

# Quality Enhancement Plan

## Sub-Group Project Template

J. Sargeant Reynolds  
Community College



**Due March 7, 2008**

*(All completed templates should be uploaded to the SharePoint site.)*

**Project Title:** Faculty Success

**Theme project is related to:**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Support                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Career Advising   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Adjunct Training</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advising                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction       |

**Project Description:**

Implement a comprehensive learning community for adjunct faculty to learn about learners. Teaching and learning is about relationships. Through learning, faculty will become better teachers and will improve relationships that will make better learners.

The necessity for training is apparent: This college relies upon its adjunct faculty for the majority of its instruction, and the practical expertise that adjunct faculty bring to the classroom is highly valued, yet there are many important aspects of teaching and learning with which an adjunct faculty member may lack experience.

Once this training is in place, we can open it to new faculty, or faculty who would like professional development opportunities in these areas. This will broaden the faculty learning community to include all JSRCC faculty, and give all faculty the opportunity to learn about learners. The biggest room we all have as faculty is the room for improvement.

The training program would consist of graduated training levels, using courses based on best practices discovered through research. Courses will involve training in pedagogy (teaching and learning), technology, and BlackBoard. The outcome creates a richer, more productive learning environment through distance learning.

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**How does this project support the mission and vision of the institution?**

This project: provides a well-trained faculty to support greater student success and retention; promotes the institutional commitment to excellence and demonstrates that the College is continuously seeking avenues for quality improvement; encourages collaboration between staff and faculty; and enhances the teaching and learning environments.

**How is this project tied to the strategic plan of the institution? (2008-2009)**

## **2.0 TEACHING AND LEARNING**

*Ensure that teaching and learning remain the focus of JSRCC in helping students achieve their personal learning and career goals.*

- 2.1 Increase awareness and use of instructional techniques focused on active and collaborative learning, distance learning, diverse learning styles, and interdisciplinary approaches.
  - 2.1.1 Deliver training on new instructional techniques.
  - 2.1.2 Develop a peer-to-peer, cross-disciplinary, annual faculty symposium on effective application of collaborative learning and diverse learning style teaching techniques.
  - 2.1.3 Continue to design and implement cross-curriculum learning communities that engage a variety of approaches to enhance student learning.
- 2.6 Increase the college's first-time, full-time, program-placed student retention rate from 56% to 65% (90<sup>th</sup> percentile for peer institutions) and the first-time, part-time, program-placed student retention rate from 41% to 45% (90<sup>th</sup> percentile for peer institutions).
  - 2.6.1 Continue implementation of the college's Retention Plan.
- 2.8 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students from 10.7% to 20% (90<sup>th</sup> percentile for peer institutions) by 2010.
  - 2.8.1 Implement best practices from peer institutions for increasing graduation rates.
  - 2.8.2 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students to 15% by June 2009.
  - 2.8.3 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students to 20% by June 2010.
  - 2.8.4 Continue to market the timeliness and benefits of graduation.

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### **What data (internal and/or external) supports the importance of implementing this project?**

JSRCC [Productivity Analysis System \(PAS\) for Fall 2007](#) shows: Adjunct teach approximately 60% of the course credits, and approximately 60% of the student credit hours (that is, they are not teaching abnormally high or low enrollment classes compared to full-time faculty). They are teaching about 62% of the contact hours (actual clock time in the classroom).

Field Code Changed

As stated in Harris, M. and Gibson, S. [(Summer 2007): 147 (7). Course perceptions of distance education students. (Report). *Academic Exchange Quarterly*.], "Research by Hamann, Pollock and Wilson (2006) suggests that the delivery mode does not necessarily drive learning. Instead effective teaching is what truly promotes student learning. Students learn best in a well organized course that allows for active learning opportunities." It is imperative that the college provides the training of instructors to ensure that course delivery is presented to the learners in the most effective manner.

“Whatever the form, a meaningful emphasis of student learning demands some kind of serious program for faculty development as teachers... Adopting the best educational practices and structuring courses, curricula, and university support programs to stimulate student involvement enhances the conditions for learning and individual development.” [Frye, R. Assessment, accountability, and student learning. Retrieved February 1, 2008 from <http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~dialogue/issue2.html> (Richard Frye, Ph.D., is a Planning Analyst for the Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing at Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.)]

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**SACS broadly defines student learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors or values. What is the definition of student learning in the context of this project?**

The ability to demonstrate competence in the concepts and skills identified as the course objectives in the outlines and syllabi for classes taught by adjunct faculty.

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**How will you know that the identified learning outcomes have been achieved (assessment)?**

- Student Success within courses taught by adjuncts (Grades of A, B, C will be higher).
  - Student Success within courses taught by full time faculty
  - Improved performance on outcome assessment measures
  - Improved performance on core competency assessments
  - Academic performance after transfer (for transfer programs)
  - Positive results on graduate survey
  - Increased retention rate
  - Increased graduation rates
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**What best practices are going to be used as a part of this project and why?**

“There are many different strategies that have been used for faculty development in higher education. Menges and Weimer (1996) list the different approaches that have been found to be successful. These are a) workshops and seminars; b) individual consultation; c) grants for instructional improvement; resources materials; and colleagues helping colleagues.” (Scalese, E A Blended Approach to Faculty Development makes for a Smooth Mix. Retrieved February 4, 2008 from [www.sloan-c.org/conference/proceedings/2006/ppt/1160529785121.doc](http://www.sloan-c.org/conference/proceedings/2006/ppt/1160529785121.doc))

The project will start as a pilot program and will be open to all faculty with heavy recruiting of adjunct faculty. Workshops/seminars will be offered on Teaching and Learning and Blackboard for the first year. After the first year, we will assess the program, and then expand the program to include workshops/seminars addressing Teaching with Technology. Workshops/seminars will be delivered through online, hybrid and face-to-face formats. The face-to-face and hybrid can be done onsite at the college on Friday afternoons and Saturdays, allowing for some flexibility for the attendees. Full-time faculty will be accepted in these workshops/seminars as well. Workshops/seminars will be delivered by full-time faculty, adjunct faculty with experience in topic, and staff. We will partner with CCWA to find other instructors as needed.

The curriculum will be a level format (Level I, II, and III), with five (5) workshops/seminars in each level, with specific workshops/seminars making up each piece. For example, Level I could be BlackBoard training, Writing Syllabi, Developing a Teaching Philosophy, Classroom Assessment Techniques, and Active Learning. This is just a possible scenario, and the levels and seminars will be addressed at the time of the planning.

We are looking to follow the model the VCU uses for its faculty, which can be found at: <http://www.vcu.edu/cte/workshops/workshops.htm>. VCU does do all onsite, but we will offer these sessions online, hybrid, and/or face-to-face. Faculty members face time constraints, so a blended approach of online workshops and seminars establish a sustained culture of collaboration.

Through research, we found that in order to be fully effective, training sessions should:

- be presented through a coherent curriculum that provides a logical sequence;
- have interaction with full-time and adjunct faculty;
- be provided through a convenient schedule to make accessible to on-site and off-site instructors;
- be available in three formats: online, hybrid, and face-to-face;
- include competency assessments (particularly for technology topics) so that attendees can “test out” of sessions and receive credit for them.

#### Faculty Learning Community:

Creating this Faculty Success program lends itself to the best practices of fostering a Faculty Learning Communities Program. Miami University in Ohio states, on its Faculty Learning Communities page: “Evidence shows that FLCs increase faculty interest in teaching and learning and provide safety and support for faculty to investigate, attempt, assess, and adopt new (to them) methods. In the literature about student learning communities, the word ‘student’ usually can be replaced by ‘faculty’ and still make the same point, for example, ‘Learning community students generally fare better academically, socially, and personally than those in comparison groups.’”

“The climate in which educators work is a critical element in forming perspectives of teaching and learning. When educators work within an environment in which their high value is communicated and in which they are addressed as professionals, they can develop responsibility for and invest time in their professional development. Intrinsic motivation powerfully complements extrinsic rewards and can be communicated through the organization, individual relationships, and the manner in which professional development is planned and delivered....

Such learning is well received when educators interact with the content and with one another through multiple instructional strategies. Collaborative learning offers one way to cultivate this interaction with experience, content, and application, and to build opportunities for reflection, application, and dialogue.

...Rather than professional development stopping when an in-service program ends, educators have the opportunity to continue learning both individually and together, when their organization supports and validates their learning, experience and collaboration.” (King, Melia & Dunham, December 2005)

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#### **What resources (human, fiscal, academic, technology) will be needed to complete this project?**

- Incentives for adjunct faculty
  - Compensation for faculty involved in program
  - AV needs
  - Consumables
  - Increase in staffing (security, housekeeping)
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### **What could be the impact on student learning if this project is not implemented?**

This project is essential to developing a world-class course curriculum and teaching; the college needs to implement some of these actions even if this project is not chosen as the one project. Status quo is no longer acceptable. Improving teaching has a systematic positive effect on student learning. If students are not retained due to disappointment in learning, Reynolds will not be doing its part to increase the number of college degrees that are imperative for the growth of Richmond's educated workforce and regional prosperity.

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### **Name(s) of faculty/staff involved in the preparation of this project template.**

Donna Levy, Barbara Grano, Joseph Appiah, Ty Corbin, Kristi Green, Brenda Falconer, Pamela Ratliff, Lois Bradley, Rhodora Snow, Dedra Hampton

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