

# WCC 4 ME



**Making online learning click  
for first year students!  
[wcc4me.com](http://wcc4me.com) - [#wcc4me](https://twitter.com/wcc4me)**

Wytheville Community College

SACSCOC

On-Site Reaffirmation Committee Visit

October 26-29, 2015

**Table of Contents**

Statement by the President.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Overview of Wytheville Community College.....	6
Key Terms and Definitions.....	8
Development and Selection of the QEP Topic.....	10
Outline of WCC4ME.....	18
Literature Review and Best Practices.....	21
Actions to be Implemented.....	30
Timeline.....	39
Personnel and Organizational Structure.....	46
Resources.....	50
Assessment.....	54
Appendix A: WCC QEP First Round of Voting-Topics and Brief Descriptions.....	63
Appendix B: Executive Summary WCC QEP Viability Report.....	67
Appendix C: 2015 QEP Original Leadership Committee.....	69
Appendix D: WCC Title III Grant-Goal Results for FY 2014-2015.....	70
Appendix E: Online Learning Success Statistics.....	75
Appendix F: Professional Development-Tiers of Certification.....	78
Appendix G: Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument.....	79
Appendix H: Organizational Structure of Wytheville Community College.....	81
Appendix I: WCC4ME Committee Descriptions.....	82
References.....	84



Welcome to Wytheville Community College's (WCC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): **WCC4Me!**

WCC's QEP focuses upon helping first-time, online learners be successful in online course completion. The QEP is informed by WCC's recent Title III project directed at strengthening online learning, and additional information gleaned from the college during the development phase of the QEP.

The selection of this topic is especially relevant and important to WCC and those whom we serve: Nearly one-half of WCC's FTE are generated by online learners. In the grand scheme of higher education, this online mode of delivery is relatively young, but has seen phenomenal growth in popularity and demand. As institutions of higher education, we have asked our faculty to take on the challenging task of creating a learning environment that is delivered online, without the benefit of "social presence" and live interaction, but expect results comparable to the traditional face-to-face learning environment. In all honesty we have, in many instances, done this without providing the necessary support and professional development for our faculty.

Likewise, we have expected our students to make this transition to the online learning environment without taking adequate steps to assess their requisite skills, or to make sure that they are aware of those skills, their relative strengths and weaknesses, and the resources to support them and help them to be successful.

WCC4Me is Wytheville Community College's approach to providing WCC's students, faculty and staff with the resources to ensure that first-time, online learners are successful in completing their online courses.

Dean Sprinkle  
President, WCC

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

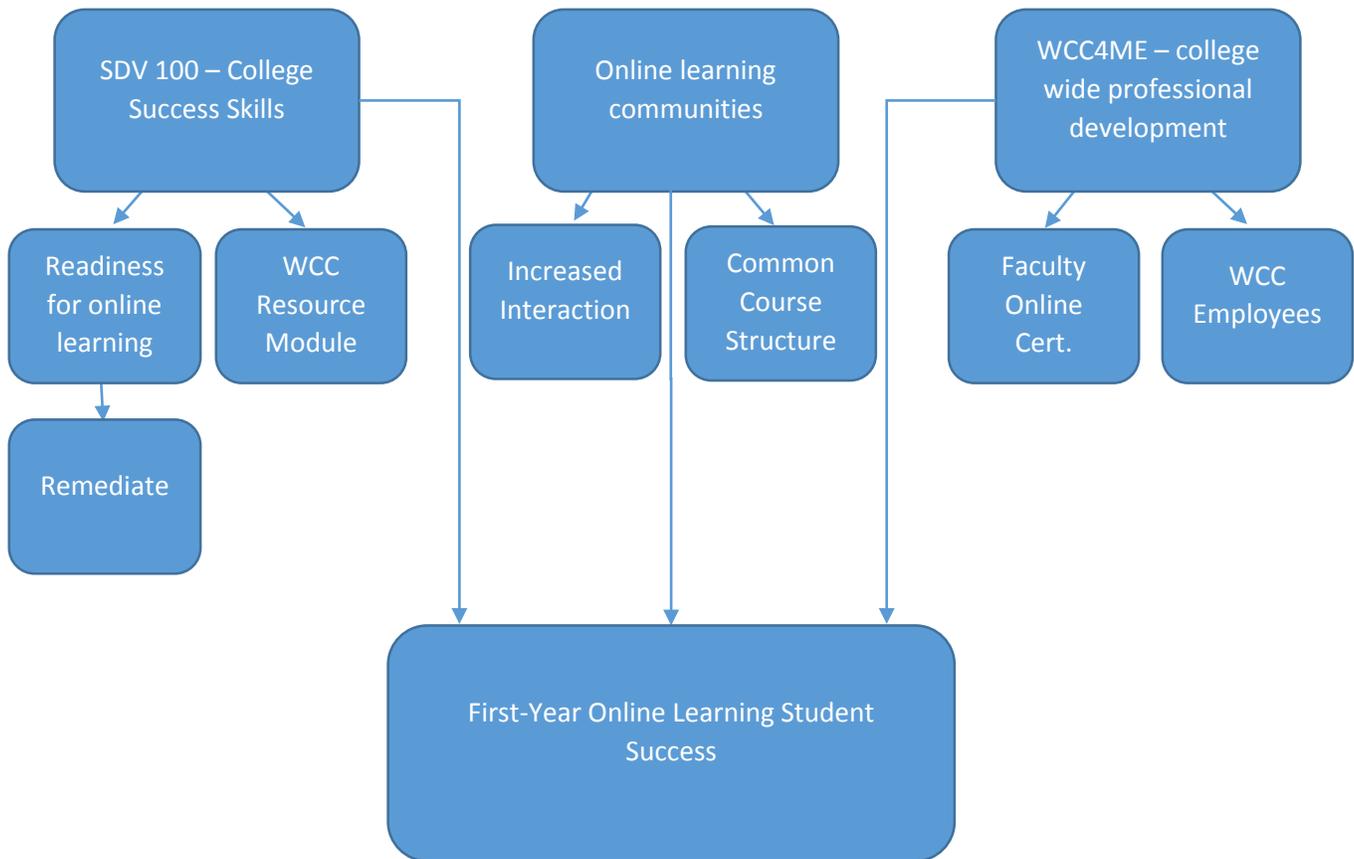
The mission statement of Wytheville Community College states: “Wytheville Community College is committed to providing access to lifelong learning within an environment of academic excellence.” As a part of this commitment, WCC is increasingly providing access to students from the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and the City of Galax, via distance learning. WCC has seen its percentage of enrollment in online courses increase from 30.4% in the fall of 2009 to 47.1% in the spring of 2015. While the percentage of students enrolled strictly in the online environment has steadily increased, the pass rate for online students at WCC has remained approximately 85%, which is significantly below the pass rate for traditional courses.

The WCC community at large chose the topic of the current QEP project to be the first-year experience. The QEP Leadership Team narrowed the focus of the first-year experience to the first-year experience of online learners based heavily on the data. Beyond these data, the topic was also chosen in light of WCC’s involvement in the Title III Strengthening Institutions grant that was received in 2010. The focus of the Title III grant was to help WCC improve its distance learning program. At the time the Title III grant proposal was submitted, data from 2008 indicated that out of 348 first-time in college students, 54.7% either dropped out, withdrew, or failed to pass their course (WCC Institutional Research Office, March 2008). The dropout rate for traditional students in the same courses was 38.5%, a difference of 16.2%. Pass rates for the students in asynchronous classes averaged 58.9% compared to 76.7% for traditional students, a difference of over 17%. While the Title III grant helped improve faculty preparedness for teaching in distance learning courses, WCC recognized that additional work needed to be done to help improve the readiness of distance learners to succeed in the online environment. Research has shown that one of the best indicators of future success in the online learning environment is the successful completion of previous online courses. It is believed that an online

self-efficacy is developed by students who have learned to be successful in online courses (Hachey, Waldis, and Conway, 2012).

The focus of the WCC QEP, entitled WCC4ME, is to help our first-time online learners be successful in the online learning environment. It is hypothesized that this early intervention and desired increase in success of first-time online learners will permeate throughout the WCC online course community and lead to an overall increase in successful completion of online courses at WCC. The direct interventions of the QEP are:

1. A redesign of the online SDV 100 College Success Skills course that will implement an Online Learning Success module that includes an online learning readiness assessment.
2. Remediation for students on areas identified as deficient by the online learning readiness indicator.
3. The implementation of learning communities (see Terms and Definitions) in online courses identified as having a high number of first-year students enrolled.
4. College-wide development of, and professional development on, the resources available to support students in the online learning environment.



*WCC4ME: Helping WCC first-time online learners be successful.*

## OVERVIEW OF WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Wytheville Community College (WCC) is located in Wytheville in the southwestern region of Virginia, in the Appalachian Mountains. WCC welcomed its first students in September of 1963, as a two-year branch of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. During its first year of operation, the college enrolled 107 students and employed five full-time faculty members. The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) was established during the 1966 session of the Virginia General Assembly. WCC became a member of the system on July 1, 1967.

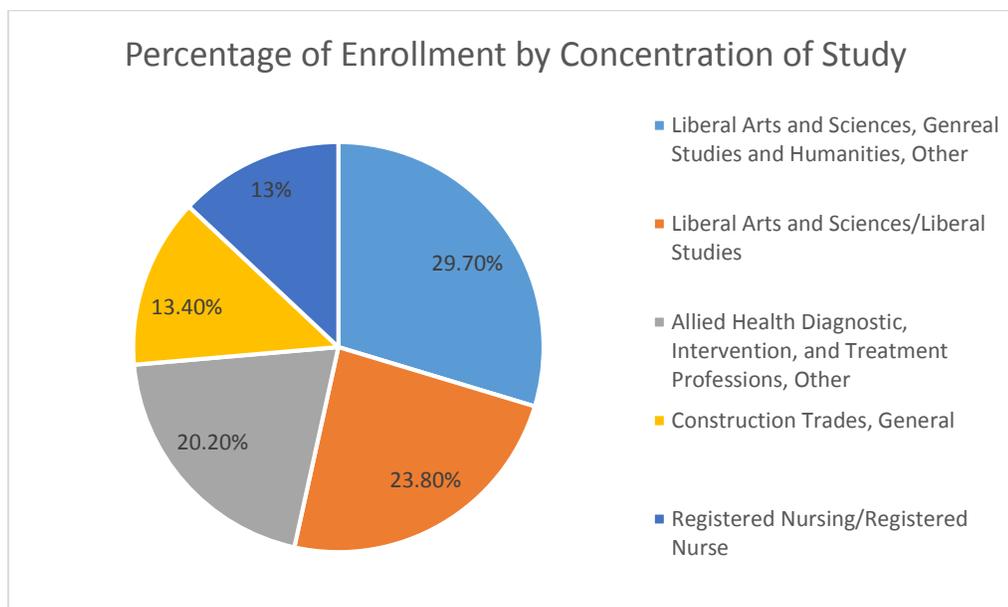
WCC offers a wide range of programs that include technical programs, transfer programs, and developmental courses to assist in successful transition to college, continuing education, and Workforce Development for job preparedness. To meet the needs of the community, the college offers traditional, hybrid, and online courses at the Wytheville Campus, the Summit Center in Marion, and at the Crossroads Institute in Galax. In the fall of 2014, WCC had an enrollment of over 3,300 students with 44.5% of these students being enrolled in at least one online course.

Over the years, the college's enrollment has grown. In 2014-2015, WCC had nearly 4,300 students with 45 full-time and 87 part-time faculty. The college is a two-year comprehensive community college with an open enrollment policy that serves the citizens of the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and the city of Galax. The composition of the student body is 37% full-time and 63% part-time, and 61% female and 39% male, while 75% are curricular students and 25% are non-curricular students. WCC is one of 23 colleges in the VCCS and operates under policies established by the State Board for Community Colleges and the Wytheville Community College Board, which serves as an advisory board. Additionally, WCC is authorized by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The college is financed primarily with state funds, including tuition dollars, supplemented by contributions from the participating localities.

The majority of students who attend WCC are males, nearly 63.5% with 36.5% being females. Approximately 88.8% of the student population identifies as White Non-Hispanic with the next largest group at 7.3% identifying as Black Non-Hispanic ([www.StateUniversity.com](http://www.StateUniversity.com), 2015).

The two-year degrees that WCC offers include the Associate of the Arts, the Associate of Science and the Associate in Applied Science. In addition to the degrees, students can obtain

diplomas and certificates in various programs. Below depicts the percentage of enrolled students by concentration of study.



## KEY TERMS and DEFINITIONS

**BIO 101-General Biology I-** focuses on foundations in cellular structure, genetics, and metabolism in the evolutionary context; explores core concepts of evolution, information flow, storage and exchange, structure and function, pathways and transformations of energy and matter; emphasizes the process of science, the interdisciplinary approach, and relevance of biology to society.(Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**Blackboard Learning Management System (Bb)-** Is an online course management system that provides faculty and students with tools to develop content, engage, collaborate, grade and track assignments. (Blackboard Learn)

**Distance/Online Learning-** according to SACSCOC distance education is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. For the purposes of WCC's QEP distance/online learning refers to courses delivered asynchronously, where the instruction delivered 100% online. (Distance and Correspondence Education- Policy Statement, 2014)

**ENG 111-College Composition I-** introduces students to critical thinking and the fundamental of academic writing; through the writing process, students refine topics: develop and support ideas; investigate, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate resources; edit for effective style and

usage; and determine appropriate approaches for a variety of contexts, audiences, and purposes. (Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**First Year Experience-** having either limited or no experience in the online learning environment.

**HIS 121-United States History I-** surveys United States history from its beginning to the present. (Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**Interaction-** in reference to WCC's QEP, interaction is defined within an online course as communication between faculty and students, and communication between students and other students as part of the curriculum.

**ITE 115-Introduction to Computer Applications and Concepts-** covers computer concepts and internet skills, and uses a software suite which includes word processing, spreadsheet, database, and presentation software to demonstrate skills. (Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**Learning Community-** a group of individuals who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct meaning and confirm mutual understanding (Wilcoxon, 2011)

**Pass Rate-** students receiving a final grade of A, B, or C in the course.

**SDV 100-College Success Skills-** student development skills course that provides an overview of college policies, procedures, and curricular offerings; assists students toward college success through information regarding academic planning, college resources, and effective study habits. (Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**SOC 200-Principles of Sociology-** introduces fundamentals of social life; presents significant research and theory in areas such as culture, social structure, socialization, deviance, social stratification, and social institutions. (Virginia Community College System Course Catalog)

**SmarterMeasure™-** an online assessment tool that measures a student's level of readiness to take an online course. The tool provides the students with a detailed report highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. (Smarter Measures)

**Student Learning Outcomes-** learning outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that learners have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program. (How to Write Objectives)

**Student Persistence-** in reference to WCC's QEP, persistence refers to a student, who remains active in and completes an online course. Students, who do not show persistence either withdraw or become inactive prior to last day of class.

**Social Presence-** "The ability of learners to project themselves socially and affectively into a community of inquiry." (Description: Social Presence)

**Student Retention-** in reference to WCC's QEP, retention refers to a student enrolled in one semester, who returns to college the following semester as part of an ongoing program of study.

**Student Readiness**– the degree to which a student is prepared to be successful in an online/distance learning course. In the WCC QEP, student readiness is being measured by the Smarter Measures assessment.

**Student Success**– a student is deemed successful in a course if they receive a final grade of A, B, or C. Students are deemed unsuccessful if they receive a final grade of D, F, or W.

**Teaching Presence**– “The design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educational worthwhile learning outcomes.” (Description: Instructor Presence)

**Traditional/Face-to-Face Course**– a course that requires students to meet with the instructor at the same time and classroom location.

## DEVELOPMENT AND SELECTION OF QEP TOPIC

As part of the decennial reaffirmation process for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), WCC began the process of identifying the topic for the upcoming Quality Enhancement Plan or QEP in the fall of 2013. WCC sought to develop a QEP that would, as had the Title III grant, support the college's mission to provide “access to lifelong learning within an environment of academic excellence”.

The development began with a brainstorming process involving the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development, the Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, a Professor of Psychology (who had also been the chair of the previous WCC QEP), and an Associate Professor of Communication Studies and Theatre (who was heavily involved in the previous WCC QEP). The above aforementioned committee recommended that a survey be used to begin the process of selecting a topic for the next WCC QEP.

The committee recommended the use of an online survey to ensure the potential for broad-based involvement for all WCC stakeholders. On September 24, 2013, an email was sent to 3,850 WCC stakeholders. The stakeholders included WCC students, faculty, staff, wage employees, administrators, board members and retirees. The email discussed the purpose of

the QEP asked the respondents to answer the following four open ended questions by October 8, 2013.

1. Please describe a QEP topic that you feel would be appropriate for Wytheville Community College (100 words or less).
2. How would a focus on this topic meet a need or provide an enhancement to IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING?
3. What are the benefits to students and the College of addressing the proposed topic?
4. If you do not have a specific topic to suggest, do you have an issue/concern you would like addressed in the broad based QEP topic?

Sixty-four (64) individuals responded to this initial survey. On October 10, a list of all submitted ideas was compiled by the Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness. The list included 31 unique topics (Appendix A). The list of topic suggestions was then sent via email to the same 3,850 WCC stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, and community members) for a second round of voting. These 3,850 surveyors were asked to choose up to five of the potential topics under consideration that they would like to see enacted at WCC, and responses to this survey were used to cull the list of potential topics to a “top ten”. The deadline for response was October 15, 2013, and 190 stakeholders responded. Below is a compilation of those results.

**Top Ten Responses from WCC Stakeholders in Second Round of Voting**

Topic	Response Rate	Topic	Response Rate
Distance Learning	31.58%	How to Study Class	22.63%
Preparation			
First Year Experience	30.00%	Expansion of Tutoring	20.53%
		Services	

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
College Readiness	28.95%	Availability of Traditional Classes	20.00%
Critical Thinking	24.74%	WCC Local "Green" Movement	18.42%
Career Readiness	24.21%	Consistency Across Classes	16.32%

Once these "top ten" topics had been identified, a third round of voting was distributed via another online survey to the same 3,850 stakeholders. For this third round of voting WCC stakeholders were asked to select up to three topics for the new QEP from the "top ten" that had been identified, stakeholders were given a deadline of October 22, 2013, for this third round of input. Responses were received from 241 stakeholders and the "top ten" was reduced to the "top five".

**Top Five Responses from WCC Stakeholders in Third Round of Voting**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
Career Readiness	42.74%
Consistency Across Classes	35.68%
Expansion of Tutoring Services	34.44%
Distance Learning Preparation	33.20%
First Year Experience	30.29%

Finally, a fourth survey was sent to the same 3,850 WCC stakeholders requesting that they select their top three choices for the next QEP topic from the remaining five topics ( as listed in the table above) by October 29, 2013. The responses from 234 WCC stakeholders selected Career Readiness (with a response of 27.78%), First-Year experiences (23.93%), and

Distance Learning (21.37%) as the top three choices for the next WCC QEP topic. The Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness shared the top three selected topics with the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Development then distributed the top three topics via email to all WCC stakeholders.

Due to lack of adequate direction from instructional leadership, the project failed to progress as it should have during the period of October 2013 through Summer 2014. At that time, the former President tasked the former Vice President of Instruction and Student Development to ask members of the previous QEP Leadership Team and two additional WCC faculty, who had attended the SACSCOC 2014 Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation, to conduct a literature review on each of the three possible topics for potential viability. This committee included a Professor of Psychology (previous WCC QEP chair), HVAC Instructor, Assistant Professor of Computer Information Systems, Assistant Professor of English, Assistant Professor of Human Services, Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, two Professors of Communication Studies and Theatre, Associate Professor of Dental Hygiene, Associate Professor of Nursing and the Dean of Transfer, Business and Social Sciences. The team completed the literature review and developed a written report called the QEP Viability Report. The Executive Summary of that report can be found in Appendix B. Based on the literature review and committee discussions, the team submitted its report on October 24, 2014, and recommended that WCC focus its new QEP on the first-year college experience. The committee submitted that report and recommendation to the President's Cabinet and it was approved.

Shortly after the First-Year experience was selected as the topic, WCC underwent several sudden administrative changes. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Development was reassigned to the Virginia Community College (VCCS) central office and the

Dean of Transfer, Business and Social Sciences announced her retirement. Valuable time was lost during these transitions and in December 2014, the Interim Vice President of Instruction and the Interim Dean of Transfer, Business, and Social Sciences met with the leader of the previous QEP Leadership Team, discussed the approved topic, and asked Dr. Teresa Galyean, Professor of Psychology, to lead the development of the new WCC QEP project. Additional employees were invited via email from the Vice President of Instruction to serve on the new QEP Leadership Team.

The 2015 QEP Leadership Team met for the first time on December 10, 2014. The specific members of the committee by name and title can be found in Appendix C. At the first meeting on December 10, 2014, the new 2015 QEP Leadership Committee was informed that First-Year Experience had been recommended as the new QEP topic by the committee that had conducted the literature review in October of 2014.

The 2015 QEP Leadership Team met again on January 14, 2015, and January 21, 2015. In an effort to focus resources and better understand implementation of the new QEP topic, the college enlisted the expertise of an outside consultant. The consultant visited the WCC campus on January 30, 2015, and encouraged the 2015 QEP Leadership Team to:

- Find a way to refine the focus of the First-Year Experience and to make the decision based on institutional data.
- Consider SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.12 as it moved forward with its decision making and narrowing of the topic.

The next time the 2015 QEP Leadership Team met, on February 4, 2015, the committee members voiced agreement with the recommendation to narrow the focus of the topic of First-Year Experience. In addition, several committee members noted that all further decisions should be based on institutional assessment data. At that meeting, the WCC Coordinator of Distance

and Distributive Learning and the WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness both suggested the QEP topic be focused on the First-Year Experience of Distance Learning students at WCC. The recommendation for this topic focus was heavily based on pertinent data from a current Title III grant WCC received in September of 2010; this grant was in the fourth year of implementation. The Title III grant was primarily focused on improving the skills of WCC online instructors in an effort to increase student success in WCC online courses. However, the Title III grant data demonstrated that the interventions had little to no effect on increasing student success in WCC online courses. Current data from the Title III project demonstrated that the percent of students in online courses increased from 30.4% in the fall of 2009 to 47.1% in the spring of 2015. The pass rate for distance learning students from the fall semester of 2009 to the spring semester of 2015 has remained at or near 85% since the beginning of the Title III grant in 2009. In addition, the latest data from the Title III grant show that while the pass rate of distance learning students has remained at or near 85%, the pass rate of traditional face-to-face students has increased from 88.9% in the fall of 2009 to 91.6% in the spring of 2015. This six percentage point difference between the success of online learners as compared to face-to-face learners is statistically significant (based upon 2-proportion z-test, traditional vs distance learning, that was significant at the  $p < .001$ ) and further validates refining the topic from first-year experience to the first-year experience of online learners. The Title III grant data are summarized graphically in its entirety in Appendix D.

The 2015 QEP Leadership Committee agreed that since the interventions on the faculty side had not shown the desired increase in online student learning success the new QEP, now called WCC4ME, would focus on student interventions that would increase the success of our first-time online learners. The purpose of WCC4ME is to help first-time online learners be successful. The final topic selection was unanimously approved by the 2015 QEP Leadership Committee.

Additional data from the previous Title III grant project, relative to the retention of online students, further justified the selection of the new QEP Topic for WCC. The retention rate for distance learners from the fall of 2014 to the spring of 2015 was 69.3% as compared to 72.2% for traditional delivery. Retention rates leave room for significant improvement in the retention percentage of our distance learners.

Successful course completion, retention from semester to semester, as well as progress towards program completion has always been a priority of WCC. However, the course success, retention, and progress of WCC students has become increasingly important to WCC as the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) phases in Performance Based Funding (PBF) over the next five years. By the year 2020, 20% of each VCCS college's state budget allocation will have to be earned by meeting performance based metrics. There are fifteen different metrics in the VCCS PBF model that allow colleges to earn points towards the outcome-based portion of the annual budget. Out of the fifteen metrics, two are directly related to students' successful completion of math and English, four are related to retention from fall-to-fall semester and fall-to-spring semester and two of the metrics relate to the progression of a student towards program completion.

While student success has always been the first priority of Wytheville Community College, it is now, additionally, a fiscal responsibility. A QEP focused on increasing the success of first-time distance learners will put WCC in the position to earn its maximum allocation from the Performance Based Funding model which is critical to the college continuing to meet its mission to provide access to lifelong learning within an environment of academic excellence. Below is a detailed list of activities relative to the topic identification, development, and direction of the QEP.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Fall 2013	VP of Instruction & Student Development met with Director of Institutional Effectiveness, 2005 QEP Chair, and 2005 QEP member to discuss QEP topic selection process
September 2013	Email distributed to ALL stakeholders requesting submission of potential QEP topics
10/8/13	Deadline for submission of all ideas
10/10/13	All ideas compiled and emailed to all stakeholders for 1 <sup>st</sup> round of voting for a "Top Ten" list
10/15/13	1 <sup>st</sup> Round of Voting Deadline for "Top Ten"
10/17/13	All ideas compiled into "Top Ten" list and emailed to all stakeholders for 2 <sup>nd</sup> Round of Voting for "Top Five" ideas
10/22/13	2 <sup>nd</sup> Round of Voting Deadline for "Top Five"
10/24/13	All ideas compiled into "Top Five" list and emailed to all stakeholders for 3 <sup>rd</sup> Round of Voting for "Top Three" ideas
10/29/13	3 <sup>rd</sup> Round of Voting Deadline for "Top Three"
10/31/13	"Top Three" ideas emailed to all stakeholders
8/12/14	2005 QEP Committee charged with conducting a literature review of "Top Three" ideas
8/19/14	2005 QEP Committee met to discuss literature review and available data sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title III Grant Data</li> <li>• Distance Learning Survey Data</li> </ul>
October 2014	Submission of QEP Topic Viability Report to the President's Cabinet with recommendation of First-Year Experience as the 2015 QEP Topic
November 2014	Vice President of Instruction and Student Development and overseer of the QEP left to return to the Virginia Community College System
12/10/14	1 <sup>st</sup> meeting of the 2015 QEP Leadership Team
1/14/15	2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting of the 2015 QEP Leadership Team
1/21/15	3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 2015 QEP Leadership Team
1/30/15	Consultant visited WCC Campus
2/4/15	4 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the 2015 QEP Leadership Team-decision to use the previously mentioned data sources to narrow focus to First-Year Experience of Distance Learning Students
2/11/15- <i>current</i>	Continuous meetings of QEP committees to finalize details
3/19/15	Two new Co-Chairs appointed as current QEP Chair steps down from project
5/14/15	All-day retreat for Leadership Committee & Subcommittees

## OUTLINE OF WCC4ME

The purpose of the WCC QEP, WCC4ME, is to help first-time online learners be successful in the online learning environment. The college will do this through:

- Implementing proven best-practices that will better prepare students for the demands of online learning
- Creating a network of support that will better enable WCC students to persist through online courses and promote academic success

Stated in goal form, WCC4ME, has two overarching goals:

**WCC4ME Goal #1:** Prepare WCC first-time online learners for success in the online environment.

In order to achieve the goal of preparing WCC first-time online learners for success in the online environment the WCC4ME QEP project will implement the following actions:

### QEP ACTIONS:

1. Students in the SDV 100 College Success Skills course will complete the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator.
2. SDV 100 College Success Skills instructors will receive professional development on interpreting the results of the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator.
3. After completing the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator students will meet with their SDV 100 instructor to review the results of his/her SmarterMeasure™ report.
4. Students will be made aware of WCC resources available to support him/her in any area identified as weak by the SmarterMeasure™ indicator.
5. Students in the SDV 100 College Success Skills course will complete an Online Learning Success Module which will include units on:
  - a. Characteristics of Successful Online Learners
  - b. Online Communication and Netiquette
  - c. Time Management
  - d. The Responsibilities of the Online Learner
  - e. Blackboard Learning Management System

6. WCC Employees will receive professional development on the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator results and the resources available to support students in the online learning environment.

Outcomes Associated with Goal #1

- 1.1 Students will be able to identify the characteristics of a successful online learner.
- 1.2 Students will be able to identify their personal strengths for success in the online learning environment.
- 1.3 Students will be able to identify their personal weaknesses for success in the online learning environment.
- 1.4 Students will be able to identify a WCC resource available to support any weakness identified as a barrier to their success in the online learning environment.
- 1.5 Students who completed the redesigned SDV 100, which includes the Online Learning Success module, will have improved course success rates compared to student previously enrolled in the QEP targeted courses.

**WCC4ME Goal #2:** WCC first-time online learners will successfully complete their online courses at the same pass rate as first-time students in traditional face-to-face courses.

In order to achieve the goal of WCC online learners and traditional face-to-face students achieving success at the same rate, the WCC4ME QEP project will implement the following actions:

**QEP ACTIONS:**

1. Identification of academic subject areas that contain the highest number of first-time online learners:
  - a. BIO 101 General Biology I
  - b. HIS 121 American History I
  - c. ITE 115 Introduction to Computer Applications
  - d. SOC 200 Principles of Sociology
  - e. ENG 111 College Composition I

2. Lead faculty members from Biology, History, ITE, Sociology and English will work with an online Instructional Designer and the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to develop a common course format based on researched best practices in online learning.
3. Common course redesign will be grounded in the research that supports creating an online learning community atmosphere that emphasizes early and frequent faculty-student, student-student, and student-content interaction.

#### Outcomes Associated with Goal #2

- 2.1 First-time online learners will be able to successfully navigate the Blackboard sites of their online courses.
- 2.2a First-time online learners will be able to locate the “Start here” section in QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.2b First-time online learners will be able to locate the syllabus section in QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.2c First-time online learners will be able to locate the course assignments and due dates in QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.2d First-time online learners will be able to locate the instructor’s office hours, office location and preferred method of communication in QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.2e First-time online learners will be able to locate the grading policy in QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.2f First-time online learners will be able to identify the first three items that need to be completed to start their QEP targeted online courses.
- 2.3 First-time online learners will report a strong teaching presence in their online courses.
- 2.3a Courses redesigned as a part of the QEP project will contain student-instructor interactive activities.
- 2.4 First time online learners will report a strong social presence in their online courses.
- 2.4a Courses redesigned as a part of the QEP project will contain student-student interactive activities.
- 2.5 First-time online learners will report a strong cognitive presence in their online courses.
- 2.6 The percent of successful (measured as a C or better) first-time online learners in the following online courses will be the same as the percent of successful first-time learners in the traditional face-to-face sections of:
  - 2.6a HIS 121
  - 2.6b BIO 101
  - 2.6c SOC 200

2.6d ENG 111

2.6e ITE 115

A detailed description of the QEP actions associated with each goal is included in the “ACTIONS” section of this document. In addition a detailed description of the methods that will be used to assess the above listed outcomes is included in the assessment section.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND BEST PRACTICES**

Building on the previous literature review and the resulting QEP Viability Report, the new QEP team further researched best practices utilized in the online learning environment, focusing directly on the online learner. The team identified a number of previously proven strategies for increasing the successful course completion rate of online learners.

### **ACHIEVEMENT AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS IN ONLINE COURSES**

Wytheville Community College’s (WCC) mission statement states: “Wytheville Community College is committed to providing access to lifelong learning within an environment of academic excellence”. Access to learning at Wytheville Community College and nationally has become increasingly dependent on online course delivery. Allen and Seaman (2013) note that while total postsecondary enrollment between fall 2010 and fall 2011 decreased, there were 572,000 more online students in fall 2011 than in fall 2010 with a total of 6.7 million students taking at least one online course. Nationally, the percent of online enrollment as a percentage of total enrollment at degree-granting postsecondary institutions has increased from 9.6% in the fall of 2002 to 32.0% in the fall of 2011 (Allen & Seaman, 2013).

WCC is currently completing a Title III grant cycle that it was awarded in September of 2010. The Title III grant was heavily focused on improving the skills of WCC online instructors in an effort to increase student success in WCC online courses. Data from the recent Title III grant implemented at WCC show that WCC online enrollment is consistent with the national trends.

The percentage of distance learners at WCC in the fall of 2009 was 30.4%. The percentage of distance learners at WCC had increased to 47.1% by the spring of 2014.

While online enrollments continue to increase as a percentage of overall postsecondary enrollments, there continues to be documented concern over the attrition or lack of success for online learners. The literature and research show that the retention rates for distance education courses are lower than face-to-face courses (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007). Nationally, it is estimated that the attrition rates for online courses are 10 – 20% higher than for traditional face-to-face courses (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007). Once again the data from the WCC Title III grant, which focused on distance learning, show that WCC's attrition rates are consistent with the national data. The pass rate for WCC distance learners in the spring of 2015 was 85.1% compared to the pass rate of WCC traditional face-to-face students which was 91.6%.

### BARRIERS TO SUCCESS IN ONLINE LEARNING

National and local data support the sometimes anecdotal research that says online learners do not persist and achieve at the same rate as traditional face-to-face learners. A review of the literature, relative to reasons for the achievement gap between online learners and traditional learners, identifies some common trends. An integrated literature review by Hart (2012) identified auditory learning style, basic computer skills, college status and graduating term, difficulty accessing resources, isolation and decreased engagement, and lack of computer accessibility as barriers to student persistence in online courses. In a separate literature review, Robert Nash (2005) described the distance learning student as typically older, attending school part-time and having an increased number of responsibilities outside of school such as a full-time job and family responsibilities. The lack of computer skills, confidence, reading ability and the ability to manage their time were also identified by Nash (2005) as barriers to online student

persistence in courses. Students also reported they believed an online course would be easier than a face-to-face course and were not prepared for the difficulty of the material (Nash, 2005).

### BEST PRACTICES IN ONLINE LEARNING

The success of students in the online learning environment has been shown to increase through the implementation of student readiness assessments, remediation on areas of weakness as identified by the readiness assessment tool and student orientations to the online learning environment. In fact, student readiness instruments such as SmarterMeasure™ directly address suggested best practices of electronically offered degrees and programs as proposed by SACSCOC. For example, in the 2000 document entitled Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, SACSCOC recommends that prior to admitting a student to an online program, the institution:

1. Assists the prospective student in understanding independent learning expectations as well as the nature and potential challenges of learning in the program's technology based environment.
2. Informs the prospective student concerning required access to technologies used in the program.
3. Informs the prospective student concerning technical competence required of student in the program.
4. Informs the prospective student of library and other learning services available to support learning and the necessary skills to access them.

The SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator is designed to accomplish exactly what is required in the above statements. It creates a dialogue between the student and the college about the reality of being an online student and how a student's personal level of

readiness can affect his or her ability to be successful in the online environment. The indicator can also be customized to inform students about the required technology access and computer skills necessary for courses at WCC. In addition to making the students aware of the technical requirements, it measures the student's technical competency and identifies strengths and weaknesses. Ideally students would then be referred to the appropriate resources for bolstering any area that is seen as deficient. Finally, colleges can build in specific information about how to access library and other academic and student support services.

The assessment itself provides valuable feedback to the student about his/her strengths and weaknesses as a student in the online learning environment. The key component to seeing the use of a readiness indicator correlate to increased student success is the advising that can occur for a student once the readiness indicator is completed (Harrell, 2009). Embedding online readiness indicators in a course that serves as an orientation to the online learning environment has been shown to correlate positively to increased student success in the online environment (Harrell, 2000). In fact, in a study by Wojciechowski and Palmer (2005) completion of an orientation to online learning was found to be the second greatest factor, second only to the student GPA, in predicting a student's success in online courses.

As a part of the previously described Title III grant awarded to WCC, to improve the success of students in the online learning environment, an Online Learning Success (OLS) course was created for WCC students. OLS is currently made available to students who register for their first online course at WCC as an optional orientation course to online learning. The data collected, beginning in the summer of 2013, support the findings of Wojciechowski and Palmer. There is a strong correlation between students who successfully completed the OLS course and the completion of their first online course with a grade of "C" or better. For example, in the summer of 2013, 66 students enrolled in the optional Online Learning Success Workshop. As summarized in the table below, 41 students completed the course and 25 students did not

complete the course. Out of the 41 students who completed the course, 80% made a grade of “C” or better in their first online course. Out of the 25 students who did not complete the workshop, only 48% made a grade of “C” or better.

Comparison of Students Who Complete an Online Learning Success (OLS) Workshop with Those Who do Not	OLS Completers	OLS non-Completers	Total
Number	41	25	66
Percent Making “C” or Better	80	48	

The data from the OLS course are included in its entirety in Appendix E.

The student’s ability to be flexible, goal commitment, grade point average, quality of interactions and feedback, satisfaction and relevance, self-efficacy and personal growth, social connectedness or presence, and support were all identified as factors that increase student persistence in online courses (Hart, 2012). Many of the barriers to student persistence and success in online courses, including illness, academic background, family responsibilities and job demands, are beyond the control of the learning institution (Nash, 2005).

To overcome such barriers, some interventions that have demonstrated an impact on increasing student persistence and achievement in online courses are a student's early and frequent personal contact with faculty, pre-course orientation programs that help raise student awareness of the expectations of an online learner and easily accessible supplemental tutoring (Nash, 2005). In addition, faculty need professional development on designing online courses using learning centered approaches (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007). Finally, making student support services such as counseling, advising, registration, technical support, library services and student governance readily available to the online learner has been shown to improve retention in online courses (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007).

Creating learning communities and cohorts will also decrease the feelings of separation and isolation documented by many online learners (Angelino, Williams & Natvig, 2007). Wilcoxon (2011) defines a learning community as "a group of individuals who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct meaning and confirm mutual understanding, (p.2). " The online learning community is built by the people, relationships and interaction, not by the technology used to manage the course and communicate with one another. While not much research has been done that directly correlates increased student learning to a sense of community, there are multiple studies that have correlated connectedness to a student's perception of increased learning (Sadera, Robertson, Song & Midon, 2009). Other research (Swan, 2002; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005) has argued that when students feel engaged and active in a learning community they are more likely to make meaningful contributions which makes the learning experience more enjoyable for themselves and others.

### BARRIERS TO SUCCESS IN THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

Just as feeling isolated and disconnected has been identified as one of the barriers to persistence and success in the online learning environment (Hart, 2012), isolation, loneliness and a lack of engagement with faculty and peers have also been identified as reasons students

do not persist from the first to the second year of college (Tinto, 1999, Feldman & Zimbler, 2011). In the research done on the first-year experience by Feldman and Zimbler (2011), some solutions to the troubling statistics on first-year persistence are presented. In particular, “Targeted seminars and programs that directly instruct students in effective learning strategies and critical thinking skills – and also provide opportunities for new students to engage socially with instructors and other students – produce a significant and demonstrable rise in student persistence beyond the first year of college” (Feldman & Zimbler, 2011, p. 3). Tinto (1999) identified five specific conditions that support the retention of first-year students: expectations, advice, support, involvement and learning. While colleges can do little to change the attributes of students arriving for the first-year of college, they can control the learning environment of the first-year students and the learning environment can be changed to increase student retention (Tinto, 1999).

### STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

One specific method of intervention for first-year students is the learning community. Tinto (1999) identifies learning communities as, “a kind of co-registration or block scheduling that enables students to take courses together, rather, than apart. In some cases learning communities will link students by tying two course together” (p.4). The development of the learning community requires a collaborative effort between faculty and student affairs. In order for the learning community to succeed, faculty and student affairs must work together to maximize the benefits of linked courses and provide consistent messages of support to students (Tinto, 1999). Research has also shown that this type of collaboration between the faculty, staff and administrators across a college campus has a direct positive impact on the first-year experience of college students (Feldman & Zimbler, 2011).

The national and local data presented in this research, relative to the gap in achievement between students taking traditional face-to-face courses and students enrolled in

online courses, are alone a cause for concern. The above research also shows that a first-year student who is enrolled in online courses has the compounding issues of lack of connection to the college, loneliness and isolation. Possible solutions to increase retention in online classes and of first-year students include assessment of learning styles, establishment of learning communities and increased levels of communication with faculty and other students. Finally, support for online students and first-year students needs to be a college-wide commitment. Faculty, student support services, staff and administrators must be committed and work together to maximize the college experience for these vulnerable students (Cuseo, n.d.).

### HOW THE LITERATURE REVIEW IMPACTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WCC4ME QEP PROJECT

The literature on the gap in achievement between students enrolled in face-to-face courses as compared to students enrolled in online courses led the QEP committee to take a closer look at the WCC institutional data on face-to-face versus online course success rates. A two proportion z-test was performed on the percent of students who achieve a “C” or better in WCC traditional face-to-face courses as compared to WCC online courses for every semester beginning with the fall of 2010, up through the spring 2015 semester. For every semester, except the spring of 2011, the data demonstrated a significant difference between the two success pass rates at the  $p < .01$  level of significance. What this helped to clarify to the committee is that although our overall online pass rate of approximately 85% is high in comparison to most of the data on online pass rates in the literature, there is a significant difference in the chances of successfully completing a face-to-face course at WCC as compared to successfully completing an online course at WCC.

Another theme in the literature that the committee found was the documented improvement in online success when students participate in some type of orientation to the online learning environment. Bringing the topic of online orientation up in a QEP committee

meeting led to the discovery that WCC had been offering an optional course, entitled Online Learning Success, to our students since the summer of 2013 and had viable data to support that students who had taken and completed the course had increased rates of online success. Data relative to the success of the Online Learning Success course can be found in Appendix D. The online advisors who had created and implemented the course became actively involved in the QEP project and proposed adjusting the Online Learning Success course, as well as redesigning the SDV 100 College Success Skills course, so that all SDV 100 students would have the Online Learning Success experience.

Finally, the literature indicating that the more interaction a student has with the online instructor the more successful he or she is in the course also attracted the attention of the QEP committee. The annual Distance Education Survey that has been administered by WCC since the spring of 2013 supported the recommendations from the literature to increase the interactivity of the online courses to increase student success. Question #20 on the Distance Education Survey asks, what suggestions would you give to make improvements in online courses at WCC? The most frequent responses in 2013, 2014 and 2015 were:

- Instructors responding to email in a timely manner
- Increased interaction between students and with the instructor
- Developing a common course format so that students know better where to find the course information

The literature review of best practices to improve the success of online learners had a direct correlation to the feedback WCC was receiving from students about what they wanted to see improved in WCC courses.

As a result of the literature review, a survey of available WCC resources, the analysis of what our distance learning students told us they need to better succeed, and the institutional

data that validated a discrepancy in achievement between our face-to-face and distance learning students, the QEP project began to develop. The QEP project would have a two pronged focus. One focus of the QEP would be on better preparing WCC first-time students for the online learning environment and the second focus would be on creating online courses in a common format that included an increased level of interactivity between the students and between the students and the instructor.

### **ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED**

The actions of the WCC QEP project, WCC4ME, are all focused towards increasing the success of our first-time online learners, with success being defined as students completing their online course with a grade of “C” or better. Hachey, Wladis and Conway (2012) found that one of the factors that correlated strongly to whether or not a student successfully completes an online course is whether or not he or she has previously successfully completed an online course. It is hypothesized that students who have been successful in the online environment develop an online self-efficacy that gives them the skills they need to persist and be successful in the online environment. To that end WCC4ME focuses on the preparation and first-time experience of our online learners. If our first-time online learners are successful, they will take that self-efficacy and persistence and be successful in their future online courses. While WCC4ME focuses on our first-time online learners, the success of the project will lead to improved success for all WCC online learners.

The actions of WCC4ME are directly aligned with the achievement of the two overarching goals of the project:

**WCC4ME Goal #1:** Prepare WCC first-time online learners for success in the online learning environment

**WCC4ME Goal #2:** WCC first-time online learners will successfully complete their online courses at the same pass rate as first-time students in traditional face-to-face courses

### **ACTIONS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH GOAL #1**

As the WCC4ME project was being brainstormed and the best practices and literature review was being conducted, an orientation for students to the online learning environment immediately surfaced as something that should be done at WCC to improve the success of our first-time online learners. Many institutions use a readiness assessment for the online learning environment, and the results of that assessment, as a prerequisite for student enrollment in online courses until additional skills can be developed. The mission statement of Wytheville Community College states: “Wytheville Community College is committed to providing access to lifelong learning with an environment of academic excellence.” Since WCC’s mission statement specifically address accessibility, the WCC4ME committee was committed to finding a way to prepare students for the online learning environment that would not be an additional barrier to their progression towards completion of their program or degree.

In order to provide early assessment and remediation for students, and to prepare them to be successful in the online environment, QEP Committee decided that WCC’s SDV 100: College Success Skills course would be redesigned to include an Online Learning Success Module in the first week of the course. WCC already had an Online Learning Success (OLS) course that was offered as an optional course to students who were enrolling in an online course for the first time. Data from the results of the Online Learning Success course show that students who successfully completed OLS had an increased probability of successfully completing their first online course with a grade of “C” or better. Initially the WCC4ME committee recommended that the redesign be focused only on the online SDV 100 course. However, after input from multiple consultants it was decided that the SDV 100 redesign would be implemented in both the online and face-to-face sections due to the fact that a student in a

face-to-face section of SDV 100 could very well also be enrolled in his or her first online course and would benefit from the OLS module.

Implementing the OLS course into SDV 100 will require a redesign of both courses due to some overlap in learning outcomes and assignments in the two courses. One of the most significant pieces of work that will be a part of the WCC4ME project relates to the use of the SmarterMeasure™ online learning readiness indicator as a part of the Online Learning Success module. Currently students in the optional Online Learning Success course are taking the SmarterMeasure™ online learning readiness indicator but they do not receive advising or remediation on the results of the indicator.

One piece of the WCC4ME project will be to provide professional development to all SDV 100 instructors on the interpretation of the results of the SmarterMeasure™ learning readiness indicator. The professional development will be provided to WCC faculty by professionals from SmarterMeasure™. In addition, resource modules will be developed by the WCC4ME project that provide support for a student in any area indicated as a potential barrier to the student's success in the online environment. The resource modules will provide students with the names of professionals and the locations of resources available through WCC, which will serve as an additional set of resources to those that are provided as a part of the SmarterMeasure™ assessment report.

All students in SDV 100 will have a face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with their SDV 100 instructor. In that conference the SDV 100 instructor, who has received professional development on the analysis and interpretation of the SmarterMeasure™ Assessment report, will review with the student his/her results of the student's readiness assessment for the online learning environment. The decision to have this conference was very intentional by the WCC4ME committee as members reviewed the best practices for student success in the online environment. The literature mentions time and time

again that the establishment of personal contact with the instructor and the campus is another highly correlated factor towards the successful completion of online courses (Angelino, Williams & Natvig (2007), Britto & Rush (2013), Britto & Rush (2013), Nash (2005)). This one-on-one conference will provide the student with important feedback on the results of their assessment, clarify the location and how to access resources for support, and establish a point-to-point contact with the new WCC student and an instructor on the campus.

In addition to taking the SmarterMeasure™ online learning readiness indicator in the redesigned OLS module, students will also be educated on the characteristics of successful online learners. The first unit in the OLS module outlines the characteristics of a successful online learner, which are:

1. Independent Learner
2. Self-Discipline/ Goal Oriented/ Time Management
3. Reading/Writing skills
4. Computer Skills
5. Technology Accessibility
6. Problem Solving
7. Being Respectful
8. Engaging in the course
9. Appropriate at home Workspace
10. Staying Active

The implementation of the Online Learning Success course into SDV 100, the redesign of both the OLS and the SDV 100 course, the professional development of all SDV 100 instructors, the development of the resource modules to support our online learners and the increased contact between SDV 100 students and their instructors are all focused on increasing the preparation for WCC first-time online learners in the online learning environment.

WCC4ME will measure the success of the above mentioned interventions by directly assessing the following outcomes:

- 1.1 Students will be able to identify the characteristics of a successful online learner.
- 1.2 Students will be able to identify their personal strengths for success in the online learning environment.
- 1.3 Students will be able to identify their personal weaknesses for success in the online learning environment.
- 1.4 Students will be able to identify a WCC resource available to support any weakness identified as a barrier to their success in the online learning environment.
- 1.5 Students who complete the redesigned SDV 100 which includes the OLS module will have improved course success rates compared to students not enrolled in the redesigned SDV 100 course.

The targets for success, correlation to a WCC4ME intervention, assessment tool and baseline data are all available in the Assessment Matrix included in the Assessment section of this document.

## **ACTIONS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH GOAL #2**

The part of WCC's mission that emphasizes access led the WCC4ME committee to make the decision to incorporate the OLS course into the SDV 100 course so as not to place any barrier to educational access. In addition, the mission also states that the education at WCC will occur in an environment of academic excellence. To that end, the WCC4ME committee felt strongly that WCC should also do work with the online courses that first-time online learners are preparing to take.

The WCC4ME committee researched which online courses had the highest number of first-time online students enrolled in them. An analysis of that list led the WCC4ME committee to

invite a lead faculty member from each of the following academic departments to join the WCC4ME project: Biology, English, History, Informational Technology Essentials, and Sociology. The specific courses associated with those academic disciplines are BIO 101 General Biology I, ENG 111 College Composition I, HIS 121 American History I, ITE 115 Introduction to Computer Applications and Concepts, and SOC 200 Principles of Sociology.

The faculty in those disciplines will work with the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, and an instructional designer, to redesign the online sections of BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, ENG 111, and SOC 200. The first part of the redesign effort of those courses will be to develop a common course format to be used in Blackboard, the Learning Management System (LMS) used by WCC. The impetus for creating a common course format in Blackboard came from the literature (Aragon and Johnston, 2008), feedback from the annual WCC Distance Education Survey, and an informal survey done at the WCC Spring Fling picnic in the spring of 2014. All three sources reference the idea that if all of the online courses were structured in the same way it will decrease the initial intimidation factor of beginning an online course. Once the new format has been agreed upon by the faculty involved in the WCC4ME project, and these courses start being used for instruction, the WCC4Me committee will assure that information about course format is built into the SDV 100 course.

WCC4ME will measure the success of the common course format intervention by directly assessing the following outcomes:

2.1 First-time online learners will be able to successfully navigate the Blackboard sites of WCC4ME targeted online course.

2.2a First-time online learners will be able to locate the "Start Here" section in WCC4ME targeted online courses.

2.2b First-time online learners will be able to locate the syllabus in WCC4ME targeted courses.

2.2c First-time online learners will be able to locate the course assignments and due dates in WCC4ME targeted online courses.

2.2d First-time online learners will be able to locate the instructor's office hours, office location and preferred method of communication in WCC4ME targeted online courses.

2.2e First-time online learners will be able to locate the grading policy in WCC4ME targeted online courses.

2.2f First-time online learners will be able to identify the first three items that need to be completed to start their WCC4ME targeted online courses.

The targets for success, correlation to a WCC4ME intervention, assessment tool and baseline data are all available in the Assessment Matrix included in the Assessment section of this document.

In addition to the WCC4ME intervention of a common course format, the committee researched instructional strategies that had been proven to increase the achievement of students in the online learning environment. Throughout the literature the online teaching intervention that was demonstrated as having the largest impact on whether or not students successfully completed their online courses was the level of interactivity the student experienced in the course. The interactivity could be student-student, student-instructor, or student-content. As a result, the WCC4ME committee is committed to not only redesigning the format of the online courses in the WCC4ME targeted high enrollment disciplines, it also committed to making those courses highly interactive for the students.

In order to empower the WCC faculty involved with the WCC4ME project, as well as all WCC faculty who teach online, a three-tiered professional development program will be implemented (Appendix F). A faculty member can become a Master Online Instructor through successful completion of the seven tiered courses. In tier one, the faculty member as well as all

WCC employees will complete the WCC4ME Module. In addition to that class, there are two more courses in tier one that instructors must complete. The instructor can then select two courses from tier two and two courses from tier three to meet the requirements for this certification. The courses in the professional development program have already been designed by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and are free to all faculty employed in the VCCS.

Once the WCC faculty involved with the WCC4ME project have received the third tier of certification, they will work with the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to develop highly innovative and interactive courses that support the learning of the content in their discipline.

WCC4ME will measure the success of the course redesigns centered on increasing the interactivity of the courses by directly assessing the following outcomes.

2.3 Teaching Presence: First-time online learners will report a strong teaching presence in their online courses

2.3a Courses redesigned as a part of the WCC4ME project will contain student-instructor interactive activities

2.4 Social Presence: First-time online learners will report a strong social presence in their online courses

2.4a Courses redesigned as a part of the WCC4ME project will contain student-student interactive activities

2.5 Cognitive Presence: First-time online learners will report a strong cognitive presence in their online courses (see Terms and Definitions)

Outcomes 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 will be assessed using the Community of Inquiry (CoI) questionnaire (Appendix G). The framework of the Community of Inquiry has been used in studies to draw the

connection between the construct of the online learning environment and student success. The results of a study by Arbaugh, Cleveland-Innes, Diaz, Garrison, Ice, Richardson and Swan (2008) “suggest that the instrument is a valid, reliable, and efficient measure of the dimensions of social presence and cognitive presence, thereby providing additional support for the validity of the Col as a framework for constructing effective online learning environments.”

In summary, the work of the WCC4ME project will involve a redesign of the SDV100 College Orientation course, taken by most WCC students in their first semester, which will include an Online Learning Success module that will assess and remediate their readiness for online learning. In addition, the WCC4ME project will include the redesign of the online courses identified as having a high number of first-time students enrolled. These courses will have a common Blackboard (Bb) course format and will be designed to include multiple opportunities to interact in a community atmosphere within the course structure.

While the focus of the WCC4ME project is on six specific courses, all WCC faculty will be required to take part in the WCC4ME three-tiered online certification. It is the hope of the committee and supported by the administration that if we can assess the increased success of our students in these online courses then that these interventions will be implemented in all WCC online courses.

**TIMELINE**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
Year 1 2015 - 2016	Summer 2015	Finalize QEP Document for submission to SACSCOC	WCC4ME Co-Chairs
	Fall 2015	Redesign SDV 100 to include Online Learning Success Module	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Construct common course format for WCC4ME online courses	WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, WCC Instructional Technologist, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Design assessment tools to measure SLO's	WCC4ME Co-Chair, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Online Advisors
		Collect baseline data for SLO comparison	WCC4ME Co-Chair, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Online Advisors
		Begin construction of WCC4ME professional development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Begin implementation of Tier 1 and Tier 2 certification	Full-time faculty
	Spring 2016	Pilot redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors, Online Advisors
		Redesign BIO 101 online course focused on increasing interactivity	WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, WCC Instructional Technologist, WCC4ME identified academic subject faculty
		Collect SLO data from students in	WCC Director of Institutional

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
		redesigned SDV 100 course	Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Finish construction of WCC4ME professional development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Continue Tier 1 and Tier 2 certification	Full-time faculty
Year Two 2016 - 2017	Summer 2016	Analyze feedback on SDV 100 redesign, make necessary changes	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Pilot WCC4ME Professional Development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Finalize BIO 101 online redesign	WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, WCC Instructional Technologist, WCC4ME identified academic subject faculty
		Continue Tier 1 and Tier 2 online certification	Full-time faculty
	Fall 2016	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101 online	BIO 101 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
		redesigned BIO 101 online	Co-Chair, BIO 101 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, begin including adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Spring 2017	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101 online	BIO 101 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, begin including adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
Year Three 2017 - 2018	Summer 2017	Analyze feedback from SDV 100/ BIO 101 redesigned courses, prepare to add redesigned ENG 111	QEP Co-chairs/ SDV 100/ BIO 101/ ENG 111 faculty
		Update WCC4ME Professional Development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Fall 2017	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111 online	BIO 101/ ENG 111 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ ENG 111 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Spring 2018	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ ENG 111 online	BIO 101 instructors/ENG 111
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ ENG 111 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
Year Four 2018 - 2019	Summer 2018	Analyze feedback from SDV 100/ BIO 101/ENG 111 redesigned courses, prepare to add redesigned SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121	QEP Co-chairs/ SDV 100/ BIO 101/ ENG 111/SOC 200 faculty
		Update WCC4ME Professional Development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
			faculty involved with QEP
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Fall 2018	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/ SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ ITE 115/HIS 121 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Spring 2019	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/ SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
		200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
Year Five 2019- 2020	Summer 2019	Analyze feedback from SDV 100/ BIO 101/ENG 111/ SOC200/ITE 115/HIS 121	QEP Co-chairs/ SDV 100/ BIO 101/ ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 faculty
		Update WCC4ME Professional Development course	WCC4ME Co-Chair, WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning, Director of Technology, Full-time faculty involved with QEP
		Continue Tier1 , Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
	Fall 2019	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/ SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, begin including adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
		Collect data tracking QEP participants in	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester /Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
		subsequent online courses	
	Spring 2020	Implement redesigned SDV 100 in all sections	Online Advisors, SDV 100 Instructors, Full-time Faculty involved with QEP
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned SDV 100 course	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, SDV 100 Instructors
		Implement redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/ SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Collect SLO data from students in redesigned BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 online	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness, WCC Co-Chair, BIO 101/ENG 111/SOC 200/ITE 115/HIS 121 instructors
		Continue Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 Certification	Full-time faculty, adjunct and dual-enrollment faculty
		Collect data tracking QEP participants in subsequent online courses	WCC Director of Institutional Effectiveness
		Begin writing 5-year impact report for SACSCOC	WCC4ME Co-chairs
	Summer 2020	Examine the continuation of WCC4ME project	WCC Administrators
		Submit the five year QEP Impact report to WCC SACSCOC liaison	WCC4ME Co-chairs

## **PERSONNEL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Wytheville Community College recognizes the importance of a strong infrastructure to support the successful implementation of WCC4ME. As evidenced by WCC's history of sound management and implementation of numerous federal and state grants (including TRiO, Title III, Department of Labor, Appalachian Regional Commission, and others), WCC is committed to the provision of adequate funding for personnel and all aspects of the WCC4ME Quality Enhancement Plan.

### QEP Co-Chairs Description

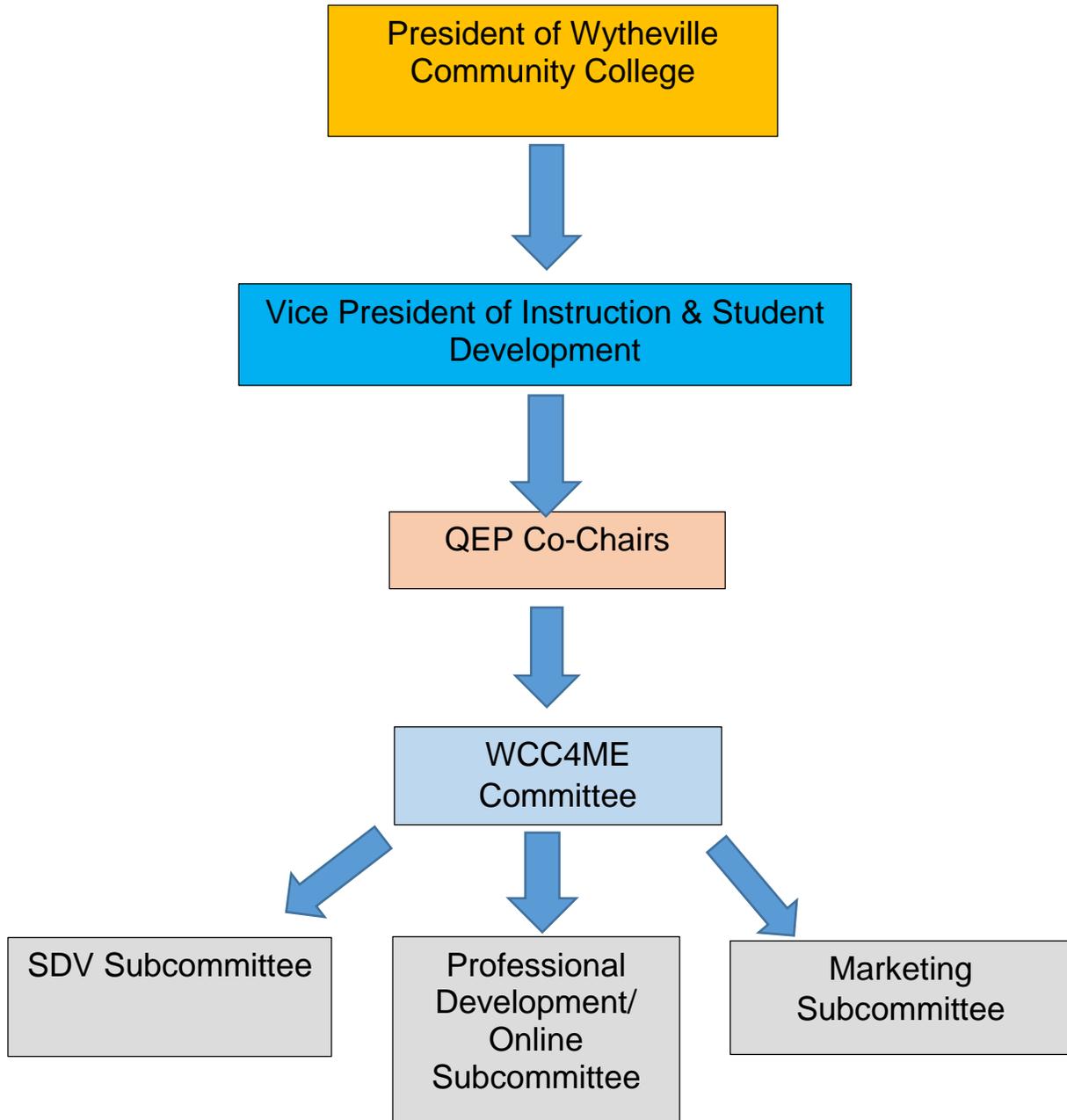
The responsibilities of the QEP Co-Chairs during the implementation and assessment phase include: holding weekly meetings, providing facilitation and oversight of the QEP, presenting updates and results to the WCC stakeholders, facilitating cooperation and communication between all areas involved with the QEP, coordinating efforts, and participation in discussions on fiscal resources for executing the QEP. During the fifth year of WCC4ME, the Co-Chairs will conduct a summative assessment and review and interpret data gathered over the duration of the plan. The information will be compiled into a report to be shared with all stakeholders.

### QEP Reporting Structure

The WCC4ME Co-Chairs report directly to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Development will continue the oversight of budgetary resources. In the event of an unforeseeable expense, contingency funds from the Vice President's office will be utilized for WCC4ME. It is also the responsibility of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development to assist in resolving any issues that are beyond the scope of the WCC4ME Committee and Co-Chairs. The President requires the Vice President to present timely updates to the President's Cabinet and the WCC Board. Either the

President or the Vice President may request the appearance of the Co-Chairs to speak to these groups as necessary.

The WCC4ME organizational structure is detailed below. For a complete organizational structure for Wytheville Community College, please reference the section titled “Outline of Wytheville Community College” as well as Appendix H.



*WCC4ME Organizational Structure*

### WCC4ME Committee and Subcommittees

The WCC4ME Committee contains experts in the areas associated with the QEP and includes faculty leads, staff, and administrators as well as a student representative. These individuals report to the QEP Co-Chairs as it relates to the plan. The members of the WCC4ME Committee will remain intact over the following five-year period as they are integral to the success of the project. The responsibilities of the WCC4ME Committee include the development of a standard course format for the identified courses included in the QEP, data collection and assessment, monitoring of compliance requirements and reporting, as well as continued leadership for the plan.

Several members are serving multiple roles on the QEP as three subcommittees were created to ease the workload of the project. These three subcommittees included the SDV Subcommittee, the Professional Development/Online Subcommittee, and the Marketing Subcommittee. The SDV Subcommittee will work to ensure that the SDV 100 becomes internally certified by Quality Matters and will analyze feedback following the course and make any needed adjustments. The Professional Development/Online Subcommittee will assist with the online tiers of faculty certification, create additional modules to be included in the tiers, and will assist with the creation of the WCC4ME Module. The Marketing Committee will continue to be instrumental in the promotion of WCC4ME throughout the implementation process by providing such promotional items as t-shirts, wristbands, printed materials, mouse pads, and posters.

A list of the WCC4ME Committee is listed below along with their employment title and specific area on the QEP Team. The Committee descriptions are listed in Appendix I.

<b>Team Member</b>	<b>Position at Wytheville Community College</b>	<b>QEP Committee/Subcommittee</b>
Bill Grose	Instructor, History	Leadership Committee, Lead-History
John Lawson	Associate Professor, Social Sciences	Leadership Committee, Lead-Sociology
Cindy Kincer	Instructor, Biology	Leadership Committee, Lead-Biology
Gerald Goad	Online Academic Advisor	SDV Subcommittee
Jamie Edwards	Interim Dean of Transfer, Business & Social Sciences	Leadership Committee
Jason Settle	Instructor, English	Leadership Committee, Marketing Subcommittee, PD/Online Subcommittee, Lead-English
Josh Floyd	Online Academic Advisor	SDV Subcommittee
Karen Hawkins	Administrative Assistant, Student Services SDV Instructor	SDV Subcommittee
Karla Yates	Assistant Professor, Nursing	Leadership Committee, PD/Online Subcommittee
Keisha Stuart	Admin & Office Specialist III – Educational Foundation	Leadership Committee
Ken Fairbanks	Coordinator of Distance and Distributed Learning	Leadership Committee, Marketing Subcommittee
Kent Glindemann	Director of Institutional Research, Planning & Effectiveness	Leadership Committee
Marc Nester	Assistant Professor, Computer Information Systems	Leadership Committee Lead-Information Technology
Natasha Puckett	Assistant Professor, Mathematics	Leadership Committee, PD/Online Subcommittee
Renee Thomas	Dean of Student Success & Academic Development, Counselor	Leadership Committee, SDV Subcommittee
Rhonda Catron-Wood	Vice President of College Development, SACSCOC Liaison	Leadership Committee
Rita Phillips	Professor, Dental Assisting & Hygiene	Co-Chair, Leadership Committee, PD/Online Subcommittee
Shawn McReynolds	Director of Technology	Leadership Committee, PD/Online Subcommittee, Marketing Subcommittee
Stan Jones	Instructor, Chemistry	SDV Committee, Leadership Committee
Stefanie Shrader	Student-Dental Hygiene Program	Leadership Committee, PD/Online Committee
Susan Evans	Assistant Professor , Mathematics	Co-Chair, Leadership Committee, SDV Subcommittee

*WCC4ME Committee*

## RESOURCES

Wytheville Community College (WCC) has a history of conservative fiscal planning to maintain operations within a sound financial base. Outside of tuition fees, funding for WCC is allocated based on the Virginia Community College System's Validated Distribution Model which is based on a three-year rolling average of enrollment. For additional resources, the WCC Educational Foundation, the WCC Scholarship Foundation, and the Office of College Development are responsible for fundraising endeavors on behalf of the College. As a result, the College has a record of financial stability and adequate funding.

Because WCC recognizes the importance of a strong infrastructure to support the successful execution of the Quality Enhancement Plan, the College has allocated human, physical, and financial resources for the implementation, sustainment, and completion of WCC4ME. The College has dedicated two full-time faculty members to continue their service as Co-Chairs. The committee faculty members will remain in the QEP over the five years as they are essential to the project and they have expressed interest in active participation.

### Compensation for the QEP Co-Chairs

The QEP Co-Chairs, who are continuing in their positions as full-time faculty members, will be reimbursed for their efforts on the WCC4ME project through a mechanism of release time (up to 6 credit hours/semester), stipend (\$700/credit hour), or a combination of the two. The Co-Chairs stem from each division: one from the Division of Transfer, Business, and Social Division and one from the Division of Health and Occupational Programs. As such, each has differing workloads and time allocation needs and will be compensated accordingly for each semester of the duration of the project.

### Compensation for Faculty of the WCC4ME Committee and Subcommittees

Currently, there are eight faculty members participating in the project. The faculty members are compensated with a one-credit hour stipend per semester of involvement which is in the amount of \$700.00.

### Reallocation of Staff and Administrator Time

The staff and administrators are expected to perform required tasks related to the QEP as part of their overall contract with the College. A 10% portion of their overall job responsibilities has been allocated for the successful implementation and assessment of WCC4ME. This breaks down into a four hour per week allocation of time for each staff and administrator on the team.

### Technology and Professional Development

As well as human resources, funds have been allocated for technology in the form of SmarterMeasure™. In-kind donations from Title III was used to purchase the measurement tool through FY 2017 and following that period, the expense will be absorbed by the college's operating budget. The College also budgeted for marketing and promotional items particularly during the first year. Items such as t-shirts, posters, microfiber cloths, USB wristbands, etc. were purchased and distributed. In-kind donations from the WCC Marketing account and the WCC Student Services account covered several of the promotional items.

Professional development opportunities include travel, registration, lodging and meals to the SACSCOC QEP Annual Conference for five QEP members which occurred in Year One. Beginning in Year Two, funds have been allotted for four members of the Team to travel to the Conference plus an additional 2% for increase in costs. Additional professional development opportunities will come in the form Quality Matters training for those faculty who have not completed the course, which will be funded from the Title III grant through FY 2017. Quality Matters is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to quality assurance in online education.

The organization provides training to instructors to help them gain the knowledge and the skill-set to meet national benchmarks for online course structure and instruction. As well as Quality Matters, distance education faculty will participate in the online tier certification courses which have been developed previously by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and are free to all faculty employed in the VCCS. In addition to QEP Co-Chairs and faculty stipends, personnel contributions in the form of time, four hours per week or approximately 10% of their time, have been set aside.

#### Development of the Budget

The WCC4ME budget was developed by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development with input from the QEP Co-Chairs, the WCC4ME Marketing Committee, the President's Cabinet, and the Director of Human Resources. The budget was then reviewed by the Vice President of Finance and Administration. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Development oversees all QEP budgetary items and approves expenses accordingly. In the event of an unforeseeable expense, the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development will secure funds by requesting that a transfer of funds from the contingency flex account be made to the QEP account, with approval from the College President. Listed below is a more detailed account of the actual expenses for WCC4ME followed by an account of in-kind donations and sources.

**WCC4ME BUDGET**

Description	Development Stage	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
<b>1. Personnel</b>							
Co-Chairs	\$4,200.00	\$22,800.00	\$22,800.00	\$22,800.00	\$22,800.00	\$22,800.00	\$118,200.00
Faculty	\$4,200.00	\$17,500.00	\$16,800.00	\$16,800.00	\$16,800.00	\$16,800.00	\$88,900.00
<b>2. Professional Development</b>							
SACSCOC Conference		\$14,500.00	\$11,600.00	\$11,832.00	\$12,068.64	\$12,310.01	\$62,310.65
Quality Matters Training		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$2,500.00
Online Tier Courses		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Reallocation of Staff/Administrator Time		\$65,522.70	\$65,522.70	\$65,522.70	\$65,522.70	\$65,522.70	\$327, 613.50
<b>3. Assessment</b>							
SmarterMeasure™		\$2,880.00	\$2,880.00	\$3,360.00	\$3,360.00	\$3,360.00	\$15,840.00
<b>4. Advertising/ Marketing</b>							
Promotional Items		\$8,896.50	\$2,725.00	\$1950.00	\$1950.00	\$1950.00	\$17,471.50
<b>5. Other</b>							
• Office Supplies		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$2,500.00
<b>6. External Consultants</b>		\$2,000.00					\$2,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$8,40.00	\$135,099.20	\$123,327.70	\$123,264.70	\$123,501.34	\$123,742.71	<b>\$637,335.65</b>

<b>In-Kind Donations</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
SmarterMeasure™	Title III Grant x 2 years	\$5,760.00
QM Training	Title III Grant x 2 years	\$1,000.00
Promotional Items	WCC Marketing Account Student Services Account	\$6,261.50
External Reviewer	WCC SACSCOC Account	\$2,000.00
<b>TOTAL for In-Kind Donations</b>		<b>\$15,021.50</b>

*WCC4ME In-Kind Donations*

## ASSESSMENT

The WCC4ME committee has developed a detailed assessment matrix to measure the achievement of the goals of the WCC4ME QEP which are:

**WCC4ME Goal #1:** Prepare WCC first-time online learners for success (See Terms and Definitions) in the online environment.

**WCC4ME Goal #2:** WCC first-time online learners will successfully complete their online courses at the same pass rate as first-time student in traditional face-to-face courses

Each of the outcomes listed in the matrix is measurable, has a target against which it will be measured for success, the QEP intervention intended to support the outcomes, the tool that will be used to measure the outcome and a description of any baseline data that will be used to show improvement as a result of the QEP interventions. The matrix can be found in its entirety below.

### WCC QEP ASSESSMENT MATRIX

PURPOSE: HELP WCC FIRST-TIME ONLINE LEARNERS BE SUCCESSFUL

QEP GOAL #1: PREPARE WCC FIRST-TIME ONLINE LEARNERS FOR SUCCESS IN THE ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

QEP ACTIONS:

1. Students in the SDV 100 College Success Skills course will complete the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator.
2. SDV 100 College Success Skills instructors will receive professional development on reading and interpreting the results of the Smarter Measure Learning Readiness Indicator.
3. After completing the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator students will meet with their SDV 100 instructor to review the results of his/her SmarterMeasure™ report.
4. Students will be made aware of WCC resources available to support him/her in any area identified as weak by the SmarterMeasure™ indicator.
5. Students in the SDV 100 College Success Skills will complete an Online Learning Success Module which will include units on:
  - a. Characteristics of Successful Online Learners
  - b. Online Communication and Netiquette
  - c. Time Management
  - d. The Responsibilities of the Online Learner
  - e. Blackboard Learning Management System
6. WCC Employees will receive professional development on the SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator results and the resources available to support students in the online learning environment.

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
1.1 Students will be able to identify the characteristics of a successful online learner	_____ % (to be determined from baseline data collected in fall 2015) of students who complete SDV 100 will be able to identify the characteristics of a	Online Learning Success Module required in SDV 100 course	Unit 1-4 Quiz in Online Learning Success Module	Collected in fall 2015 SDV 100 courses

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
	successful online learner with 80% accuracy			
1.2 Students will be able to identify their personal strengths for success in the online learning environment	80% of students who complete SDV 100 will be able to identify their personal strengths in the online environment with 80% accuracy	SmarterMeasure™ Assessment in the Online Learning Success Module	End of Course Evaluation in Online Learning Success Module	Collected in fall 2015 SDV 100 courses
1.3 Students will be able to identify their personal weaknesses for success in the online learning environment	80% of students who complete SDV 100 will be able to identify their personal weaknesses in the online environment with 80% accuracy	SmarterMeasure™ Assessment in the Online Learning Success Module	End of Course Evaluation in Online Learning Success Module	Collected in fall 2015 SDV 100 courses
1.4 Students will be able to identify a WCC Resource available to support any weakness identified as a barrier to their success in the online learning environment	80% of students who complete SDV 100 will be able to identify a WCC Resource available to support any weakness identified as a barrier to their online success in the online learning environment	Personal advising by SDV 100 instructor on the results of the SmarterMeasure™ assessment and WCC Resources available to address any identified barriers	End of Course Evaluation in Online Learning Success Module	Collected in fall 2015 SDV 100 courses
1.5 Students who completed the redesigned SDV 100 which includes the Online Learning Success module will have improved course success rates compared to students not enrolled in the	The success rate (a “C” or above final grade in the course) of students who complete the redesigned SDV 100 will be 5% greater in targeted classes over students who previously took SDV 100	Online Learning Success module implemented in the SDV 100 course	Institutional Data – success rate (a C or above final grade in the course) of students who complete SDV 100 in the fall of 2015 and are enrolled in online BIO 101, ITE 115, HIS 121, ENG 111 and SOC 200.	Collected at the end of the fall 2015 semester

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
redesigned SDV 100 course.				

**QEP GOAL #2: WCC FIRST-TIME ONLINE LEARNERS WILL SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THEIR ONLINE COURSES AT THE SAME PASS RATE AS FIRST-TIME STUDENTS IN TRADITIONAL FACE-TO-FACE COURSES**

**QEP ACTIONS:**

1. Identification of academic subject areas that contain the highest number of first-time online learners:
  - a. BIO 101 General Biology I
  - b. HIS 121 American History I
  - c. ITE 115 Introduction to Computer Applications
  - d. SOC 200 Principles of Sociology
  - e. ENG 111 College Composition I
2. Lead faculty members from Biology, History, ITE, Math, and English will work with an online Instructional Designer and the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to develop a common course format based on researched best practices in online learning.
3. Common course redesign will be grounded in the research that supports creating an online learning community atmosphere that emphasizes early and frequent faculty-student, student-student, and student-content interaction.

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
2.1 First-time online learners will be able to successfully navigate the Blackboard sites of their online courses	80% of first-time online learners will report that they found their BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 easy to navigate	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology, and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200, and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>QEP Intervention</b>	<b>Measurement Tool</b>	<b>Baseline Data (if applicable)</b>
2.2a First-time online learners will be able to locate the “Start Here” section in QEP targeted online courses	80% of students will be able to locate the “Start Here” section in QEP targeted courses	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.2b First-time online learners will be able to locate the syllabus section in QEP targeted online courses	80% of students will be able to locate the syllabus section in QEP targeted courses	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.2c First-time online learners will be able to locate the course assignments and due dates in QEP targeted online courses	80% of students will be able to locate the course assignments section in QEP targeted courses	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.2d First-time online learners will be able to locate the instructor’s office hours, office	80% of students will be able to locate the instructor’s office hours, office location and	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology,

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>QEP Intervention</b>	<b>Measurement Tool</b>	<b>Baseline Data (if applicable)</b>
location and preferred method of communication in QEP targeted online courses	preferred method of communication in QEP targeted course	will develop a common Blackboard course format	(under construction) with an online advisor	with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.2e First-time online learners will be able to locate the grading policy in QEP targeted online courses	80% of students will be able to locate the grading policy in QEP targeted courses	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.2f First-time online learners will be able to identify the first three items that need to be completed to start their QEP targeted online courses	80% of students will be able to identify the first three items that need to be completed to start their QEP targeted online courses the in QEP targeted courses	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Sociology and English will develop a common Blackboard course format	Face-to-face conference using QEP Course Structure rubric (under construction) with an online advisor	Face-to-face conference, either in person or using available technology, with online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester using QEP Course Structure Rubric
2.3 <i>Teaching Presence</i> First-time online learners will report a strong teaching presence in their online courses	A mean score of > 4 on the Teaching Presence Category on the Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col)	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Math and English will work with a contracted the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to design online courses	Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col) questions 1 - 13	Survey data administered to online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
		that create a sense of community learning		
2.3a Courses redesigned as a part of the QEP project will contain student-instructor interactive activities	Courses participating in the QEP redesign project will achieve a 75% or better on a predetermine rubric for student – instructor interaction.	WCC4ME Tiered Professional Development Plan	WCC4ME online learning community rubric – under construction	WCC4ME online learning community rubric based on current online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester
2.4 <i>Social Presence</i> First-time online learners will report a strong social presence in their online courses	A mean score of > 4 on the Social Presence Category on the Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col)	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Math and English will work with a contracted Instructional Designer and the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to design online courses that create a sense of community learning	Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col) questions 14 - 22	Survey data administered to online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, MTE 1-9 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester
2.4a Courses redesigned as a part of the QEP project will contain student–student interactive activities	Course participating in the QEP redesign project will achieve a 75% or better on a predetermine rubric for student – student interaction	WCC4ME Tiered Professional Development Plan	WCC4ME Online Learning Community Rubric – under construction	WCC4ME online learning community rubric based on current online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, SOC 200 and ENG 111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester
2.5 <i>Cognitive Presence</i> First-time online learners will report a strong cognitive	A mean score of > 4 on the Cognitive Presence Category on the	WCC full-time faculty in Biology, History, Information Technology, Math and English will	Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col) questions 23 - 34	Survey data administered to online BIO 101, HIS 121, ITE 115, MTE 1-9 and ENG

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>QEP Intervention</b>	<b>Measurement Tool</b>	<b>Baseline Data (if applicable)</b>
presence in their online courses	Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (Col)	work with a contracted Instructional Designer and the WCC Coordinator of Distance Learning to design online courses that create a sense of community learning		111 fall 2015 and spring 2016 semester
2.6a The percent of successful (measured as a C or better) first-time online learners in HIS 121 online will be the same as the percent of successful first-time online learners in HIS 121 face-to-face	Online and face-to-face success rates will be within 2% of each other	Common course structure, Professional Development on Best Practices in Online instruction, increased level of student-student and student-instructor interaction in QEP targeted online courses	Institutional Data	Fall 2014 HIS 121 f2f pass rate 87% HIS 121 online pass rate 73% Spring 2015 HIS 121 f2f pass rate 95% HIS 121 online pass rate 50%
2.6b The percent of successful (measured as a C or better ) first-time online learners in BIO 101 online will be the same as the percent of successful first-time online learners in HIS 121 face-to-face	Online and face-to-face success rates will be within 2% of each other	Common course structure, Professional Development on Best Practices in Online instruction, increased level of student-student and student-instructor interaction in QEP targeted online courses	Institutional Data	Fall 2014 BIO 101 f2f pass rate 93% BIO 101 online pass rate 81% Spring 2015 BIO 101 f2f pass rate N/A BIO 101 online pass rate 100%
2.6c The percent of successful (measured as a "C" or better) first-time online learners in	Online and face-to-face success rates will be within 2% of each other	Common course structure, Professional Development on Best Practices in Online	Institutional Data	Fall 2014 ITE 115 f2f pass rate 87%

Outcomes	Target	QEP Intervention	Measurement Tool	Baseline Data (if applicable)
ITE 115 online will be the same as the percent of successful first-time online learners in ITE 115 face-to-face		instruction, increased level of student-student and student-instructor interaction in QEP targeted online courses		ITE 115 online pass rate 73% Spring 2015 ITE 115 f2f pass rate 100% ITE 115 online pass rate 79%
2.6d The percent of successful (measured as a "C" or better) first-time online learners in ENG111 online will be the same as the percent of successful first-time online learners in EMG 111 face-to-face	Online and face-to-face success rates will be within 2% of each other	Common course structure, Professional Development on Best Practices in Online instruction, increased level of student-student and student-instructor interaction in QEP targeted online courses	Institutional Data	Fall 2014 ENG 111 f2f pass rate 87% ENG 111 online pass rate 70% Spring 2015 ENG 111 f2f pass rate 79% ENG 111 online pass rate 72%
2.6e The percent of successful (measured as a "C" or better) first-time online learners in SOC 200 online will be the same as the percent of successful first-time online learners in SOC 200 face-to-face	Online and face-to-face success rates will be within 2% of each other	Common course structure, Professional Development on Best Practices in Online instruction, increased level of student-student and student-instructor interaction in QEP targeted online courses	Institutional Data	Fall 2014 SOC 200 f2f pass rate 92% SOC 200 online pass rate Spring 2015 86% SOC 200 f2f pass rate 91% SOC 200 online pass rate 90%

## **Appendix A**

### **WCC QEP First Round Voting – Topics and Brief Descriptions**

#### **College Readiness**

A College Readiness Program is needed for both incoming high school seniors that need assistance transitioning to a college environment and also for adult career changers who need assistance returning to the student life. Building a strong foundation is important in keeping students. What does that mean? Educating students prior to "educating" students on the college process.

#### **Critical Thinking**

Critical Thinking is one of WCC's core competencies. This kind of thinking is valuable in almost any course a student takes. If students can understand the concept of how to analyze, how to prove a point, how to argue logically or reasonably, they could improve their scores on tests and tasks that require these types of thought processes.

#### **First Year Experience**

Implementing a more formal and structured "first-year experience" program for our students. By ensuring that students are not only aware of the resources available to them, but also have certain skills (such as how to use Blackboard) it will boost their level of comfort and their confidence. They will be more likely to ask questions, and after gaining skills needed, they will be more likely to be academically successful.

#### **Technology Primer Seminar**

Most new college students (especially non-traditional students) do not have knowledge of how to use Blackboard, check email, send email, etc. They NEED this knowledge BEFORE the first day of classes. Once students are comfortable with the technology of college, then they would be more successful in their classes.

#### **Writing Across the Curriculum**

Writing across the curriculum would require writing (with proper grammar, spelling, and documentation) in all classes/disciplines. Students would improve their ability to express what they know in written form. The college would produce a higher quality of student. Writing is reading, reading is writing, and writing is thinking.

#### **Distance Learning Preparation**

Many students are unprepared to be successful in an online or even a hybrid course. Most courses (even face-to-face) are requiring online assignments. This QEP would focus on preparedness for and success in distance learning courses and assignments.

#### **Expansion of Tutoring Services**

A QEP focused on tutor training, particularly peer-to-peer, has the potential to increase student retention and success by expanding the availability of tutors within all subject areas, off-site, and for a greater number of hours.

### **Math and Science for Life / Math Empowerment**

Overall math and sciences are considered much more difficult classes, and as a result they show lower grades for those types of classes. We need our students to have the resources to succeed. We already have the math lab, and some tutors, but we need to supplement that somehow, perhaps tutors can meet with students in online study groups to help them get the hang of it.

### **Support/Liaisons for At-Risk Students**

Addressing the needs of the "At-Risk Student", which can be all of our students at some point! Something to help instructors to address the students who are not doing well. Possibly after first test or so in a course, a liaison to meet with the students who aren't doing well and see if there is something that can be done (on their part or WCC's part) to improve before the semester progresses further along.

### **Application of Concepts Learned Through Hands-On Activities**

Hands-on activities would better benefit classes in any program. It would allow students to learn more about the lessons in accordance to applying concepts.

### **Availability of Traditional Classes**

I feel that we are short changing our students when we only offer a course online. Not all students are good online students and some need the structure of a classroom to reach their full potential.

### **Career Readiness**

Are you ready to land your job? Career readiness components incorporated into all courses.

### **Communication Skills**

Helping students to communicate more efficiently would help all students to be able to reach their goals and be successful.

### **Consistency Across Classes**

Use the QEP to come up with standards for online courses and have everyone agree to use those standards. Establish a review committee for text book adoption and have the instructors that teach the same classes as other instructors choose a text as a group.

### **Development and Strengthening of Cohorts / Learning Community**

Developing stronger cohort grouping where it already exists, and creating a cohort system for students in areas where cohort grouping doesn't already exist. Developing cohorts, in which students became responsible for the success of program participants, would provide a mechanism for improved student learning through group learning and peer motivation.

### **How to Study Class**

It would be a class to teach students how to study for those really difficult classes. Also one where the teacher could learn how to help the students study and learn better. Some teachers

stick to one method and it doesn't work and if they want to change it they should see how other methods compare.

### **Impact of Adjunct Professors on Student Learning**

Does hiring adjunct professors to teach the majority of college courses influence student learning? I believe this topic could improve student learning because teachers who are fairly employed and have more economic stability are often better prepared to develop courses that challenge students and prepare them for the workforce.

### **Improvement of Graduation Rates**

Improving WCC's graduation rate ensures that students are receiving the full benefit of the programs in which they enroll. That is the fundamental reason WCC exists. A higher graduation rate means more students have learned more. That is truly an improvement in student learning.

### **Internal Communication (Institutional)**

Something focused on enhanced communication. Poor communication between many of our key groups on campus leads to many students falling through the cracks.

### **Merging Workforce Development and Academic Activities**

Merging workforce development and academics to a greater degree. Merging faculty together for a more blended front for the benefit of the students. This would improve student learning by combining those in academic studies into real work experience and real work knowledge from the teachers.

### **New Student Enrollment Assistance**

I would like to see more support for potential students who make initial contact with the college. For example, older students without computer skills are likely to change their mind about enrolling in a program if they are asked to go online to apply to a program or enroll in classes. I think more human assistance for students making the initial contact would increase college enrollments.

### **Positive Thinking Skills**

By helping student to develop positive thinking skills, it would help all students to be able to reach their goals and be successful.

### **Preparing High School Students for Dual Enrollment**

Preparing high school students for dual credit enrollment with emphasis on students completing a college degree while still enrolled in high school. A focus on Upward Bound and Talent Search students will be supported by the college. Career Coaches and high school counselors will be engaged in the processes.

### **Priority Setting**

To set up a program for students on how to set priorities. For many of my students, college is at the bottom of the list, I suppose because other problems are more immediate. It may be impossible to set up a program with that objective, but it would be helpful.

### **Social Media Blended Into the Classroom**

Our QEP needs to be focused on online social sites/media/multimedia. We just finished an oral communications QEP, which was important and needed but technology is moving people and companies into the online world through social media/chat rooms/video and we need to make sure our students are ready and prepared for that transition.

### **Student Academic Advising**

WCC serves many first-generation college students. These students often need extra assistance in navigating college processes. While there are advantages to allowing on-line registration, I fear that students may not always know what classes they need, and students may be missing out on much-needed academic and career counseling.

### **Student Life / Learning Outside the Classroom**

Student Life enhances student learning by providing opportunities outside of the classroom to learn social skills, leadership, community services, networking, and other outcomes beneficial to students.

### **Student Self-Esteem**

Making sure each student feels valued as a student. Students will feel open to discussing what they feel and what their needs are as a student.

### **Study Group Locator**

To create online or in person way to find study groups. Some students like myself are shy and it's hard to just walk up to someone to create a study group. Maybe if we had some sort of bulletin board or an app on Blackboard it would be a way to break the ice.

### **Tutoring for Career/Technical Education Classes**

I feel an appropriate topic would be for the college to provide tutors. Although the college does provide outstanding tutoring for classes including English, Math, and other classes vital for completing an degree requirement for the college; I feel if at all possible tutoring should be available for professional development in career classes that are offered.

### **WCC Local "Green" Movement**

I had the opportunity to visit an Organic College in Ireland recently. It was part of the community college in County Limerick. Not only were they providing an associate degree for individuals to learn small farming techniques, they were providing healthy food, weekly, at a local farmer's market. I would like to see WCC be more involved in the local "green" movement, especially as it relates to economic development, jobs and best land use

## Appendix B

### Executive Summary WCC QEP Viability Report

#### Executive Summary

##### CAMPUS VOTE

Brainstorming possible topics for our new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) began in September and continued into October of 2013. The Wytheville Community College (WCC) community (faculty, staff, board of trustees, students, and friends of WCC) were asked to submit topics to be considered for the new QEP. Once all the suggestions were received, a master list of topics was developed to be voted on by the WCC community. In order to narrow down the list of topics, participants were next given the opportunity to vote for their top 10 topics. After those results were compiled, another round of voting took place. Of that new list of 10 possible QEP topics, the WCC community was asked to vote for their top five topics. After the votes were compiled, a final list was distributed to the WCC community to vote on their top three choices for the QEP topic. By conducting the voting this way, we were able to determine the three most popular topics to consider as our next Quality Enhancement Plan.

##### RECOMMENDED FOCUS TOPICS FOR QEP

Career readiness, distance learning, and first-year college experience emerged as the three most popular areas of interest for a QEP.

##### NARROWING THE TOPIC

The Learning to Communicate Quality Enhancement Committee – 2005-2015 was charged with conducting literature reviews for the three topics gleaned from surveys in the fall of 2013. To do so, committee members conducted a broad search of topics related to Career Readiness, Distance Learning, and First-Year Experience, and then examined available Wytheville

Community College data to support the development of a topic. Each report is organized in the following format: subcommittee members, key words used in search of articles, other QEPS, and/or surveys, annotated bibliography of information reviewed, and then, notable WCC institutional surveys or data that may provide support for areas examined.

The committee was also asked to propose a topic for the new QEP and submit a proposed timeline for QEP develop (page 20 – this document).

Recommended Topic for the 2015- 2025:

The committee recommends a focused topic on first-year student preparation that enhances student success in traditional and distance learning classrooms.

Dr. Teresa Galyean

Professor of Psychology and Education

Director of Quality Enhancement Plan – 2005 -2015

October 24, 2014

### Appendix C

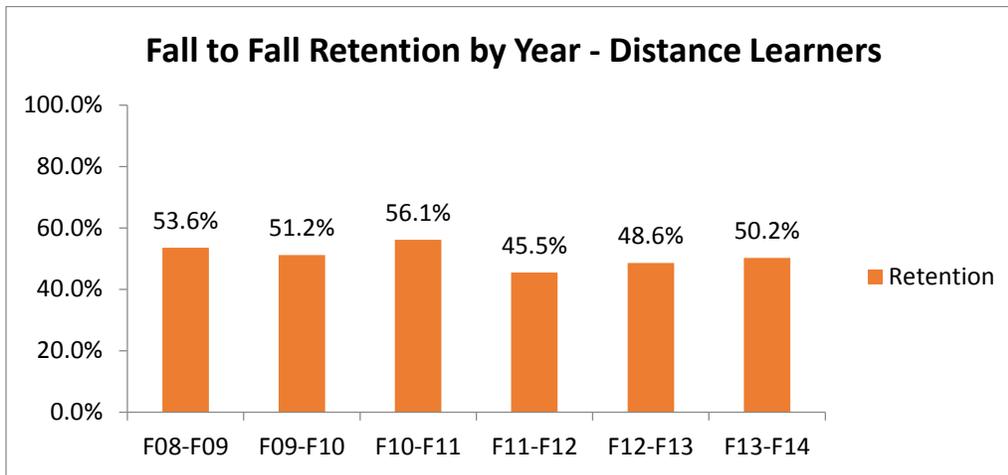
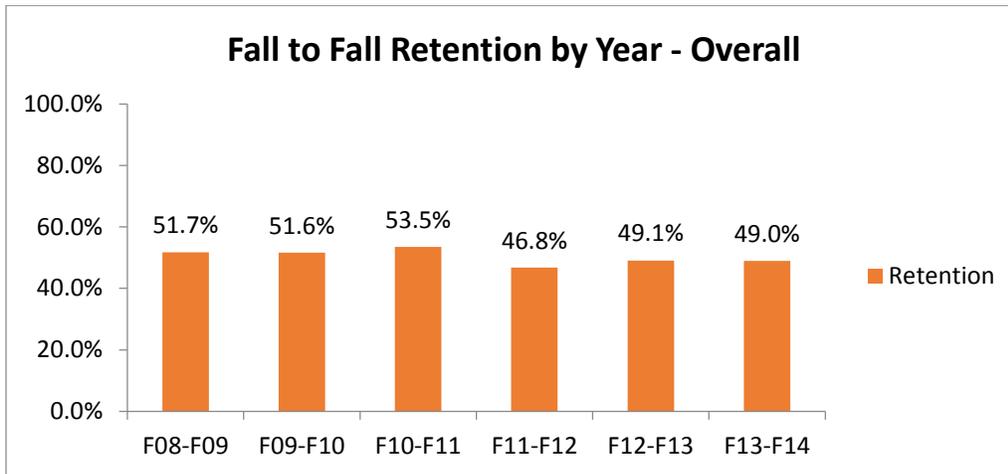
#### 2015 QEP Original Leadership Committee

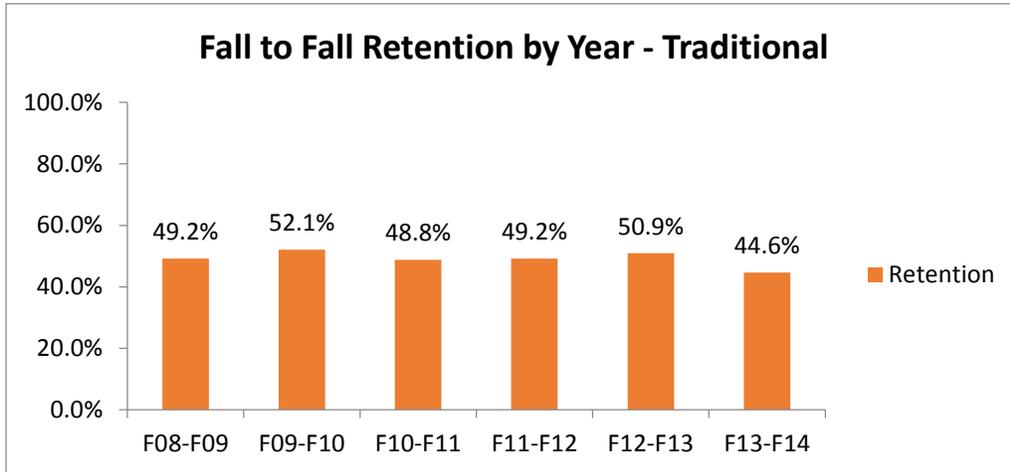
Team Member	Position at Wytheville Community College
Teresa Galyean – chair	Professor, Psychology and Education
Crystal Goad	Interim Dean of Health & Occupational Programs
George Mattis	Coordinator of Library Services
Jamie Edwards	Interim Dean of Transfer, Business & Social Sciences
Jenny Buchanan	Title III Project Director/ Disabilities & Career Counselor
Katherine Asbury	College Success Coach
Keisha Stuart	Admin & Office Specialist III – Educational Foundation
Ken Fairbanks	Coordinator of Distance and Distributed Learning
Kent Glindemann	Director of Institutional Research, Planning & Effectiveness
Lorri Huffard	Program Head, Med Lab
Natasha Puckett	Assistant Professor, Mathematics
Rhonda Catron-Wood	Vice President of College Development, SACSCOC Liaison
Rita Phillips	Professor, Dental Assisting & Hygiene
Ron Proffitt	Interim Vice President of Instruction & Student Development
Shawn McReynolds	Director of Technology
Susan Evans	Assistant Professor , Mathematics

## Appendix D

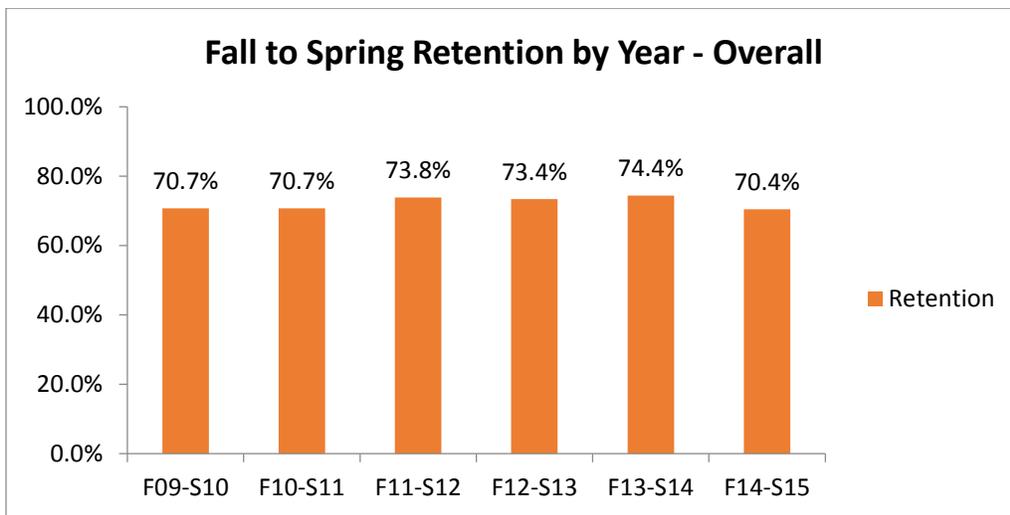
### WCC Title III Grant – Goal results for FY 2014-2105

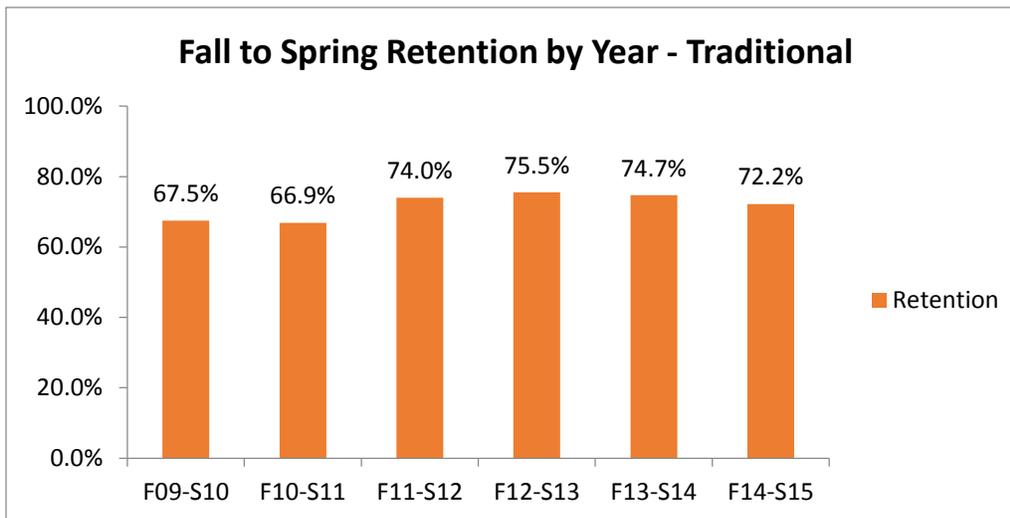
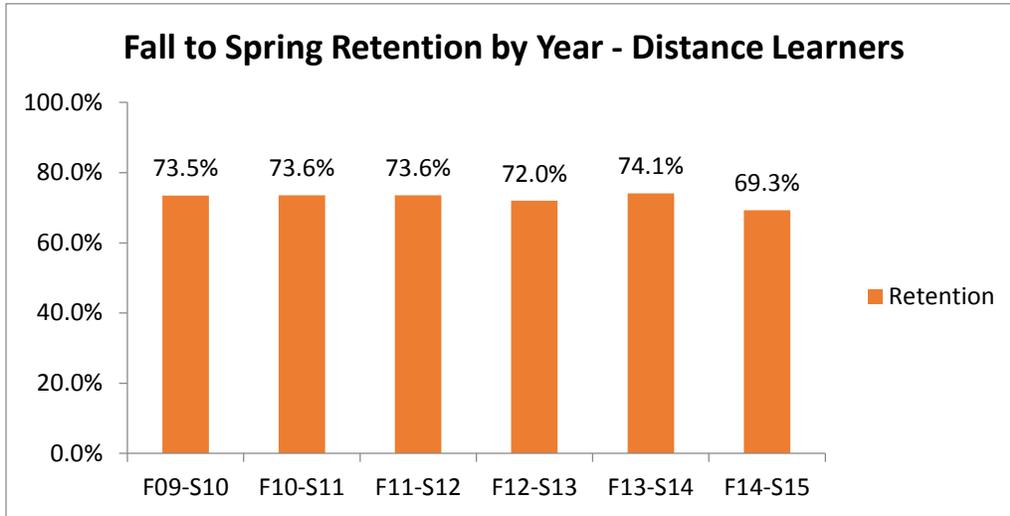
**Goal 4b: The retention rate of distance learners will increase by 2%.**



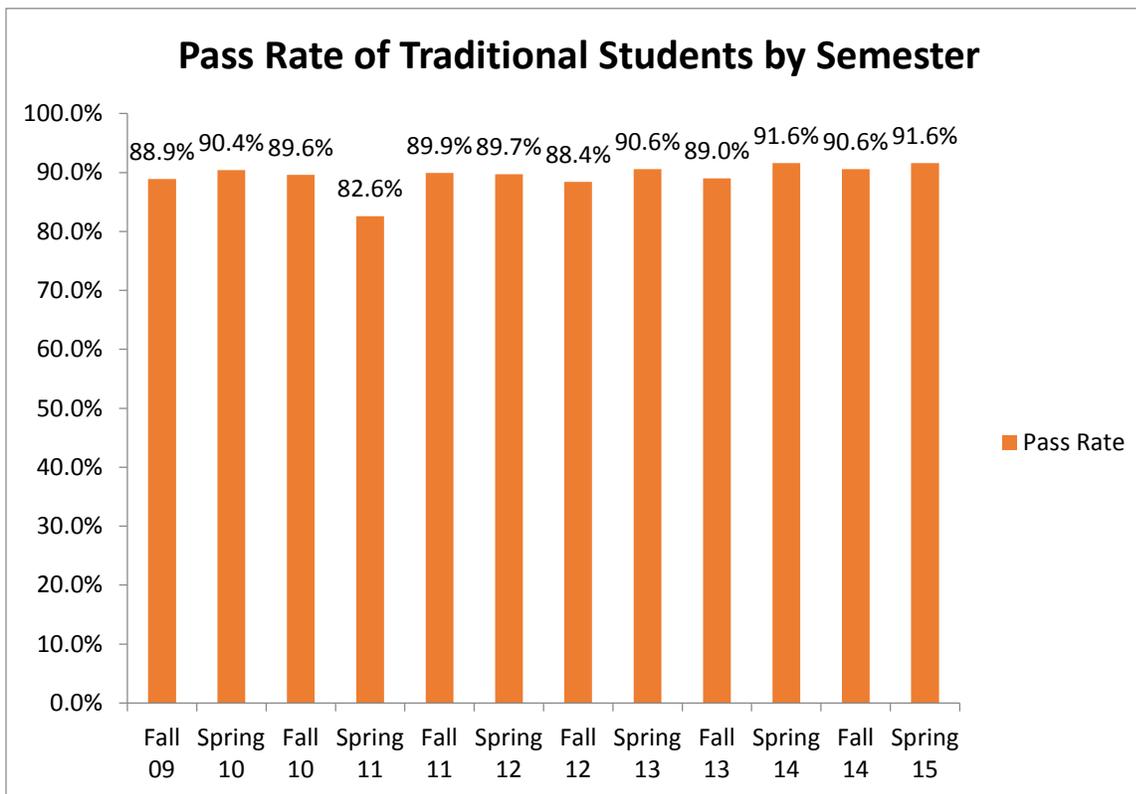
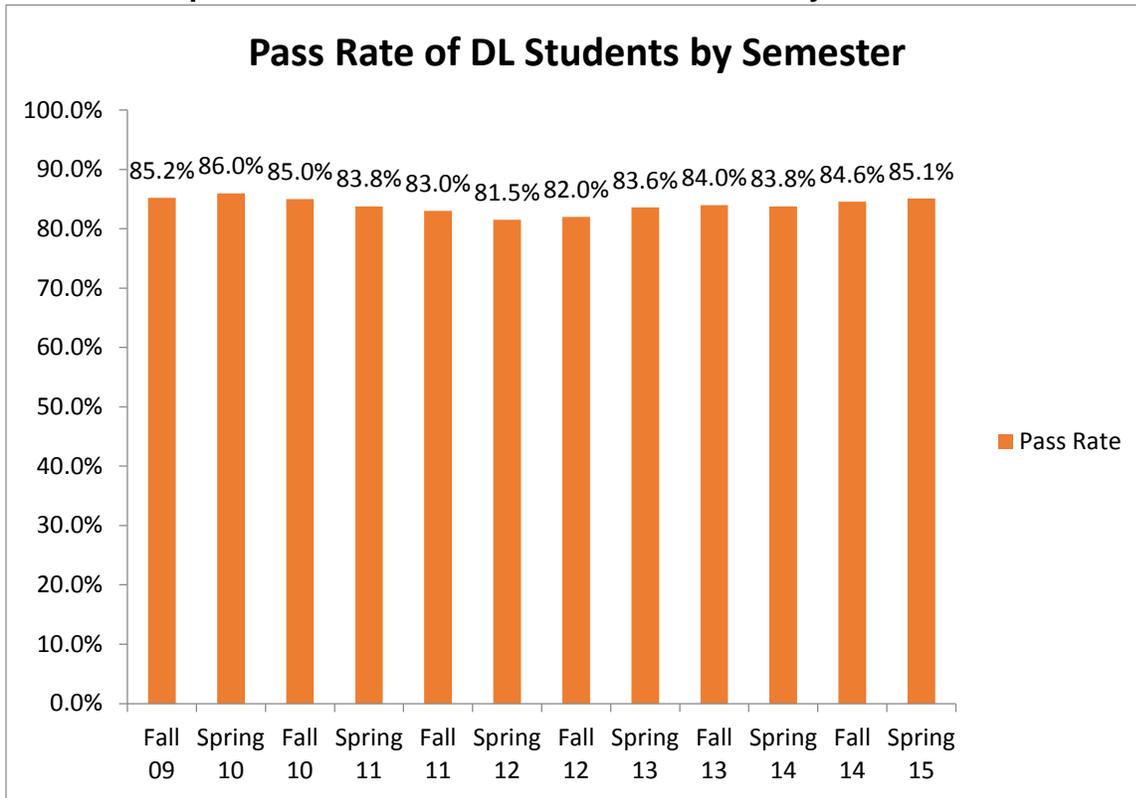


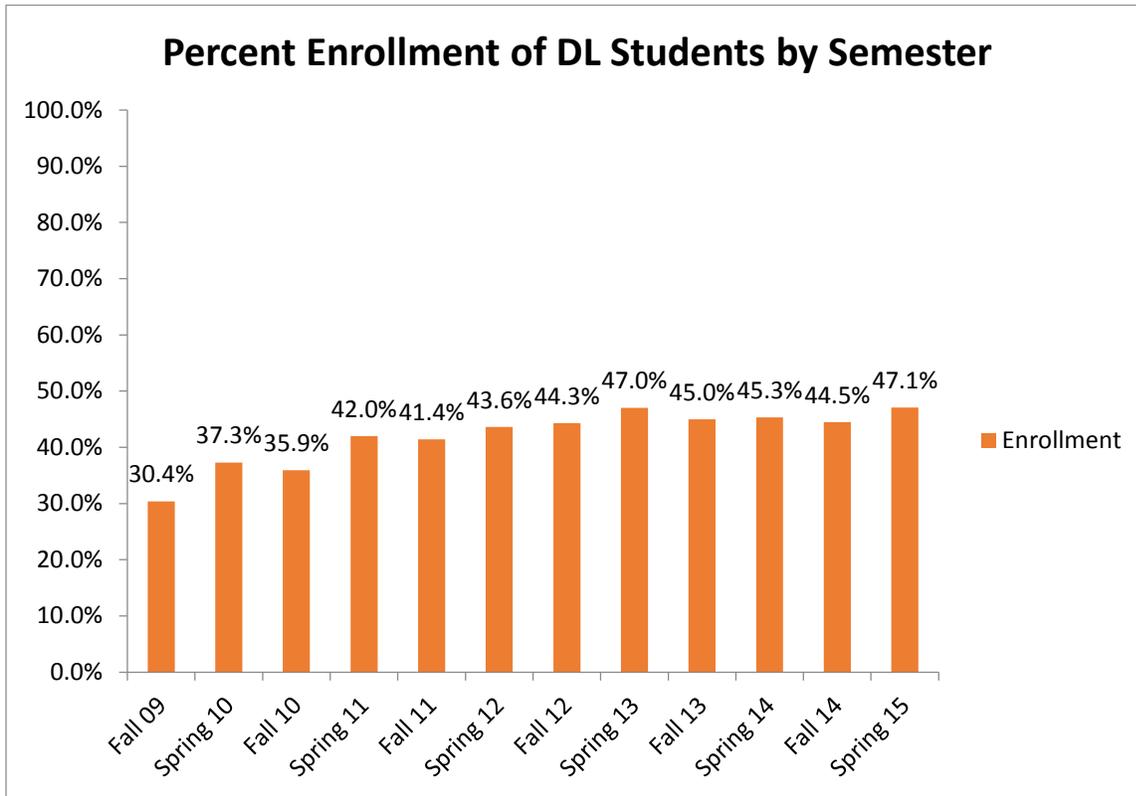
**Goal 4b: The retention rate of distance learners will increase by 2%.**





**Goal 4c: The pass rate of distance learners will increase by 2%.**





**Appendix E**

**Online Learning Success Statistics**

Summer 2013

Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
66	41	25

Out of the 41 students that completed the workshop, 80 % made a grade of a “C” or better in their first online course and 30% of the students made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes this semester.

Out of the 25 students that did not complete the workshop, 48 % made a grade of a “C” or better and 52% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Summer semester.

Fall 2013-Session 1

Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
9	5	4

Out of the 5 students that completed the workshop, 100 % made a grade of a “C” or better in their first online course.

Out of the 4 students that did not complete the workshop, 50 % made a grade of a “C” or better and 50% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Fall semester.

Fall 2013-Session 2

Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
21	8	13

Out of the 8 students that completed the workshop, 100 % made a grade of a “C” or better in their first online course.

Out of the 13 students that did not complete the workshop, 54% made a grade of a “C” or better and 46% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Fall semester.

Fall 2013-Session 3

Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
61	19	42

Out of the 19 students that completed the workshop, 100 % made a grade of a “C” or better in their first online course.

Out of the 42 students that did not complete the workshop, 43% made a grade of a “C” or better and 57% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Fall semester.

Spring 2014  
Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
11	4	8

Out of the 4 students that completed the workshop, 100 % made a grade of a “C” or better in their first online course.

Out of the 7 students that did not complete the workshop, 71% made a grade of a “C” or better and 29% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Spring semester.

Spring 2014-Spring 2014 - HMS  
Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
13	1	12

Out of the 1 student that completed the workshop, 100 % made a grade of a “C” or better.

Out of the 12 students that did not complete the workshop, 67% made a grade of a “C” or better and 35% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Spring semester.

Summer 2014  
Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
16	3	13

Out of the 3 students that completed the workshop, 67 % made a grade of a “C” or better and 33% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes this semester.

Out of the 13 students that did not complete the workshop, 69 % made a grade of a “C” or better and 31 % made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Summer semester.

Fall 2014-Session 3  
Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
33	11	22

Out of the 11 students who completed the workshop, 82% made a grade of a “C” or better and 18% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes this semester.

Out of the 22 students who did not complete the workshop, 41% made a grade of a “C” or better and 59% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Fall semester.

Spring 2015  
Online Learning Success Workshop

Total Registered Students	Completed	Did not complete
21	8	13

Out of the 8 students who completed the workshop, 75% made a grade of a “C” or better and 25% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes this semester.

Out of the 13 students who did not complete the workshop, 23% made a grade of a “C” or better and 77% made a grade below a “C,” withdrew from the course, or were not enrolled in online classes the upcoming Spring semester.

## Appendix F

### Professional Development-Tiers of Certification



#### Tiers of Certification:

- Tier 1
    - WCC4ME- (this course will most likely be developed by the other subcommittee; will contain messages from specific departments so that ALL of WCC will be versed in presenting the message to students)
    - Blackboard Basics
    - Best Practices
  - Tier 2
    - Preparing Student Objectives
    - Writing Directions
    - Rubrics & Feedback
    - Quality Matters
  - Tier 3-Master Online Certification
    - Collaborative Activities
    - Open Educational Resources
    - Developing Meaningful Discussion Activities
    - Captioning Media
- Total of 7 trainings = Certificate in Online Teaching

Must complete all of Tier 1 = 3

Pick 2 from Tier 2 and Tier 3 = 4

Total = 7

## Appendix G

### *Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (draft v14)*

#### *Teaching Presence*

##### Design & Organization

1. The instructor clearly communicated important course topics.
2. The instructor clearly communicated important course goals.
3. The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities.
4. The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning activities.

##### Facilitation

5. The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics that helped me to learn.
6. The instructor was helpful in guiding the class towards understanding course topics in a way that helped me clarify my thinking.
7. The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.
8. The instructor helped keep the course participants on task in a way that helped me to learn.
9. The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.
10. Instructor actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants.

##### Direct Instruction

11. The instructor helped to focus discussion on relevant issues in a way that helped me to learn.
12. The instructor provided feedback that helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses.
13. The instructor provided feedback in a timely fashion.

#### **Social Presence**

##### Affective expression

14. Getting to know other course participants gave me a sense of belonging in the course.
15. I was able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.

16. Online or web-based communication is an excellent medium for social interaction.

Open communication

17. I felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.

18. I felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.

19. I felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.

Group cohesion

20. I felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.

21. I felt that my point of view was acknowledged by other course participants.

22. Online discussions help me to develop a sense of collaboration.

**Cognitive Presence**

Triggering event

23. Problems posed increased my interest in course issues.

24. Course activities piqued my curiosity.

25. I felt motivated to explore content related questions.

Exploration

26. I utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems posed in this course.

27. Brainstorming and finding relevant information helped me resolve content related questions.

28. Online discussions were valuable in helping me appreciate different perspectives.

Integration

29. Combining new information helped me answer questions raised in course activities.

30. Learning activities helped me construct explanations/solutions.

31. Reflection on course content and discussions helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.

Resolution

32. I can describe ways to test and apply the knowledge created in this course.

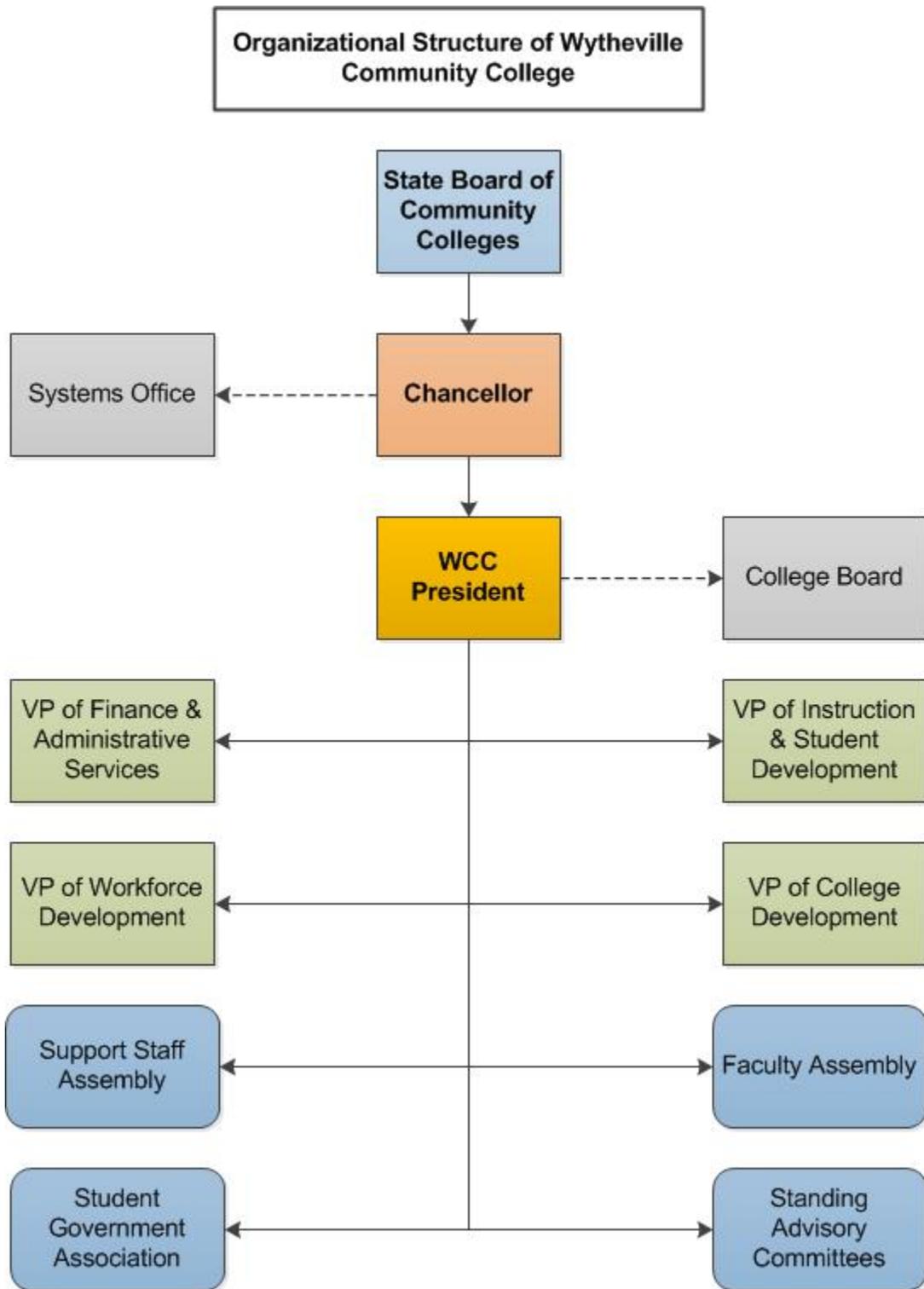
33. I have developed solutions to course problems that can be applied in practice.

34. I can apply the knowledge created in this course to my work or other non-class related activities.

5 point Likert-type scale

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

### Appendix H



## Appendix I

### WCC4ME Committee Descriptions

#### **WCC4ME Co-Chairs:**

The Co-Chairs provide leadership to support faculty and staff in the development and implementation of the QEP. The position establishes the framework and enacts the QEP to improve student learning and support per the goals of the plan and develops and executes the QEP program per the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requirements and the College's mission and vision.

#### **WCC4ME Leadership Committee:**

The WCC4ME Leadership Committee is comprised of members from all areas of the College in support of Quality Enhancement Plan. The committee offers broad-based College involvement throughout the planning, development, and implementation phases of the QEP.

#### **WCC4ME Marketing Subcommittee:**

The WCC4ME Marketing Subcommittee seeks to increase the visibility and awareness of the Quality Enhancement Plan across the College. As the QEP is implemented, the broad-based committee works to ensure the commitment of all institutional constituencies.

#### **WCC4ME Professional Development/Online Subcommittee:**

The WCC4ME Professional Development Subcommittee creates and implements a plan for professional development of faculty for online instruction. The program would initially be targeted for the faculty involved with the QEP but would be extended and required of all faculty teaching online or hybrid courses.

**WCC4ME SDV Subcommittee:**

The SDV Subcommittee develops and implements a redesign of the SDV 100 course to be incorporated into the QEP. The committee will also analyze feedback from the SDV redesign and make necessary adjustments moving forward.

## References

- Allen, I.E. & Seaman, J. (2013). *Changing course: Ten years of tracking online education in the United States*. Babson Survey Research Group and Quahog Research Group, LLC.
- Angelino, L., Williams, F & Natvig, D. (2007). Strategies to engage online students and reduce Attrition rates. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 4(2) 1-14.
- Arbaugh, J.B., Cleveland-Innes, M., Diaz, S.R., Garrison, D.R., Ice, P., Richardson, & Swan, K.P. (2008). Developing a community of inquiry instrument: Testing a measure of the Community of Inquiry framework using a multi-institutional sample. *The Internet and higher Education*, 11 (3-4), 133-136.
- Blackboard Learn | Learning Management System. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <http://www.blackboard.com/learning-management-system/blackboard-learn.aspx>
- Britto, M. and Rush, S. (2013) Developing and implementing comprehensive student support Sevices for online students. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*. 17(1), 29-43.
- Cuseo, J. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FC5065E4-E5A0-4F3F-9B36-FA33FEF29929/0/TheCaseforPromotingPartnershipsBetween.pdf>
- Description: Social Presence. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <https://coi.athabascau.ca/coi-model/description-social-presence/>
- Description: Teaching Presence. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <https://coi.athabascau.ca/coi-model/description-teaching-presence/>
- Distance and Correspondence Education- Policy Statement. (2014, July 1). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/DistanceCorrespondenceEducation.pdf>
- Feldman, R.S. & Zimbler, M.S. (2011). *Engendering college student success: Improving the first year and beyond*. McGraw- Hill Research Foundation. Retrieved from [http://www.pcrest3.com/llc/academy/fye\\_whitepaper.pdf](http://www.pcrest3.com/llc/academy/fye_whitepaper.pdf)

- Hachey, Wladis & Conway (2012). Is the second time the charm? Investigating trends in online re-enrollment, retention and success. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 9 (1), 1-25.
- Harrel, I.L. (2009) Increasing the Success of Online Students. *Inquiry*, 13 (1), 36-44.
- Hart, C. (2012) Factors associated with student persistence in an online program of study: A review of literature. *Journal of Interactive Online Learning*, 11 (1), 19 – 41.
- How to Write Objectives. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <http://www.assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteObjectivesOutcomes.pdf>
- Nash, R. (2005). Course completion rates among distance learners: Identifying possible methods to improve retention. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 8 (4), 1-27.
- Quality Matters. (n.d.). Retrieved September 9, 2015, from <https://www.qualitymatters.org/>
- Sadera, W.A., Robertson, J. Song, L. & Midon, M.N. (2009). The Role of Community in Online Learning Success. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 5 (2), 277 – 284.
- Smarter Measures. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <http://www.smartermeasure.com/about/>
- State University. (2015). Retrieved September 13, 2015, from [http://www.stateuniversity.com/universities/VA/Wytheville\\_Community\\_College.html](http://www.stateuniversity.com/universities/VA/Wytheville_Community_College.html)
- Tinto, V. (1975). *Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research*. *Review of Educational Research* 45, 89-125.
- Tinto, V. (1999). Taking retention seriously: Rethinking the first year of college. *NACADA Journal*, 19(2), 5-9.
- Virginia Community College System Course Catalog. (n.d.). Retrieved September 6, 2015, from <http://courses.vccs.edu/courses>
- Wojciechowski, A. & palmer, L.B. (2005). Individual characteristics: Can any be predictors of success in online classes? *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 7(2), 2-21.