives are fully delineated under the *Assessment* Section of this report.
9. **Implement continuous improvements to STEP, as appropriate,** and update the list of resources for best practices in the CTE, which will continue to serve as a valuable faculty resource, both during the QEP and beyond.

The flow of the action plan is more fully delineated under the *Timeline* Section of this report.
Timeline

Northeast State recognizes that a well implemented plan begins with a well researched and designed plan. Therefore, the first year of STEP shall primarily be devoted to fully developing the Center for Teaching Excellence and planning for and piloting the implementation of the first student-centered instructional best practice, self-regulated learning. Years two through five shall then be devoted to implementing the plan, assessing the outcomes, and making continuous improvements to the plan as appropriate. Table 5, below, visually displays an overview of the flow of the research, training, implementation, assessment, and continuous improvement processes for the initiatives that are centered on each annual theme.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09S/09U</td>
<td>⊅ CTE researches instructional best practices and related initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09F</td>
<td>⊅ Introduce self-regulated learning theme to faculty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Early implementers pilot/assess best practice initiatives</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Approve the instructional best practices and related initiatives for full implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10S</td>
<td>⊅ Re-introduce self-regulated learning theme to faculty and provide training</td>
<td>⊅ CTE researches instructional best practices and related initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Each faculty member selects an initiative for implementation in one course section for fall and spring</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Provide keynote speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>10U</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10F</td>
<td>⊅ Provide update and refresher training at convocation</td>
<td>⊅ Introduce active learning theme to faculty</td>
<td>⊅ CTE researches instructional best practices and related initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Each full-time faculty member implements selected initiative in one course section per semester</td>
<td>⊅ Early implementers pilot/assess best practice initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Perform STEP mid-year assessment</td>
<td>⊅ Approve the instructional best practices and related initiatives for full implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11S</td>
<td>⊅ Re-introduce active learning theme to faculty and provide training</td>
<td>⊅ Faculty/staff and students provide feedback as to usefulness of the initiative during fall and spring</td>
<td>⊅ Each faculty member selects an initiative for implementation in one course section for fall and spring</td>
<td>⊅ CTE researches instructional best practices and related initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Provide keynote speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11U</td>
<td>⊅ Perform STEP year-end assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11F</td>
<td>⊅ Communicate outcomes to college constituents during Fall Convocation</td>
<td>⊅ Provide update and refresher training at convocation</td>
<td>⊅ Introduce collaborative/cooperative learning theme to faculty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ CTE acts as a repository for self-regulated learning resources for future use</td>
<td>⊅ Each full-time faculty member implements selected initiative in one course section per semester</td>
<td>⊅ Early implementers pilot/assess best practice initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊅ Perform STEP mid-year assessment</td>
<td>⊅ Approve the instructional best practices and related initiatives for full implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>12S</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Faculty/staff and students provide feedback as to usefulness of the initiative during fall and spring</td>
<td>➢ Re-introduce collaborative/cooperative learning theme to faculty and provide training</td>
<td>➢ CTE researches instructional best practices and related initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12U</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Re-introduce collaborative/cooperative learning theme to faculty and provide training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12F</td>
<td>➢ Perform STEP year-end assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Provide update and refresher training at convocation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13S</td>
<td>➢ Communicate outcomes to college constituents during Fall Convocation</td>
<td>➢ Perform STEP mid-year assessment</td>
<td>➢ Each full-time faculty member implements selected initiative in one course section per semester</td>
<td>➢ Introduce higher order thinking theme to faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13U</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Faculty/staff and students provide feedback as to usefulness of the initiative during fall and spring</td>
<td>➢ Early implementers pilot/assess best practice initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Perform STEP mid-year assessment</td>
<td>➢ Approve the instructional best practices and related initiatives for full implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Provide update and refresher training at convocation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14U</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Re-introduce higher order thinking theme to faculty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14F</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Each full-time faculty member implements selected initiative in one course section for fall and spring</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>➢ Provide keynote speaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Faculty/staff and students provide feedback as to usefulness of the initiative during fall and spring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following timeline is a more detailed chronological calendaring of all primary actions to be implemented within the plan.

### 2007 – 2008 Calendar of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2007</td>
<td><strong>SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team</strong> (SACS Leadership Team) announces QEP initiative to college constituents at Fall Convocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td><strong>SACS Leadership Team</strong> selects QEP Topic Development Chair and Co-chair&lt;br&gt;QEP Topic Development Team initiates QEP research and data collection phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2007</td>
<td>QEP Topic Development Chair and Co-chair attend annual SACS Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2008</td>
<td><strong>SACS Leadership Team</strong> attends SACS orientation meeting in Atlanta&lt;br&gt;Topic Development Team members announced&lt;br&gt;SACS Leadership Team updates College constituents STEP during the spring awards ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>QEP Topic Development Team surveys all campus constituent groups and collects and analyzes empirical data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>QEP Topic Development Team presents the four possible topics to the SACS Leadership Team; the theme <em>Enhancing Student Learning by Increasing Student Engagement</em> is selected and announced as the overarching topic/goal for STEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td><strong>SACS Leadership Team</strong> selects QEP Plan Development Team Co-chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2008</td>
<td>QEP Plan Development Team conducts additional, extensive research to aid in refinement of topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2008 – 2009 Calendar of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2008</td>
<td>QEP Plan Development Team updates College constituents on QEP at Fall Convocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2008</td>
<td><strong>Dr. Gerald Lord, SACS Vice President</strong>, visits Northeast State and provides suggestions regarding QEP (and Compliance Certification)&lt;br&gt;QEP Plan Development Team holds a two-day off-campus retreat to refine QEP topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| October 2008 | - **SACS Leadership Team** affirms the selection of the refined topic:  
             *Increasing student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices* |
| Fall 2008  | - **CTE Taskforce** is established. The Center shall function in an oversight capacity for the day-to-day administration of STEP, monitor STEP action items for appropriateness, and promote the successful attainment of the student learning outcomes  
             - **QEP Plan Development Team** identifies specific and measurable student learning outcomes related to the STEP topic  
             - **QEP Plan Development Team** identifies specific annual student-centered instructional themes to facilitate successful attainment of student learning outcomes |
| December 2008 | - **QEP Plan Development Co-Chair, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, and SACS Accreditation Liaison** attend annual SACS conference |
| January 2009 | - **QEP Plan Development Team** updates College constituents STEP during the spring awards ceremony |
| Spring 2009 | - **SACS Leadership Team/QEP Plan Development Team** selects CTE Director, two faculty assistants, and early implementer faculty to assist with research and pilot projects and to act as liaisons with divisional faculty and students  
             - **QEP Plan Development Team** apprise College constituents of QEP project via emails and through divisional meetings |
| Summer 2009 | - **CTE** develops an orientation program for faculty and key student leaders with direction from Academic Council. Orientation sessions shall provide an overview of the STEP topic, themes, and faculty members’ responsibilities in STEP  
             - **CTE** develops a working definition of the self-regulated learning theme by defining key terms and initiatives, as well as profiles of learners who personify the theme  
             - **CTE** prepares a list of researched best practices and classroom initiatives related to self-regulated learning for presentation to Academic Council for approval for pilot implementation  
             - **Early implementer pilot group** convenes to finalize development of pilot project  
             - **SACS Leadership Team** announces QEP Implementation Team  
             - **College** finalizes the QEP Report and associated marketing plan |
## 2009 – 2010 Calendar of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **August 2009** | - College constituents receive updates on QEP project (STEP: Strategies for Teaching Excellence Program) at Fall Convocation (A.14)  
- All full-time faculty and key student leaders participate in the STEP orientation program. The keynote speaker, Audrey Williams, Director of Educational Technology Services at Pellissippi State Community College, Knoxville, Tennessee, shall address Increasing student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices (A.14)  
- Early implementer pilot group initiates self-regulated learning pilot project. The pilot project will include one full-time faculty member from each academic division along with the coordinator of Student Development and Activities. The self-regulated initiative shall subsequently be implemented by all full-time faculty in academic year 2010-11. |
| **September 2009** | - College submits QEP report to SACS On-site Review Team |
| **Fall 2009** | - Early implementer pilot group and C.L.A.S.S./students evaluate the self-regulated learning initiatives for their appropriateness for full implementation |
| **October 2009** | - SACS On-site Review Team evaluates QEP and provides feedback |
| **November 2009** | - College implements continuous improvements to STEP based upon feedback from SACS  
- CTE submits to Academic Council a brief report for review and approval. The report shall include a bibliography, identified key researchers, and definitions of key initiatives related to the self-regulated learning theme in preparation for 2010-11 full implementation  
- Academic Council reviews and approves self-regulated learning best practices and related initiatives for implementation in 2010-11 based upon recommendations presented by the CTE director and the QEP Chair  
- QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.9, A.10, A.14, A.17, A.18) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td><strong>Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee</strong> review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td><strong>Selected college representatives</strong> attend annual SACS conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td><strong>QEP chair and CTE director</strong> re-introduce self-regulated learning theme, to be fully implemented in 2010-11, to college constituents (A.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March – April 2010</td>
<td><strong>College</strong> hosts workshops for faculty, staff, and key student leaders regarding self-regulated learning and classroom implementation (A.15, A.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CTE/early implementers</strong> initiate research on active learning in preparation for 2011-12 full implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>QEP chair and CTE director</strong> provide a speaker who is a specialist in self-regulated learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2010</td>
<td><strong>QEP Implementation Team</strong> conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee</strong> review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CTE</strong> develops a working definition of the active learning theme by defining key terms and initiatives, as well as profiles of learners who personify the theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CTE</strong> prepares a list of researched best practices and classroom initiatives related to active learning for presentation to Academic Council for approval for pilot implementation</td>
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</table>

**2010 – 2011 Calendar of Actions**

<p>| August 2010 | <strong>College constituents</strong> receive updates on STEP at Fall Convocation                                                                                                                                     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(A.14)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ All new full-time faculty and key student leaders participate in the STEP</td>
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<tr>
<td>orientation program (A.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Early implementer pilot group initiates active learning pilot project. The active learning initiative shall subsequently be implemented by all full-time faculty in academic year 2011-12.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to self-regulated learning for fall 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ College provides on-going professional development regarding self-regulated learning (A.15, A.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional support outside the classroom to assist in reaching the overarching goal of increasing student learning, assisting students with self-regulated learning initiatives as appropriate (A.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Early implementer pilot group (A.9) and C.L.A.S.S./students (A.2) evaluate the active learning initiatives for their appropriateness for full implementation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October – November 2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, selects one course section in which to implement a self-regulated learning initiative for spring 2011 and records it in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Academic dean reviews the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the self-regulated learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement, as appropriate (A.10)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ CTE submits to Academic Council a brief report for review and approval. The report shall include a bibliography, identified key researchers, and definitions of key initiatives related to the active learning theme in preparation for 2011-12 full implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Academic Council reviews and approves active learning best practices and related initiatives for implementation in 2011-12 based upon recommendations presented by the CTE director and the QEP Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.9, A.10, A.11, A.13, A.14, A.15, A.16,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### December 2010
- Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)

### January 2011
- **Selected college representatives** attend annual SACS conference

### Spring 2011
- **QEP chair and CTE director** re-introduce active learning theme, to be fully implemented in 2011-12, to college constituents (A.14)

### March – April 2011
- **All full-time faculty members** implement identified initiative in one course section related to self-regulated learning for spring 2011
- **College hosts workshops** for faculty regarding active learning and classroom implementation (A.15, A.16)
- **College provides on-going professional development** regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)
- **The Learning Center, with support from other offices**, provides additional information and/or support outside the classroom to students on student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.17)
- **CTE/early implementers** initiate research on collaborative/cooperative learning in preparation for 2012-13 full implementation
- **QEP chair and CTE director** provide a speaker who is a specialist in active learning

### Summer 2011
- **QEP Implementation Team** conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)
- **Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee** review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation
Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)

- **CTE** develops a working definition of the collaborative/cooperative learning theme by defining key terms and initiatives, as well as profiles of learners who personify the theme
- **CTE** prepares a list of researched best practices and classroom initiatives related to collaborative/cooperative learning for presentation to Academic Council for approval for pilot implementation

### 2011 – 2012 Calendar of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Actions Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **August 2011**         | College constituents receive updates on STEP at Fall Convocation (A.14)  
                          | All new full-time faculty and key student leaders participate in the STEP orientation program (A.14)  
                          | Early implementer pilot group initiates collaborative/cooperative learning pilot project. The collaborative/cooperative learning initiative shall subsequently be implemented by all full-time faculty in academic year 2012-13. |
| **Fall 2011**           | All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to active learning for fall 2011  
                          | College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)  
                          | The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional support outside the classroom to assist in reaching the overarching goal of increasing student learning, assisting students with active learning initiatives as appropriate (A.17)  
                          | Early implementer pilot group (A.9) and C.L.A.S.S./students (A.2) evaluate the collaborative/cooperative learning initiative for their appropriateness for full implementation |
| **October – November 2011** | Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, selects one course section in which to implement an active learning initiative for spring 2012 and records it in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)  
<pre><code>                      | Academic dean reviews the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the active learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement, as |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| November 2011| - CTE submits to Academic Council a brief report for review and approval. The report shall include a bibliography, identified key researchers, and definitions of key initiatives related to the collaborative/cooperative learning theme in preparation for 2012-13 full implementation  
  - Academic Council reviews and approves collaborative/cooperative learning best practices and related initiatives for implementation in 2012-13 based upon recommendations presented by the CTE director and the QEP Chair  
  - QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report)  
  - Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate. |
| December 2011| - Selected college representatives attend annual SACS conference  
  - QEP chair and CTE director re-introduce collaborative/cooperative learning theme, to be fully implemented in 2012-13, to college constituents. |
| January 2012 | - All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to active learning for spring 2012  
  - College hosts workshops for faculty regarding collaborative/cooperative learning and classroom implementation  
  - College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)  
  - The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional information and/or support outside the classroom to students on student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.17)  
  - CTE/early implementers initiate research on higher order thinking in preparation for 2013-14 full implementation  
  - QEP chair and the CTE director provide a speaker who is a specialist in collaborative/cooperative learning (A.14) |
<p>| Spring 2012  | - Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, evaluates the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Implementation of the active learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement for the upcoming year, as appropriate. This is recorded in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Academic dean reviews the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the active learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement for the upcoming year, as appropriate (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2012</td>
<td>- QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- CTE develops a working definition of the higher order thinking theme by defining key terms and initiatives, as well as profiles of learners who personify the theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- CTE prepares a list of researched best practices and classroom initiatives related to higher order thinking for presentation to Academic Council for approval for pilot implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2012 – 2013 Calendar of Actions

**August 2012**
- College constituents updated on STEP at Fall Convocation (A.14)
- All new full-time faculty and key student leaders participate in the STEP orientation program (A.14)
- Early implementer pilot group initiates higher order thinking pilot project. The higher order thinking initiative shall subsequently be implemented by all full-time faculty in academic year 2013-14 (A.9)

**Fall 2012**
- All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to collaborative/cooperative learning for fall 2012
- College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)
- The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional
support outside the classroom to assist in reaching the overarching goal of increasing student learning, assisting students with collaborative/cooperative learning initiatives as appropriate (A.17)

- Early implementer pilot group (A.9) and C.L.A.S.S./students (A.2) evaluate the classroom initiatives relative to higher order thinking for their appropriateness for full implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October – November 2012</th>
<th>Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, selects one course section in which to implement a collaborative/cooperative learning initiative for spring 2013 and records it in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic dean reviews the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the collaborative/cooperative learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement, as appropriate (A.10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 2012</th>
<th>CTE submits to Academic Council a brief report for review and approval. The report shall include a bibliography, identified key researchers, and definitions of key initiatives related to the higher order thinking theme in preparation for 2013-14 full implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Council reviews and approves higher order thinking best practices and related initiatives for implementation in 2013-14 based upon recommendations presented by the CTE director and the QEP Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.9, A.12, A.13, A.14, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| December 2012 | Selected college representatives attend annual SACS conference |

| January 2013 | QEP chair and CTE director re-introduce the higher order thinking theme, to be fully implemented in 2013-14, to college constituents (A.14) |

<p>| Spring 2013 | All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to collaborative/cooperative learning for spring 2013 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March – April 2013</td>
<td><strong>Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean</strong>, selects one higher order thinking initiative and one course section in which to implement it for fall 2013 and records it in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean</strong>, evaluates the implementation of the collaborative/cooperative learning initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement for the upcoming year, as appropriate. This is recorded in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td><strong>QEP Implementation Team</strong> conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee</strong> review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2013 – 2014 Calendar of Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td><strong>College constituents</strong> updated on STEP at Fall Convocation (A.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>All new full-time faculty and key student leaders</strong> participate in the STEP orientation program (A.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td><strong>All full-time faculty members</strong> implement identified initiative in one course section related to higher order thinking for fall 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>College</strong> provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October – November 2013</td>
<td>The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional support outside the classroom to assist in reaching the overarching goal of increasing student learning, assisting students with higher order thinking initiatives as appropriate (A.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, selects one course section in which to implement a higher order thinking initiative for spring 2014 and records it in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic dean reviews the faculty member’s progress toward full implementation of the higher order thinking initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement, as appropriate (A.10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.12, A.13, A.14, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Selected college representatives attend annual SACS conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>All full-time faculty members implement identified initiative in one course section related to higher order thinking for spring 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional information and/or support outside the classroom to students on student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March – April 2014</td>
<td>Each full-time faculty member, with his/her dean, evaluates the implementation of the higher order thinking initiative and his/her successes and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement for the upcoming year, as appropriate. This is recorded in the Strategic Planning Individual Objective database (A.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team conducts preliminary analysis of activities, assessments, and achievement of QEP student learning outcomes to date for submission to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee (refer to Assessment Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.12, A.13, A.14, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Committee (refer to *Assessment* Section of this report) (A.1, A.2, A.8, A.10, A.11, A.15, A.16, A.17, A.18)

- Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18)

### 2014 – 2015 Calendar of Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Action Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **August 2014**   | - College constituents receive updates on STEP at Fall Convocation (A.14)  
|                   | - All new full-time faculty and key student leaders participate in the STEP orientation program (A.14)                                                                                                           |
| **Fall 2014**     | - College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)  
|                   | - The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional support outside the classroom to assist in reaching the overarching goal of increasing student learning, assisting students with engagement/teaching excellence initiatives as appropriate (A.17)  
| **October – November 2014** | - Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee review the status of STEP, as reported by the QEP Implementation Team; assess student learning outcomes/goal attainment; and recommend continuous improvements, as appropriate (A.18) |
| **December 2014** | - Selected college representatives attend annual SACS conference                                                                                                                                                   |
| **January 2015**  | - College constituents receive updates on overall outcomes of STEP project and on-going, integrated use of student-centered instructional best practices (A.14)                                                   |
| **Spring 2015**   | - College provides on-going professional development regarding student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.15, A.16)  
<p>|                   | - The Learning Center, with support from other offices, provides additional information and/or support outside the classroom to students on student engagement/teaching excellence initiatives (A.17) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer 2015</th>
<th>College prepares 5th year interim report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College submits 5th year interim report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Structure

Northeast State has identified three key organizational structures to facilitate the successful implementation of its QEP: 1) Planning and Assessment, 2) Implementation, and 3) Support Services.

Planning and Assessment

The primary entities that shall be involved in the planning and assessment of STEP are:

1. The QEP Implementation Team (Appendices B, G, and J) for initial planning and assessment and the development of annual reports. Northeast State’s chair for the implementation of STEP is Ms. Nancy Forrester, dean of Mathematics (Appendix K). The director of the Center for Teaching Excellence is Mr. Jim Kelly (Appendix I). Mr. Kelly also serves as a key member of the QEP Plan Implementation Team (Appendix J). Ms. Forrester and Mr. Kelly both report either directly or indirectly to the vice president for Academic Affairs: Mr. Kelly reports directly to the dean of the Library as a function of learning resources and the dean of the Library reports to the vice president for Academic Affairs. The QEP Implementation Team shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the initiative. This Team is scheduled to meet twice a month in 2009-10, and then monthly thereafter. Ad hoc meetings shall be called as needed to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of the project. The QEP Implementation Team is the body identified to: complete research on student-centered instructional best practice initiatives; develop the STEP orientation programs and professional development workshops; oversee the yearly pilot projects; oversee assessments; and implement continuous improvements.

2. Academic Council (Appendix L) is the body identified to approve the best practice initiatives for each yearly theme and oversee each full-time faculty member’s selection of the instructional best practice and the course(s) in which it is to be implemented (via the academic deans). Academic Council is also responsible for ensuring that the overall QEP is implemented, evaluated, and sustainable. The Council’s role and responsibilities relative to STEP shall be facilitated by the fact that two members of the QEP Implementation
Team also serve on Academic Council: the vice president for Academic Affairs, who chairs Academic Council, and the dean of Mathematics. Academic Council meets weekly. Furthermore, other members of the Academic Affairs Division attend Academic Council on a rotating basis to ensure cohesion among initiatives. This includes the dean of the Library, the CTE Director, The Learning Center Lab Assistant, and the director of the office of Academic Computing.

Along with the Strategic Planning Executive Committee, Academic Council is responsible for evaluating the semi-annual reports and assessment data as prepared by the QEP Implementation Team and determining the effectiveness of the initiative. These groups will recommend continuous improvements for implementation, as appropriate.

3. Strategic Planning Committee (Appendix M). Northeast State’s Strategic Planning Committee provides oversight for all institutional initiatives. This Committee annually reviews the outcomes of current unit plans, the overall achievement of the College’s Strategic Plan, and upcoming initiatives and associated budget requests. Within this role, the Strategic Planning Committee shall provide oversight and guidance for the implementation and long term sustainability of STEP. The Strategic Planning Committee’s role and responsibilities relative to STEP shall be facilitated by the fact that three members of the QEP Implementation Team also serve on the Strategic Planning Committee: the vice president for Academic Affairs, the vice president for Institutional Effectiveness, and the dean of Mathematics. The president of the College chairs the Strategic Planning Committee.

The Executive Committee of the Strategic Planning Committee meets weekly. As noted in the previous section, this body is responsible, along with Academic Council, to evaluate the yearly report and assessment data as prepared by the QEP Implementation Team and to determine the effectiveness of the initiative. When appropriate, recommendations for implementation improvements will be made.
This organizational structure is visually represented in Figure 6, below:

![Figure 6. Overview of planning and assessment organizational structure of STEP](image)

**Implementation**

The primary entities that shall be involved in the implementation of STEP are:

1. **The QEP Implementation Team (Appendix J):** The QEP Implementation Team shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the initiative. The QEP Implementation Team is the body identified to: complete research on student-centered instructional best practice initiatives; develop the STEP orientation programs and professional development workshops; oversee the yearly pilot projects; oversee assessments; and implement continuous improvements.

2. **The Center for Teaching Excellence** functions in an oversight capacity for administration of the instructional best practice initiatives of STEP. The stated purpose of the Center is to *inspire and enable faculty to utilize both proven traditional and progressive student-centered teaching approaches to enhance teaching potential and effectiveness so that students will be more likely to achieve desired learning outcomes*. The Center is staffed by three full-time faculty members at Northeast State. The director, Mr. Jim Kelly, works 20 hours per week in the Center. There are also two full-time faculty members who each work six hours per week in the Center (Dr. Richard Merritt and Ms. Dawn Dabney for 2009-10). The director shall remain constant throughout the project. The two faculty assistants shall be selected by the QEP Implementation Team annually. All Center staff members are given appropriate levels of release time - yet still teach at least one course -
and/or receive monetary compensation for their services. Utilizing well-respected full-time faculty from Northeast State, this planned organizational structure will increase buy-in from faculty at-large. Furthermore, it will promote the inclusion of diverse ideas and areas of expertise among the Center staff. The Center’s role and responsibilities relative to STEP shall be facilitated by the fact that these individuals serve on the QEP Plan Implementation Team.

3. **Early Implementers:** There shall be eight early implementers annually: one full-time faculty member from each of the seven academic divisions along with the coordinator of Student Development and Activities. This group shall research and pilot the annual student-centered instructional best practice themes one year in advance of the full faculty body, and they will help determine the student-centered instructional best practice initiatives. They shall also aid in hosting workshops and divisional meetings to train the faculty at-large. This organizational structure will further promote buy-in from the faculty at-large since there will be one faculty member from each academic division on the Team. Furthermore, it shall provide a voice and input from student government to help direct the project. The CTE Director and the QEP Implementation Team Chair shall provide direction and oversight to the early implementer team.

4. **Full-time Faculty:** Full-time faculty members shall select and implement one instructional student-centered best practice for each academic year (2010-11 through 2013-14). The faculty member will also develop an individual objective related to its implementation. The faculty member’s individual objective will be tied to the College’s strategic plan, which will help ensure that the QEP fits within the framework of Northeast State’s mission. The academic deans will provide direct supervision and oversight for the faculty at-large. This organizational structure is visually represented in Figure 7, below:
While the student-centered instructional themes (self-regulated learning, active learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, and higher order thinking) will change from year-to-year, they will be implemented in a series of steps to build one-upon-another. Thus, in 2011-12, the faculty member will continue to utilize the self-regulated learning instructional initiative that was developed in 2010-11, while also implementing an active learning initiative.

**Support Services**

The primary entities that shall be involved in the support and/or implementation of supplemental activities of STEP are:

1. **The QEP Implementation Team** (Appendix J): As noted previously, the QEP Implementation Team shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the initiative.

2. **The Wayne G. Basler Library**: As a learning resource center, the Library shall assist with research and the provision of necessary materials to support STEP. The CTE director reports to the dean of the Library, facilitating these functions.

3. **The Learning Center**: The Learning Center (TLC) provides one-on-one tutoring and tutorial resources for students enrolled in Northeast State
classes. As a member of the QEP Implementation Team, the TLC Lab Assistant shall remain abreast of initiatives currently being implemented and shall advise tutors, etc., of these efforts.

4. **Office of Academic Computing:** The purpose of the office of Academic Computing is to direct the development of Internet courses and faculty training for web-based and technology enhanced instruction, provide assistance and information for academic areas relating to innovations in computing, and serve as a research source for students and faculty in the discovery and assessment of new technologies. Within this scope, and as a member of the QEP Implementation Team, this Office shall support the initiatives of STEP.

5. **Professional Development Committee:** The Professional Development Committee recommends, plans, and implements professional development activities for faculty and staff in support of intellectual and professional growth. The chair of the Professional Development Committee is a member of the QEP Implementation Team, facilitating the development of activities to support STEP initiatives.

6. **Student Success Oversight Council:** The Student Success Oversight Council’s primary purpose is to increase communications and collaboration between divisions regarding student success initiatives, thus increasing their likelihood of success. The QEP Chair and vice presidents for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Institutional Effectiveness are members of this Council, which meets weekly.

These support services are visually represented in Figure 8, below:
As summarized in Figure 9, below, the QEP Implementation Team is a vital part of all primary processes of STEP: planning and assessment, implementation, and support services, with the CTE being the hub of activity. As demonstrated by the Organizational Section of this report, there is clear and compelling evidence that Northeast State has the capacity to implement, sustain, and continuously improve this well-focused plan through broad-based input and support.
Resources

Northeast State thoroughly researched the physical, human, and financial resources that would be necessary in order to implement and carry out its QEP. As evidenced in the Actions to be Implemented, Timeline, and Assessment Sections of this report, attention was given to identify the specific year-by-year activities that would take place in order to provide the resources to support these initiatives. The following provides an overview of the resources Northeast State has committed to ensure it has the capacity to implement the plan.

Physical Resources
The Center for Teaching Excellence

The CTE is housed in room L204 of the Wayne G. Basler Library. The strategic placement of the Center in the Library: 1) allows for easy access by faculty members on the main campus, 2) allows for conferences with faculty at off-campus locations via the College's interactive television (ITV) system, located in the Library, and 3) promotes the coordination of QEP efforts with The Learning Center’s (TLC) tutoring efforts. The TLC is also located in the Library.

The institution considered the needs of all applicable stakeholders (e.g., faculty, students, and staff) in determining the placement of the CTE. The Center has a conference area with multimedia presentation equipment, work space for the director and faculty assistants, and a repository for instructional best practice materials. Additional conference rooms and an ITV room, as well as a professional development lab, are available within the Library for larger instructional best practice training activities.

Professional Development Lab

The Professional Development Lab is housed in room L115 of the Wayne G. Basler Library. The lab has 18 computer stations and the appropriate multimedia equipment in which to conduct hands-on computer-based training sessions. The proximity of the Professional Development Lab to the CTE shall facilitate the implementation of both planned and impromptu training.

Wayne G. Basler Library Conference Rooms

The Wayne G. Basler Library has two primary conference rooms: 1) L226, which is directly across from the CTE, and 2) L106, which is located on the first floor. Each conference room can comfortably seat 40 or more participants. Furthermore, each
conference room has multimedia equipment. As with the Professional Development Lab, the proximity of these conference rooms to the CTE shall facilitate the implementation of both planned and impromptu training.

**Interactive Television (ITV) Classroom**

Northeast State’s Interactive Television (ITV) Classroom is housed in room L114 of the Wayne G. Basler Library. The institution also has ITV classrooms at Northeast State at Elizabethton and Northeast State at Kingsport, as well as at other locations. The CTE director has taught ITV courses for Northeast State and is very familiar with the utilization of this equipment. Thus, should the College wish to schedule planned or ad hoc training with faculty members at these locations, the ITV equipment, along with the CTE director’s knowledge of the equipment, shall allow for these activities.

**The Learning Center**

The TLC is housed in room L103 of the Wayne G. Basler Library. It provides free tutoring in all subject areas to support the student outside the classroom. While support outside the classroom is not a primary focus of STEP, Northeast State does recognize the importance of supplemental activities should the students wish to participate. Therefore, the Lab Assistant in the TLC shall remain abreast of initiatives currently being implemented in the classroom and shall advise tutors, etc., of these efforts.

**Human Resources**

The purpose of Northeast State’s QEP is to increase student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices over a five-year period. To accomplish this, the first year of STEP shall focus primarily on the full establishment of the CTE, a pilot project for the first best practice theme (self-regulated learning), and providing training for the faculty. This implementation plan will reduce the burden upon the institution’s human resources, allow for the implementation of continuous improvements as the College moves through the process, and promote the successful completion of STEP.

The CTE is a department under the Library (Mr. Duncan Parsons, dean). Mr. Parsons shall aid in the provision of learning resources available through the Library. The QEP Implementation Team Chair, Ms. Nancy Forrester (dean of Mathematics), shall work closely with the Center through semi-monthly meetings of the QEP Implementation Team. Both the aforementioned individuals report to the vice president for Academic
Affairs. This organizational structure is depicted in Figure 10, below. The dashed line represents the QEP Implementation Team chair’s role and responsibilities to the CTE.

![Organizational Structure for the Implementation of STEP](image)

**Figure 10. Organizational Structure for the Implementation of STEP**

The Center is staffed by three full-time faculty members from Northeast State. The director, Mr. Jim Kelly, works 20 hours per week in the Center. There are also two full-time faculty members who each work six hours per week in the Center (Dr. Richard Merritt and Ms. Dawn Dabney for 2009-10). Mr. Kelly is an assistant professor of history, Dr. Merritt is an assistant professor of speech, and Ms. Dabney is an associate professor of mathematics. These specific individuals were selected to spearhead the CTE due to their commitment to the institution, their interest in the initiative, and the respect they have earned from their peers. All Center staff are given appropriate levels of release time - yet still teach at least one course - and/or receive monetary compensation for their services.

An East Tennessee State University (ETSU) doctoral intern, Ms. Lana Becker, has also played an instrumental role in the establishment of the Center. The focus of Ms. Becker’s current doctoral research is on student engagement in the classroom, which aligns well with Northeast State’s QEP. Furthermore, Ms. Becker is a former employee of Northeast State, and, as such, understands the institution’s unique culture and the needs of its service area. The CTE intends to request a doctoral intern from ETSU annually to assist with research. However, the assistance of an intern is not a requirement in order for the institution to be able to successfully implement the initiative.
It should be noted that the director, Mr. Jim Kelly, shall remain constant throughout the project. The two faculty assistants shall be selected by the QEP Implementation Team annually, providing for direct, broad-based involvement by a number of faculty members. By utilizing well-respected full-time faculty from Northeast State this planned organizational structure will increase buy-in from the faculty at-large. Furthermore, it will promote the inclusion of diverse ideas and areas of expertise among the Center staff. The Center’s role and responsibilities relative to STEP shall be facilitated by the fact that these individuals serve on the QEP Plan Implementation Team.

The College has also identified an early implementer pilot group. This group shall research and pilot the best practices and initiatives one year in advance of implementation by the full faculty body. They shall also aid in hosting workshops and divisional meetings to train the faculty at-large. The early implementer pilot group shall consist of one faculty member from each of the seven academic divisions along with the coordinator for Student Development and Activities, who is the staff advisor for C.L.A.S.S., the Council for Leadership, Advocacy, and Student Success. Annually, each academic dean shall recommend a full-time faculty member to participate in the early implementer pilot group. The early implementer faculty members may or may not also be faculty assistants in the CTE. This organizational structure will further promote buy-in from the faculty at-large and provide a voice and input for student government to help direct the project. The CTE Director and QEP Implementation Team Chair shall provide direction and oversight to the early implementer team. The early implementer pilot group for 2009-10 is listed below:

1. Academic Divisions
   a. Behavioral/Social Sciences: Dr. Richard Merritt
   b. Health-Related Professions: Ms. Linda Lahr
   c. Humanities: Mr. Eric Fish
   d. Mathematics: Ms. Dawn Dabney
   e. Nursing: Dr. Melessia Webb
   f. Science: Dr. David Maldon
   g. Technical Education: Dr. Pashia Hogan
2. Coordinator for Student Development and Activities/Staff advisor for C.L.A.S.S., the Council for Leadership, Advocacy, and Student Success: Mr. Keith Glover

**Primary Job Duties of the Center for Teaching Excellence Staff**

**Director**
- Research, plan, and coordinate online and on-site professional development opportunities for faculty members
- Coordinate activities associated with the pilot sections
- Coordinate the research for the annual best practices themes
- Provide orientation sessions about the Center for all new faculty members
- Review the College’s Strategic Plan and develop annual unit objectives and the budget for the Center
- Assist with the development and administration of surveys
- Supervise CTE faculty assistant activities

**Faculty Assistants**
- Assist with the research, planning, and coordination of online and on-site professional development opportunities for faculty members
- Assist with/participate in activities associated with the pilot sections
- Assist with the coordination of the research for the student-centered instructional themes
- Assist with the development and administration of surveys

**Early Implementer Pilot Group**
- Participate in activities associated with the pilot sections
- Assist with research for the student-centered instructional theme
- Assist with planning and implementation of online and on-site professional development opportunities for faculty members
**Fiscal Resources**

As with STEP’s physical and human resources, the fiscal resource requirements necessary to support STEP shall be reviewed on an on-going basis as a normal part of the College’s strategic planning and budgeting process. Additional resources shall be provided, as appropriate. Northeast State’s commitment to providing the fiscal resources necessary to initiate, implement, sustain, and see STEP through to its fruition is evidenced below in Table 6.

### Table 6. Commitment of Institutional Fiscal Resources for STEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE and CCFSSE</td>
<td>$5,900</td>
<td>$6,077</td>
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<td>$6,447</td>
<td>$6,640</td>
<td>$6,839</td>
<td>$38,162</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficiency Profile (formerly known as MAPP) exit exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>$3,605</td>
<td>$3,713</td>
<td>$3,771</td>
<td>$10,818</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutionally developed exams</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,060</td>
<td>$2,121</td>
<td>$2,185</td>
<td>$2,251</td>
<td>$10,617</td>
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<td>NCCBP</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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<td>$6,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CTE Operations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Space Renovations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational supplies and resource materials</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$4,120</td>
<td>$4,243</td>
<td>$4,370</td>
<td>$4,502</td>
<td>$21,235</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hardware and Software</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CTE Instructional Multimedia System</td>
<td>$2,550</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer System, CTE Director</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer systems, Support Faculty</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$515</td>
<td>$530</td>
<td>$545</td>
<td>$560</td>
<td>$575</td>
<td>$3,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Laptop</td>
<td>$1,950</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,050</td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE Teleconferencing Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td>$364</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>$864</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE Salary Support</td>
<td>$12,432</td>
<td>$63,330</td>
<td>$65,230</td>
<td>$67,187</td>
<td>$69,202</td>
<td>$71,278</td>
<td>$348,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QEP-related workshops, professional development for CTE staff, resource materials</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$9,270</td>
<td>$9,548</td>
<td>$9,835</td>
<td>$10,130</td>
<td>$47,783</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Convocation Speaker</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,060</td>
<td>$2,121</td>
<td>$2,185</td>
<td>$8,866</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$34,382</td>
<td>$88,372</td>
<td>$91,833</td>
<td>$98,151</td>
<td>$106,818</td>
<td>$104,523</td>
<td>$524,079</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Center for Teaching Excellence shall be the primary unit that shall plan for and provide funding (Appendix H) to support the goal and objectives of STEP. The unit’s planning/funding shall include, but not be limited to, the operations of the CTE as well as the provision of hardware and software, personnel, and relevant professional development, as noted in Table 6, above. The office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Student Success Center shall plan for and provide funding to support STEP’s assessments through their normal divisional operations. Other departments/divisions shall provide additional support as appropriate.
Assessment

Northeast State recognizes the importance of assessment and the forethought that goes into planning for assessment. As an organization, the College subscribes to the Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning (Alexander Astin, Trudy Banta, Patricia Cross, Elaine El-Khawas, Peter Ewell, Pat Hutchings, Theodore Marchese, Kay McClenny, Marcia Mentkowski, Margaret Miller, E. Thomas Moran, and Barbara Wright, DATE, AAHE Web site Originally on the American Association for Higher Education [AAHE] Web site at: http://celt.ust.hk/obe/links/references/_Principles.pdf). These principles, and their relation to Northeast State’s QEP, are as follows:

1. **The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.**
   
   Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

   i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Northeast State’s QEP Topic Development Team carefully reviewed internal and external constituents’ input as well as a variety of institutional data as they related to the vision, mission, and strategic plan of the College during the development of the QEP. During this process, this Team remained focused on the institution’s vision: *the College shall be recognized for excellence in teaching, learning, and service.* This provided a strong foundation for the QEP. Finally, during the topic selection phase of the process, each proposed topic was reviewed in light of how it would affect student learning outcomes (e.g., changes in knowledge, behaviors, skills, and/or values) and/or the environment supporting student learning and how it would aid Northeast State in accomplishing its mission.

2. **Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.** Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do
with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning and, therefore, firmer basis for improving our students' educational experience.

i. **Relationship to Northeast State's QEP:** Northeast State has developed a comprehensive assessment plan that uses multiple measures (triangulation) of assessments. These measures include quantitative and qualitative assessments as well as formative and summative evaluations. These assessments and evaluations rely on both direct and indirect measures. Furthermore, the assessment plan includes evaluations by students, faculty, and other relevant constituent groups as well as the use of institutional data. The assessment plan, which is detailed in Table 7, was designed to provide a comprehensive portrayal of student learning over time.

3. **Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.** Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations - those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.

i. **Relationship to Northeast State's QEP:** Northeast State has a clear and explicitly stated QEP with an overarching topic/goal and specific student learning outcomes.

**QEP Overarching Topic/goal:** Increasing student learning through the implementation of student-centered instructional best practices.

**QEP student learning outcomes:**

**Student Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be more self-regulated, active,
and collaborative/cooperative in their learning processes. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcome: Behavior, Skills, and Values)

**Student Learning Outcome 2:** Students will demonstrate improved success rates in classes utilizing selected instructional best practice initiatives. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcome: Knowledge)

**Student Learning Outcome 3:** Students will demonstrate improved competency in higher order thinking. (Related SACS Student Learning Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills)

4. **Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.** Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students *end up* matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way - about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.

   i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Northeast State’s comprehensive assessment plan includes qualitative measures to help ascertain the experiences that lead to the outcomes. This includes assessments by faculty, students, and staff. The assessment plan is detailed in Table 7.

5. **Assessment works best when it is on-going not episodic.** Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, *one-shot* assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

   i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Northeast State’s assessment plan utilizes various measures that shall be administered and tracked over time. This includes the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), and qualitative and quantitative data analysis from specified groups and
subgroups. Continuous improvements shall be made to the assessment plan as insights emerge through evaluation.

6. **Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.** Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment’s questions can’t be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. This understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** The implementation of Northeast State’s QEP assessment plan shall be overseen by the QEP Plan Implementation Team. The outcomes of the assessments shall be formally reviewed semiannually by Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee. Continuous improvements to STEP, QEP processes, and/or the QEP assessment plan shall be made, as appropriate.

7. **Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.** Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return results; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Northeast State’s QEP assessment results shall be reported in a user-friendly format that encourages the use of results. The QEP Implementation Team shall use a Web-based system to record its assessment results and continuous improvements. The Web-
based system shall be similar in nature to what the institution currently uses for its Strategic Planning and Performance Funding initiatives.

8. **Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.** Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly worked at and valued. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions; and information about learning outcomes is avidly sought and seen as an integral part of decision making.

   i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Northeast State has a long history of emphasizing quality in its teaching and learning processes and continually strives to improve educational performance. The institution’s commitment to this process was recently demonstrated with the institution’s research of the processes that facilitate student success and the implementation of initiatives to promote success. This includes the development of the Student Success Oversight Council, the utilization of highly qualified and experienced *new student advisors* and new student advising processes, the expansion of its early alert system, and the implementation of faculty discussion topics and a syllabus quiz to promote and emphasize to students the rigors of academia. The implementation of student-centered instructional best practices is a natural flow and further demonstrates the institution’s commitment to quality in teaching and learning.

9. **Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.** There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the public that supports or depends on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation - to ourselves, our students, and society - is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

   i. **Relationship to Northeast State’s QEP:** Through assessment of STEP and the implementation of continuous improvements to ensure the viability and sustainability of the program, Northeast State will fulfill its responsibilities to
students and the public. Furthermore, through this process, the institution shall demonstrate its commitment to the student-centered motto…Step-by-step…we’re here to get you there!

Northeast State carefully developed its assessment plan to provide meaningful and comprehensive information, which will promote the success of STEP. The College also selected assessments to foster reflection and promote change, including the attainment of STEP’s overarching topic/goal and the three identified student learning outcomes. Through this discussion and assessment planning process, the College identified two types of assessments: outcomes assessment and process assessment. Outcomes assessments are those measures that shall help determine the attainment of the student learning outcomes identified in Table 3. Process assessments are those measures that shall help determine the appropriateness of STEP support activities that have been/will be implemented. These assessment measures are identified in the table below. Primary and secondary assessment measures have been identified and are indicated with a P and an S. In support of principle number two of the Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning, noted above, Northeast State’s comprehensive assessment plan uses multiple assessment measures. These measures include quantitative and qualitative assessments as well as formative and summative evaluations. These assessments and evaluations rely on both direct and indirect measures. Furthermore, the assessment plan includes evaluations by students, faculty, and other relevant constituent groups as well as the use of institutional data.
### Student Learning Outcomes and Process Assessment Measures

Table 7. Overview of Student Learning Outcomes and Process Assessment Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Student Learning Outcome or QEP Process Activity</th>
<th>Center for Teaching Excellence Satisfaction Survey</th>
<th>C.L.A.S.S Student Focus Group</th>
<th>Community College Survey of Student Engagement</th>
<th>Community College Survey of Student Engagement (Faculty Survey)</th>
<th>Constituents’ Opinion Surveys</th>
<th>Early Implementer Focus Groups</th>
<th>Faculty Evaluations (Fall mid-year review and spring annual evaluation)</th>
<th>Grade Distributions</th>
<th>Proficiency Profile (formerly known as Mapp)</th>
<th>National Community College Benchmarking Project</th>
<th>Orientation Program Survey</th>
<th>Professional Development Survey</th>
<th>Student-Centered Instructional Best Practice Workshop Surveys</th>
<th>The Learning Center Satisfaction Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning Outcome Assessment</strong></td>
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<td>SLO 1: Students will be more self-regulated, active, and collaborative/ cooperative in their learning processes</td>
<td>S P P S S S</td>
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<td>SLO 2: Students will demonstrate improved success rates in classes utilizing selected instructional best practice initiatives</td>
<td>S S S S P P</td>
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<td>SLO 3: Students will demonstrate improved competency in higher order thinking</td>
<td>S P P S S S S P</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>QEP Process Activity Assessment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and pilot student-centered instructional best practice initiatives</td>
<td>P P</td>
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<td>Develop and implement a Faculty Orientation Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide professional development opportunities to faculty</td>
<td>P S</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time faculty members shall develop at least one individual objective related to the implementation of a best practice initiative for the upcoming academic year</td>
<td>S S P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement annual student-centered instructional best practice initiatives in the classroom</td>
<td>S P S P S</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide additional support to students outside the classroom to help reach the overarching goal and provide information as requested on the initiatives being implemented</td>
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</table>
Assessment Matrix

In support of principle number five of the *Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning*, noted above, Northeast State has developed an internal system for administering and tracking its comprehensive assessment plan over time. STEP Assessment Implementation Timeline is provided in Table 8, below. Appendix N provides a representative sample of these various STEP assessment instruments. The fiscal resources necessary to implement the assessment plan are contained in Table 6, *Commitment of Institutional Fiscal Resources for STEP*. 
Table 8. Internal System for Administering and Tracking the STEP Assessment Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Baseline Data</th>
<th>Expected Outcome</th>
<th>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</th>
<th>Implementation Accountability</th>
<th>Location of Data/ Information</th>
<th>Use of Results $^2$</th>
<th>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.1) CTE Satisfaction Survey</td>
<td>Survey to assess the satisfaction with the services of the CTE</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe being better prepared to implement student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>On-going administration</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Continuously improve the services of the CTE</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2) C.L.A.S.S/ Student Focus Groups</td>
<td>Survey for early implementer student groups to assess the students' perceptions of the projects in which they participated</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe attributes associated with the successful utilization of relevant student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>Biannually: November and April</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall</td>
<td>October and April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College Survey of Student Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.3) CCSSE: Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark for full-time students (Student Learning Outcome 1)</td>
<td>Survey to assess the students' perceptions of their active and collaborative learning activities. Courses/sections that participated in the initiative will participate in CCSSE</td>
<td>54.2 (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 1.5 points Northeast State's Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark score for full-time students by the completion of STEP</td>
<td>Annually: March</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 1</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.4) CCSSE: Academic Challenge benchmark for full-time students (Student Learning Outcome 3)</td>
<td>Survey to assess the students' perceptions of the academic challenge at the College. Courses/sections that participated in the initiative will participate in CCSSE</td>
<td>54.9 (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 1.5 points Northeast State's Academic Challenge benchmark score for full-time students by the completion of STEP</td>
<td>Annually: March</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 3</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^2$ All applicable divisions should include appropriate strategic planning unit objectives (expected outcomes) within their annual unit plans to address any identified areas of need.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Baseline Data</th>
<th>Expected Outcome</th>
<th>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</th>
<th>Implementation Accountability</th>
<th>Location of Data/ Information</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
<th>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community College Survey of Student Engagement (Faculty Survey)</td>
<td>Survey to assess the full-time faculty's perceptions of how self-regulated and/or active students are becoming</td>
<td>Very Often: 40% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s very often response rate on the CCFSSE question: How often do students in your selected course section ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions? (by the completion of STEP)</td>
<td>Annually: March</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 1</td>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.5) CCFSSE: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class? (Student Learning Outcome 1)</td>
<td>Survey to assess the full-time faculty's perceptions of how collaborative/cooperative students are becoming</td>
<td>Often through Very Often: 45% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s often to very often response rate on the CCFSSE question: How often do students in your selected course section work with other students on projects during class? (by the completion of STEP)</td>
<td>Annually: March</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 1</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.7) CCFSSE: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways? (Student Learning Outcome 3)</td>
<td>Survey to assess the full-time faculty's perceptions of students' progression toward higher order thinking</td>
<td>Very Much: 30% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 10% Northeast State’s very much response rate on the CCFSSE question: During the current school year, how much does the coursework in your selected course section emphasize synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways? (by the completion of STEP)</td>
<td>Annually: March</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 3</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.8) Constituents’ Opinion Surveys</td>
<td>Opinion surveys of faculty, students, other affected constituents. The three customized surveys shall allow individuals to provide</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The respondents shall report overall satisfaction with STEP</td>
<td>Annually: April</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall.</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Baseline Data</td>
<td>Expected Outcome</td>
<td>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</td>
<td>Implementation Accountability</td>
<td>Location of Data/ Information</td>
<td>Use of Results</td>
<td>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.9) Early Implementer Focus Groups</td>
<td>Survey to assess the early implementer group’s perceptions of the pilot projects in which they participated</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe the successful implementation of initiatives associated with relevant student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>Biannually: October and April</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall</td>
<td>October and April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.10) Faculty Evaluations (Fall mid-year review and spring annual evaluation)</td>
<td>Individual mid-year and end-of-year evaluation meetings between each full-time faculty member and his/her dean to evaluate the implementation of the instructional best practice and discuss continuous improvements, as appropriate</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe the successful implementation of initiatives associated with relevant student-centered instructional best practices of</td>
<td>Biannually: November and April</td>
<td>Academic Deans</td>
<td>Academic Deans/Human Resources</td>
<td>Make recommendations as to usefulness of specific best practices; Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall</td>
<td>January and June. Note: this will be a summative report from the academic deans. No personally identifiable information will be released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.11) Grade Distributions</td>
<td>Assessment of increases in student learning as reflected in grade distributions</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>There shall be statistically significant increases in grade point averages of full-time faculty led classes at the institutional, divisional, and departmental levels by the completion of STEP</td>
<td>Biannually: January (fall grades) and June (spring grades)</td>
<td>Academic Affairs/ Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 2</td>
<td>January and June. Note: this will be a summative report from Academic Affairs. No personally identifiable information will be released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.12) Proficiency Profile (formerly known as Mapp) Critical thinking sub-score</td>
<td>Assess students improved competency in higher order thinking</td>
<td>111.8 (2008-09)</td>
<td>There shall be a statistically significant increase in the institution's critical thinking sub-score by the completion of STEP</td>
<td>Annually: June</td>
<td>Humanities Division, Academic Affairs Office, Institutional Effectiveness, Student Success Center</td>
<td>Humanities Division</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 3</td>
<td>August. Note: due to the implementatio n of STEP over time, it may take a few years to realize measurable changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Baseline Data</td>
<td>Expected Outcome</td>
<td>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</td>
<td>Implementation Accountability</td>
<td>Location of Data/ Information</td>
<td>Use of Results</td>
<td>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Community College Benchmarking Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.13) College-level course completer success rate</td>
<td>Assess improvements in student success rates as compared to national norms. Courses/sections that participated in the initiative will be assessed as a subgroup</td>
<td>80.29% (2008)</td>
<td>Increase by 2% Northeast State's college-level course completer success rate on the NCCBP by the completion of STEP</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Continuously improve QEP plan in support of attainment of Student Learning Outcome 2</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.14) Orientation Program Survey</td>
<td>Assess participants' satisfaction with the STEP orientation program and their understanding of STEP's major elements</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall adequately and appropriately describe the major elements of the STEP program and, overall, be satisfied with the orientation program</td>
<td>Annually: September</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Continuously improve the orientation program for STEP</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.15) Professional Development Survey</td>
<td>Assess faculty members' satisfaction with QEP-related professional development opportunities</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe being better prepared to implement student-centered instructional best practices and be able to describe attributes associated with the successful utilization of relevant student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>CTE, Professional Development Committee</td>
<td>CTE, Professional Development Committee Chair's office</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall</td>
<td>January and May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Baseline Data</td>
<td>Expected Outcome</td>
<td>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</td>
<td>Implementation Accountability</td>
<td>Location of Data/ Information</td>
<td>Use of Results</td>
<td>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.16) Student-Centered Instructional Best Practice Workshop Surveys</td>
<td>Assess faculty members’ satisfaction with the student-centered instructional best practices workshops</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants shall describe being better prepared to implement student-centered instructional best practices and be able to describe attributes associated with the successful utilization of relevant student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>CTE, Professional Development Committee</td>
<td>CTE, Professional Development Committee Chair’s office</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall</td>
<td>January and May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.17) The Learning Center Assessment Report</td>
<td>Assess students’ perceptions of the STEP program, as appropriate. (Note: This is a secondary initiative and may/may not provide useful information to inform the QEP.)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Participants who utilize The Learning Center services regularly will describe and/or demonstrate attributes associated with the successful utilization of relevant student-centered instructional best practices</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>The Learning Center</td>
<td>The Learning Center</td>
<td>Provide information to the Implementation Team regarding student perceptions of STEP initiatives for the purpose of the improvement of STEP overall.</td>
<td>January and May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.18) QEP Multiple Measures Analysis</td>
<td>Assess the outcomes of all aforementioned activities and assessment instruments. The preliminary assessment of these initiatives will be reviewed by the QEP Implementation Team, as noted in the last column of this table. This Team shall forward a report of the results to Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Patterns of evidence that affirm the institution’s progression toward the attainment of STEP’s overarching topic/goal and its three student learning outcomes</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team</td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team Chair’s Office</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall. During this process, the assessment Team shall also look for gaps and/or overlaps in assessment and recommend improvements</td>
<td>October and April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity/ Assessment Instrument</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Baseline Data</td>
<td>Expected Outcome</td>
<td>Frequency/ Implementation Timeline</td>
<td>Implementation Accountability</td>
<td>Location of Data/ Information</td>
<td>Use of Results</td>
<td>Assessment Timeline of QEP Implementation Team</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. 19) IDEA</td>
<td>Assess students’ perception of STEP by researching specific IDEA questions/responses that correlate to STEP initiatives</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Full-time faculty members’ results shall exceed part-time faculty members’ results by question.</td>
<td>Biannually; October and April</td>
<td>Dean of Mathematics &amp; (QEP) STEP Implementation Team Chair</td>
<td>QEP Implementation Team Chair’s Office</td>
<td>Continuously improve annual initiatives as well as STEP overall. During this process, the assessment Team shall also look for gaps and/or overlaps in assessment and recommend improvements to the assessment plan, as appropriate.</td>
<td>January and June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The aforementioned assessment cycle is graphically displayed below:

Figure 11. Assessment Cycle

The interior wheel of Figure 11 represents the continuous improvement/assessment process that shall be used for each individual activity noted in Table 8. The office(s)/committee(s) responsible for the assessment of each individual activity are listed under the “Implementation Accountability” column header in Table 8.

The exterior wheel represents the collective analysis of all activities noted in Table 8. This analysis shall help to ensure that the institution makes steady progress toward the achievement of its overarching topic/goal and the three student learning outcomes. The STEP Implementation Team, Academic Council, and the Strategic Planning Executive Committee shall be involved in this process. A Web-base system, which shall include the utilization of a dashboard report, shall be used to track the overall progress of STEP.
Assessment by Full Strategic Planning Committee and Tie to Strategic Plan

As a part of its continuous strategic planning process, each unit at Northeast State develops or updates annual unit objectives/expected outcomes, which are linked to the College’s goals and strategic objectives contained in the Five-Year Strategic Plan. Throughout the year, each unit implements its plan in order to systematically and continuously improve institutional quality. Then, the full Strategic Planning Committee, as well as assigned oversight/review teams, annually review the outcomes of the College’s initiatives and upcoming unit objectives as they relate to the College’s goals and strategic objectives.

With regard to STEP, the Center for Teaching Excellence is a formal unit of the institution, and, as such, has developed unit strategic plans for 2009-10. Other units have also included unit objectives that relate to the activities of STEP. And, all units shall continue to do so as a normal part of their strategic planning processes.
References


Community College Survey of Student Engagement. (2003). CCSSE Highlights, Vol. 3. Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin.


Johnson, D.W., & Johnson, R.T. (1993). Cooperative learning: Where we have been, where we are going. Cooperative Learning and College Teaching, 3(2), 6–9.


Appendices

Appendix A: SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team
Appendix B: QEP Topic Development Team
Appendix C: Focus Group Documentation
Appendix D: Samples of Student Email Responses and Speak Out Documentation
Appendix E: QEP Focus Group Documentation Web Site
Appendix F: Institutional Data Review
Appendix G: QEP Plan Development Team
Appendix H: Center for Teaching Excellence Strategic Planning and Fiscal Resources for 2009-2010
Appendix I: Job description and vita of Center for Teaching Excellence Director
Appendix J: STEP Implementation Team
Appendix K: Vita of STEP Implementation Chair
Appendix L: Academic Council
Appendix M: Strategic Planning Committee
Appendix N: Assessment Instruments
Appendix A

SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Leadership Team

- Dr. Janice Gilliam, President, Chair
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, Co-chair
- Dr. Steven Campbell, Vice President for Business Affairs
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Jon Harr, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Fred Lewis, Vice President for Information Technology
- Ms. Kathy Jo Yates, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Dr. James C. Lefler, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics
- Dr. Carolyn Mccracken, Acting Dean of Science
- Mr. Duncan Parsons, Dean of the Library
Appendix B

QEP Topic Development Team

- Dr. Carolyn McCracken, Chair
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, Co-chair
- Dr. James C. Lefler, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Mr. Michael Bledsoe, Dean of Technical Education
- Mr. Donald Coleman, Dean of Health-Related Professions
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Dean of Science
- Dr. Xiaoping Wang, Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Mr. William Wilson, Dean of Humanities
- Ms. Dawn Dabney, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Mr. Eric Fish, Assistant Professor/Coordinator of English/Faculty Senate Representative
- Dr. Pashia Hogan, Professor/Department Head of Office Administration Technology
- Dr. Ruth Livingston, Assistant Professor of Speech
- Ms. Connie Marshall, Associate Professor/Program Director of Cardiovascular Technology
- Ms. Kathy Coleman, Director of the Student Success Center
- Ms. Jill Bowers, Lab Assistant of The Learning Center
- Ms. Beverley Ehrhart, Student Representative
Appendix C

Focus Group Documentation

Focus Group Meetings:
- Academic Advisory Committee Meetings: Throughout the spring 2008 semester
- Academic Affairs (e.g., Library, Academic Computing, Evening and Distance Education): 2/8/08
- Adjunct Faculty: 12/12/07
- Behavioral and Social Sciences Division: 2/11/08
- Business Affairs: 2/5/08
- C.L.A.S.S./Students: 2/11/08
- Health-Related Professions Division: 2/8/08
- Humanities Division: 2/11/08
- Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, and Institutional Effectiveness: 2/25/08
- Mathematics Division: 2/14/08 and 2/18/08
- Northeast State at Elizabethton: 2/8/08
- Northeast State at Kingsport: 2/15/08
- Northeast State Foundation: spring 2008 meeting
- Nursing Division: 2/8/08
- Science Division: 2/6/08 and 2/7/08
- Student Affairs: 2/20/08
- Technical Education Division: 2/13/08

Summary of Suggestions from Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities for Improvement</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisement</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to retention</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning (advisement within majors)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College readiness (R/D)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance learning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year student success and life skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time/adjunct faculty interaction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in campus activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online learning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving (critical thinking skills)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development and faculty preparedness</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement in learning process</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student responsibility</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology issues</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunities for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities for Improvement</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace readiness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing across the curriculum</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjunct Faculty Questionnaire Responses

Replies:
- Teach students to think and study for themselves 2
- Poor critical thinking skills 5
- Address test anxiety issues 5
- Phone-in tutoring service 1
- Address attendance issues 14
- Improve study skills 10
- Help with poor academic preparedness 11
- Improve poor organizational skills (time management) 7
- Improve poor academic self-concept 2
- Better address financial aid issues 1
- Improve poor technology skills 5
- Improve poor communication skills (more class presentations) 1
- More research 1
- Better screening processes 3
- Encourage commitment to education 2
- Upgrade lab equipment 1
- More visuals in classrooms 1
- Improve test-taking skills 1
- Child care 1
- Encourage motivation and student responsibility 14
- More standardization of introductory classes 1
- Encourage respect for academic processes 2
- Address poor writing skills 2
Appendix D

Samples of Student Email Responses and Speak Out Documentation

(as emailed to students, posted on the campus cable system, and discussed at Speak Out events)

STUDENT LEARNING IMPROVEMENT SURVEY

HOW CAN NORTHEAST STATE HELP YOU BECOME A BETTER STUDENT LEARNER?

Question:

What problem area or areas need to be improved in order to positively impact student learning at Northeast State?

Please submit your response to cgmccracken@NortheastState.edu
Student Responses to Sacs QEP Topic Selection

From C.L.A.S.S. and Speak Out
- Add a Minority Studies class
- Allow drinks in classrooms that are not carpeted
- Allow vending machines in Humanities Building
- Alternative scheduling due to snow should be announced the night before, not in the morning
- Assist faculty in repaying student loans
- Better assist students who are working parents
- Eliminate general studies classes, restricting classes to the student’s major field
- Enforce smoking area parameters
- Get rid of SAM (CSCI) or have instructors thoroughly review all contents of SAM
- Give students a fair chance
- Improve Business Office employees attitudes
- Improve Financial Aids Office employees attitudes
- Make better smoking areas and sitting areas (common area outside Subway should be a smoking area)
- On-campus classes should not have the same homework assigned to online classes
- Provide more assistance for students with test anxiety
- Provide more food options
- Reconsider strict attendance policies that cause points to be deducted after given numbers of absences
- Restrict socialization and cell phone use in Learning Center
- Schedule all classes M-R, leaving Fridays for study and extracurricular activities
- Teachers should answer questions and explain expectations more thoroughly
- Teachers should be more respectful and positive to students
- Walkways between buildings should be covered
### Appendix E

#### QEP Focus Group Documentation Web Site

**Focus Group Minutes/Documentation**

**Guiding Question:** What one problem area do you think needs to be improved in order to positively impact the learning abilities of Northeast State students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderator(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time of Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Summary of Focus Group Meeting:**

   ![Summary Table](image)

2. **Areas of Strength Noted (with regard to Student Learning):**

   ![Strengths Table](image)

3. **Opportunities for Improvement Noted (with regard to Student Learning):**

   - Communication skills
   - Career planning (advise within major)
   - Advice for internship
   - Program assessment
   - Professional development and faculty preparation
   - Technology issues
   - Engagement and retention
   - First-year student success and life skills
   - Study skills
   - Social networking
   - Interdisciplinary faculty interaction
   - Global awareness
   - Distance learning

4. **Other suggestions that did not fit in one of the categories above:**

   ![Other Suggestions](image)

5. **Additional Comments:**

   ![Comments Section](image)
Appendix F

Institutional Data Review

Summary of Institutional AssessmentsReviewed in Support of QEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Instrument</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persistence to Graduation Rates (six-year rates)</td>
<td>Northeast State has consistently surpassed the mean six-year persistence to graduation rate for State community colleges for the past 17 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Placement Rates</td>
<td>Northeast State consistently attains a recent graduate job placement rate of 90% or greater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Competency Exam (MAPP)</td>
<td>The data that were generated from the MAPP exam included individual overall test scores and sub scores. The sub-score areas were: critical thinking, reading, writing, mathematics, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Overall, Northeast State has performed well with regard to the national norm. The institution also tracks the results by major and concentration, option, or area of emphasis. Academic Affairs identifies corrective actions for individual majors as appropriate. This is available upon request.</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Ave Score</td>
<td>442.0</td>
<td>443.3</td>
<td>443.6</td>
<td>440.5</td>
<td>442.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Mean</td>
<td>441.7</td>
<td>441.5</td>
<td>440.8</td>
<td>440.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>115.0</td>
<td>115.2</td>
<td>114.2</td>
<td>114.6</td>
<td>114.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>113.2</td>
<td>113.3</td>
<td>113.7</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>113.5</td>
<td>112.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td>115.1</td>
<td>116.0</td>
<td>115.2</td>
<td>115.5</td>
<td>114.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-level Reading</td>
<td>118.4</td>
<td>119.0</td>
<td>118.5</td>
<td>117.4</td>
<td>117.8</td>
<td>117.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-level Writing</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>114.3</td>
<td>114.2</td>
<td>113.6</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>113.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>110.5</td>
<td>113.9</td>
<td>111.9</td>
<td>111.6</td>
<td>112.3</td>
<td>110.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Mathematical Data</td>
<td>112.6</td>
<td>112.9</td>
<td>112.9</td>
<td>111.7</td>
<td>112.4</td>
<td>112.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Assessment Results

The University Parallel AAAS, Business Management AAS, Electrical Construction Certificate, and General Technology AAS. All programs under review met each standard of excellence in the Academic Audit process. In order to promote continuous improvements, program specific suggestions, as well as accolades, were provided by the review teams. This is available upon request.

Major Field Test Results

- 2006-07: Drafting Design Technology (Now Industrial Technology/Industrial Drafting Design): Northeast State’s average score (68.21) was 6.13 points higher than its previous score of 62.98 in 2002-2003 and 2.91 points above the current national norm (65.3).
- 2005-2006: Electrical Technology: Target Score: 65.20 Actual Score: 64.29. The following subsections were noted as areas of strength: Identification of Tools, Materials, and Components; Blueprints, Drawings, Diagrams, and Symbols; Raceway and Conduit Bending;
and Motors, Motor Control Circuits, and PLCs. The following subsections were noted as opportunities for improvement: Basic Computer Skills and DC Basic Electric and Electronic Theories. Corrective actions were implemented for these areas.

Enrolled Student Survey (CCSSE) Implemented in spring 2005:
Northeast State failed overall when compared to its cohort group and the full CCSSE Cohort group. While not statistically significant, a few areas were noted in which the institution scored lower than the mean, as noted below:

Benchmark Data: All Student Responses
Northeast State scored slightly below the mean as compared to the consortium for the categories of "Active and Collaborative Learning" (50.4 vs. 50.6), "Student Effort" (50.1 vs. 51.1), "Academic Challenge" (48.6 vs. 50.9), and "Support for Learners" (48.6 vs. 49.8). The institution also scored slightly below the mean as compared to the full 2005 CCSSE Cohort for the categories of "Academic Challenge" (48.6 vs. 50.0), and "Support for Learners" (48.6 vs. 50.0).

Benchmark Data: Weighted Part-Time Student Responses
Northeast State scored slightly below the mean as compared to the consortium for the categories of "Active and Collaborative Learning" (46.8 vs. 46.9), "Student Effort" (44.3 vs. 46.3), "Academic Challenge" (43.5 vs. 46.1), and "Support for Learners" (42.6 vs. 46.4). The institution also scored slightly below the mean as compared to the full 2005 CCSSE Cohort for the categories of "Active and Collaborative Learning" (45.8 vs. 46.1), "Student Effort" (44.3 vs. 46.3), "Academic Challenge" (48.8 vs. 50.0), "Support for Learners" (46.6 vs. 50.0), and "Support for Learners" (42.5 vs. 48.6).

Benchmark Data: Weighted Full-Time Student Responses
Northeast State scored slightly below the mean as compared to the consortium for the categories of "Active and Collaborative Learning" (54.2 vs. 54.6), "Student Effort" (54.9 vs. 55.2), "Academic Challenge" (53.2 vs. 55.0), and "Support for Learners" (49.9 vs. 52.8). The institution also scored slightly below the mean as compared to the full 2005 CCSSE Cohort for the categories of "Active and Collaborative Learning" (54.2 vs. 56.2), "Student Effort" (54.9 vs. 55.6), "Academic Challenge" (53.2 vs. 55.7), "Support for Learners" (49.9 vs. 54.5), and "Support for Learners" (42.5 vs. 48.6).

*It should be noted that Northeast State fully initiated The Learning Center, which provides free tutoring in virtually all subject areas after the distribution of the CCSSE survey instrument to students.

Alumni Survey Implemented in spring 2007:
Overall, Northeast State performed well as compared to other TBR community colleges, the College received full Performance Funding points for this assessment. There were two questions in which the mean score for Northeast State was below the institution's previous performance or the current average for TBR community colleges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Item</th>
<th>Inst. Avg</th>
<th>State Avg</th>
<th>Inst. Prior Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used an electronic medium to complete assignment (scale: 1-4)</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Financial Aid Services (scale: 1-4)</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employer Survey Current assessment is in process. Historically, employers have rated Northeast State high with regard to their overall satisfaction. A few comments have noted that a few graduates appear to lack an understanding of expectations with regard to soft skills.
Appendix G

QEP Plan Development Team

Steering Committee
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics, Co-chair
- Dr. Carolyn McCracken, Acting Dean of Science, Co-chair
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Mr. James Kelly, Assistant Professor of History and Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence

Retreat Team to Narrow the Focus of the QEP
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics, Co-chair
- Dr. Carolyn McCracken, Acting Dean of Science, Co-chair
- Dr. William Locke, President
- Dr. Steven Campbell, Vice President for Business Affairs
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. James C. Leffer, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Mr. Michael Bledsoe, Dean of Technical Education
- Mr. Donald Coleman, Dean of Health-Related Professions
- Mr. Duncan Parsons, Dean of the Library
- Dr. Xiaoping Wang, Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Dr. Melessia Webb, Dean of Nursing
- Mr. William Wilson, Dean of Humanities
- Mr. Ken Brewer, Instructor of Psychology
- Ms. Robin Byrne, Associate Professor of Physics
- Mr. Eric Fish, Assistant Professor/Coordinator of English/Faculty Senate Representative
- Dr. Rick Merritt, Assistant Professor of Speech
- Ms. Mitzi Neeley, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education
- Mr. Gary Potter, Assistant Professor of Speech
- Mr. Mahmood Sabri, Instructor of Computer Science
- Ms. Kathy Coleman, Director of the Student Success Center
- Dr. Tom Wallace, Director of Academic Computing
- Mr. Keith Glover, Coordinator of Student Development and Activities
- Ms. Jill Bowers, Lab Assistant of The Learning Center
- Mr. Chris Demas, Librarian/Co-chair of the Professional Development Committee

Center for Teaching Excellence Taskforce
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics, Co-chair
- Mr. William Wilson, Dean of Humanities, Co-chair
- Ms. Misty Carriger, Assistant Professor of Biology
- Mr. Fred Cope, Associate Professor of Electrical Technology
- Mr. Eric Fish, Assistant Professor/Coordinator of English/Faculty Senate Representative
- Dr. Rick Merritt, Assistant Professor of Speech
- Ms. Mitzi Neeley, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education
- Dr. Tom Wallace, Director of Academic Computing
- Ms. Jill Bowers, Lab Assistant of The Learning Center
- Mr. Chris Demas, Librarian/Co-chair of the Professional Development Committee
- Ms. Lana Becker, ETSU Doctoral Intern
- Ms. Garnett Williams, ODU Doctoral Intern
### Appendix H

**Center for Teaching Excellence Strategic Planning and Fiscal Resources for 2009-2010**

#### 2009-2010 UNIT OBJECTIVES

**Organization Code:** 15020  
**Category:** Operating Exp.  
**Administration:** James Kelly  
**Division/Department:** The Center for Teaching Excellence  
**Assessment:** Duncan Parsons  
**Major Functional Unit:** Academic Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Unit Objectives (Expected Outcomes)</th>
<th>$ or Other Resource Allocation</th>
<th>Key Objective</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Promote the effectiveness of the division through the purchase of standard operational items.</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a, 4d</td>
<td>Promote the development of student-centered instructional best practice initiatives (purchase software that will support this expected outcome)</td>
<td>$9,190.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a, 4d</td>
<td>Promote the development of student-centered instructional best practice initiatives (purchase software that will support this expected outcome)</td>
<td>$1,900.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a, 4d</td>
<td>Promote the faculty's understanding and use of student-centered instructional best practices and related initiatives through the provision of workshops and other learning opportunities</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$11,190.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organization Code:** 15020  
**Category:** Personnel  
**Administration:** James Kelly  
**Division/Department:** The Center for Teaching Excellence  
**Assessment:** Duncan Parsons  
**Major Functional Unit:** Academic Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Unit Objectives (Expected Outcomes)</th>
<th>$ or Other Resource Allocation</th>
<th>Key Objective</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Support the goal and objectives of STEP through the provision of salaries for the director (20 hours per week) and two faculty assistants (six hours per week each)</td>
<td>$63,330.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$63,330.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organization Code:** 15020  
**Category:** Travel  
**Administration:** James Kelly  
**Division/Department:** The Center for Teaching Excellence  
**Assessment:** Duncan Parsons  
**Major Functional Unit:** Academic Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Unit Objectives (Expected Outcomes)</th>
<th>$ or Other Resource Allocation</th>
<th>Key Objective</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Facilitate student engagement through increased awareness of the major elements of the STEP program (through the orientation program and guest speaker)</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a, 4b</td>
<td>Facilitate student engagement through research of the first student-centered instructional best practice theme, self-regulated learning (to include visits to other institutions or participation at conventions by the director, CTE staff, and/or early implementers, as appropriate)</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$4,500.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I

Job Description and Vita of Center for Teaching Excellence Director

Job Description: Innovative Teaching Center: Center for Teaching Excellence Director Part Time – 20 hrs per week

The Innovative Teaching Center: Center for Teaching Excellence encourages and enables faculty members to utilize research-based and progressive student-centered teaching approaches to enhance their teaching potential and effectiveness. Under the Office of Academic Affairs, the director will provide leadership, technical support, and training to faculty members to promote best practices that enhance student-centered learning. The selected applicant will:

- Research, plan, and coordinate online and on-site professional development opportunities for faculty members
- Manage the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
  - Coordinate activities associated with the year 1 pilot sections
  - Research best practices for the annual theme
  - Plan and coordinate professional development activities to support the annual theme
  - Coordinate fall convocation sessions supporting the annual theme
  - Coordinate annual assessment of the QEP

- Provide orientation sessions about the Center to all new faculty members
- Review the College’s strategic plan and collaborate with faculty members and administrative personnel to develop annual goals, objectives, and budget for the Center
- Develop, coordinate, and administer surveys to students regarding their degree of satisfaction with the instruction and learning environment; meet with Academic Council and the vice president of Institutional Effectiveness to discuss the survey results and develop and implement tactics that will enhance the Center in applicable areas
- Develop, coordinate, and administer surveys to faculty members regarding their degree of satisfaction with the Center’s professional development offerings, resources and learning environment; meet with Academic Council and the vice president of Institutional Effectiveness to discuss the survey results and develop and implement tactics that will enhance the Center in applicable areas
- Serve on Professional Development Committee
- Supervise the Center for Teaching Excellence activities of the faculty members identified for released time for working in the Center

Minimum Qualifications: Master’s degree from accredited institution

- Knowledge of pedagogy
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and Internet applications
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
Vita of Center for Teaching Excellence Director

James Paul Kelly, Jr.

Current Position
Assistant Professor of US History and Humanities
Northeast State Community College

Education
1975 – 1981, Ph.D. coursework (ABD), University of Tennessee
1977, Master of Arts in United States History (Minor in Philosophy and Religion), Appalachian State University
1973, Bachelor of Arts in United States History, Appalachian State University

Teaching Experience and Relevant Employment History
2002 – Present, Assistant Professor of History, (Promoted from instructor to assistant professor) Northeast State Community College
1992 – 2002, Adjunct Instructor of United States History and Humanities, Northeast State Community College
1979 – 1980, Adjunct Instructor of U.S. and World History, Roane State Community College
1975 – 1981, Graduate Teaching Assistant in U.S. History, University of Tennessee
1974 – 1975, Adjunct Instructor of World History, Caldwell Community College
1973 – 1974, Graduate Teaching Assistant, Appalachian State University


Courses Developed and Taught at Northeast State Community College: Humanities 2990 (American Popular Culture) - 3 sections, 2 of which were in E-Reading format; US History 2110 (American Popular Culture) formerly Humanities 2990, (designation changed when the course was approved as a permanent addition to the curriculum)

Selected Campus Activities and Memberships (2002 – Present): Cultural Activities Committee (Chair), Academic Audit Pilot Team, Strategic Planning Task Force, member of several faculty and staff search committees, campus mentor and history content mentor for the Regents Online Degree Program, Internet Curriculum Subcommittee, Professional Development Committee, Desire2Learn faculty trainer, New Student Advisor for the Student Success Center, Student Advisor for the Health-Related Professions Department, and pianist for various campus functions
Appendix J

STEP Implementation Team

- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics, Chair
- Ms. Joyce Sweeney, Secretary
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Ms. Dawn Dabney, Center for Teaching Excellence Faculty Assistant (2010-2011), STEP Early Implementer from Mathematics
- Mr. Darren Ellenburg, STEP Early Implementer from Health-Related Professions
- Mr. Eric Fish, STEP Early Implementer from Humanities
- Mr. David Haga, STEP Early Implementer from Math
- Ms. Kim Harp, STEP Early Implementer from Nursing
- Dr. Pashia Hogan, STEP Early Implementer from Technical Education
- Ms. Linda Lahr, STEP Early Implementer from Health-Related Professions
- Mr. Brent Lockhart, STEP Early Implementer from Sciences
- Dr. David Maldon, STEP Early Implementer from Sciences
- Dr. Rick Merritt, Center for Teaching Excellence Faculty Assistant (2010-2011)/STEP Early Implementer from Behavioral/Social Sciences
- Dr. Melessia Webb, STEP Early Implementer from Nursing
- Mr. James Kelly, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence/Assistant Professor of History
- Dr. Tom Wallace, Director of Academic Computing
- Mr. Keith Glover, Coordinator of Student Development and Activities/Staff advisor for C.L.A.S.S., the Council for Leadership, Advocacy, and Student Success
- Ms. Jill Bowers, Lab Assistant of The Learning Center
- Mr. Chris Demas, Librarian/Co-chair of the Professional Development Committee
- Ms. April Bachman, Student Representative (2010-2011)
Appendix K

Vita of STEP Implementation Chair

Nancy F Forrester

Current Position
Dean of Mathematics and Director of Developmental Studies
Northeast State Community College

Education
1979, Master of Science in Mathematics, East Tennessee State University
1971, Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, East Tennessee State University, Summa cum laude, Named Outstanding Math Graduate, 1971

Teaching Experience and Employment History
1984 – Present, Northeast State Community College
Dean of Mathematics: 2006 – Present
Director of Developmental Studies
2002 – Division Chair of Mathematics (following division split)
Associate Professor of Mathematics
1996 – Division Chair of Mathematics and Sciences
Associate Professor of Mathematics
1995 – Director of Developmental Studies
Director of Student Support Services
1994 – Director of Developmental Studies
Associate Professor of Mathematics
1992 – Associate Professor of Mathematics
Coordinator of Developmental Mathematics
1989 – Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Coordinator of Developmental Mathematics
1985 – Instructor of Mathematics
Coordinator of Developmental Mathematics
1984 – Instructor of Mathematics
1978 – 1984, East Tennessee State University and Virginia Intermont College
Mathematics Adjunct Instructor and Graduate Teaching Assistant
1971 – 1973, Sullivan County Schools, Blountville Middle School, Mathematics Instructor

Current Committees and Activities: Faculty supervision; budget management; schedule planning; hiring adjunct faculty, lab assistants, tutors, etc.; advisement and student concerns; oversight of The Learning Center; Developmental Studies Redesign Project; member of Academic Council, Academic Affairs Committee, Distance Education Subcommittee, General Education Committee, Student Success Oversight Committee, Student Activity Fee Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Technology Planning and Oversight Committee, Technology Access Fee Committee, Performance Funding Oversight Team – 5b Learning Initiative (Chair), Performance Funding Oversight 1a, 2, 3, 4b, 4d, and 5a Teams, Calendar Committee, SACS Leadership Team, QEP Topic Development Team, QEP Plan Development Team (Co-chair), Taskforce for Development of Teaching Center (Co-chair), QEP Plan Implementation Team (Chair)
Appendix L

Academic Council

- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chair
- Dr. James C. Lefler, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Mr. Michael Bledsoe, Dean of Technical Education
- Mr. Donald Coleman, Dean of Health-Related Professions
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics
- Dr. Carolyn McCracken, Acting Dean of Science
- Dr. Xiaoping Wang, Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Dr. Melessia Webb, Dean of Nursing
- Mr. William Wilson, Dean of Humanities
- Ms. Janet Gregg, Recording Secretary
Appendix M

Strategic Planning Committee

Membership: Executive Committee
- Dr. Janice Gilliam, President, Chair
- Dr. Steven Campbell, Vice President for Business Affairs
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Jon Harr, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Fred Lewis, Vice President for Information Technology
- Ms. Kathy Jo Yates, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Dr. James C. Lefler, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Ms. Jennifer Starling, Dean of Admissions and Records
- Ms. Gerri Brockwell, Director of Human Resources
- Executive Assistant to the President (vacant)
- Special Assistant to the President (vacant)

Membership: Full Committee
- Dr. Janice Gilliam, President, Chair
- Dr. Steven Campbell, Vice President for Business Affairs
- Dr. Susan Graybeal, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Ms. Allana Hamilton, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Jon Harr, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Fred Lewis, Vice President for Information Technology
- Ms. Kathy Jo Yates, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs (vacant)
- Dr. James C. Lefler, Assistant Vice President for Evening and Distance Education
- Mr. Michael Bledsoe, Dean of Technical Education
- Mr. Donald Coleman, Dean of Health-Related Professions
- Ms. Nancy Forrester, Dean of Mathematics
- Dr. Carolyn McCracken, Acting Dean of Science
- Mr. Duncan Parsons, Dean of the Library
- Ms. Jennifer Starling, Dean of Admissions and Records
- Dr. Xiaoping Wang, Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Dr. Melessia Webb, Dean of Nursing
- Mr. William Wilson, Dean of Humanities
- Dr. Charles Charlton, Associate Professor, Behavioral/Social Sciences
- Ms. Carol Cole, Professor, Technical Education/President of Faculty Senate
- Ms. Susan Fitzpatrick, Associate Professor, Mathematics
- Dr. Pashia Hogan, Professor, Technical Education
- Ms. Gerri Brockwell, Director of Human Resources
- Ms. Kathy Coleman, Director of Student Success Center
- Mr. James Kelly, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence/Assistant Professor of History
- Ms. Kathy Thacker, Director of Northeast State at Kingsport
- Ms. Patricia Chandler, Coordinator of Veterans Affairs and Assistant to the Dean
- Mr. James Henrichs, Coordinator of Enrollment Services/Campus Information
- Ms. Kelly Murphree, Grants and Contracts Officer
- Ms. Michelle Wyatt, Library Assistant
- Executive Assistant to the President (vacant)
- Special Assistant to the President (vacant)
- Ms. April Barrett, Student Representative
Appendix N

Representative Sample of Assessment Instruments