

Student

 **online**

Success

A Quality Enhancement Plan presented to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in partial fulfillment of requirements for reaffirmation of institutional accreditation.

August 1, 2013



The QEP Development Committee wishes to acknowledge Mona Cornwell, Director of Community Relations & Marketing, who gave vital input early in the QEP development process. Ms. Cornwell passed away on April 1, 2013.

This project is dedicated to her memory.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Topic Selection	6
QEP Launch Meetings	6
QEP Viability Team	6
Campus Vote	7
Executive Leadership Team Selection	8
Why 100 Percent Online Classes	9
Development of the QEP	11
Review of Distance Education-Related QEPs	11
Literature Review	11
Proposed Curriculum Project	15
Proposed Student Project	15
Further Narrowing of Focus	15
Input from Campus Community	16
Naming the QEP	19
QEP Goals and Student Learning Outcomes	20
Actions	22
SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator	22
CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage	23
<i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i>	23
Redesign of Moodle Online Orientation for Students	24
Student and Faculty Skills Assessment Surveys	27
Faculty Development	27
QEP Coordinator	27
QEP Steering Committee	28
Programming	28
Assessment and Continuous Improvement	30
Retention and Success Rates	30
Student Learning Outcomes	31
2013-2014 Strategic Plan	31

Timeline	35
Budget	38
Best Practices	39
Appendices	40
Appendix A: Committees	40
Appendix B: Notes from May 1, 2013 SGA Meeting	42
Appendix C: Notes from June 24, 2013 Department Chairs Meeting	45
Appendix D: Reliability of SmarterMeasure	46
Appendix E: Job Description for QEP Coordinator	47
Appendix F: SLO Assessment Report	48
Appendix G: SACSCOC Best Practices and Protocols for Online Education	49
References	53
Tables and Figures	
Table 1: Submitted Topics	7
Table 2: Snapshot of 100 Percent Online Classes	9
Table 3: Student Learning Outcomes	21
Table 4: Budget	38
Table 5: SACSCOC Best Practices for Online Education	49
Figure 1: Student Pathways to 100 Percent Online Classes	26
Figure 2: Actions	29
Figure 3: Assessment Based on Student Pathways	32
Figure 4: Assessment Based on Faculty Development	33
Figure 5: Continuous Improvement	34
Figure 6: Reliability of SmarterMeasure	46

Executive Summary

Student Online Success (SOS) is Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's (A-B Tech's) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The focus of **SOS** is to improve readiness of students entering 100 percent online classes. Prior to beginning classes, students will be assessed using SmarterMeasure, a web-based assessment that measures a learner's readiness for participating in an online and/or technology-rich learning program. Based on SmarterMeasure scores, students will be placed in one of three pathways that will help students improve a combination of technical skills and soft skills necessary to be successful in 100 percent online classes. Students scoring "High Readiness" on SmarterMeasure will only be required to take Moodle Online Orientation for Students. Students scoring "Medium Readiness" will be required to take *Fast Track to Online Education* and Moodle Online Orientation for Students. Students scoring "Low Readiness" will be required to take CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage, *Fast Track to Online Education*, and Moodle Online Orientation for Students. Improving students' technical skills and soft skills should achieve **SOS**'s goals of increased retention and success in 100 percent online classes.

A-B Tech, located in Asheville, serves the citizens of Buncombe and Madison counties in Western North Carolina. A member of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS), A-B Tech is a comprehensive community college, offering associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in a variety of disciplines. A-B Tech's curriculum enrollment in Fall 2012 was 8,083, with 3,844 of those students taking at least one 100 percent online class.

A-B Tech's Mission

A-B Tech inspires, nurtures, and empowers students and the community toward a better quality of life through progressive teaching, bold innovation, and supportive collaboration.

SOS is consistent with A-B Tech's mission as it provides a means to empower students to be successful in their pursuit of an education through 100 percent online classes.

Developed during an 18-month process that included research and planning, analysis of data, and creative collaboration, the resulting QEP fulfills Core Requirement 2.12 and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2. A-B Tech's QEP Budget of approximately \$500,000 over five-years represents a serious commitment to improving student success. More than 300 faculty, staff, and students provided input during the development of **SOS** through service on committees, by participation in focus groups, or by completion of surveys. This widespread participation in the process demonstrates the dedication of A-B Tech to its mission and to accreditation standards.

Topic Selection

Dr. Beth Stewart, Dean of Arts and Sciences, was named the QEP Development Committee Chair in January 2012. Working with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Dr. Stewart developed a four-step process to select A-B Tech's QEP topic:

1. QEP launch meetings to introduce the QEP process and invite topic submissions,
2. QEP viability team meetings to review submissions for QEP criteria,
3. Campus vote to determine top three submissions,
4. Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meeting to select topic.

QEP Launch Meetings

To begin the QEP process, QEP launch meetings were held. In order to provide faculty and staff with multiple opportunities to hear the QEP message, Dr. Dennis King, Special Assistant to the President for Accreditation, and Dr. Beth Stewart, QEP Development Committee Chair, conducted three 50-minute presentations on February 3, 2012, at 10:00 AM; February 3, 2012, at 1:00 PM; and February 6, 2012, at 5:00 PM. At each session, the following information was presented:

- A brief overview of the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation process,
- A definition of a QEP,
- Requirements for a QEP,
- Summaries of recent QEPs to serve as examples,
- An invitation to submit a QEP topic idea,
- The QEP selection process.

Attended by 203 faculty and staff, the QEP launch meetings yielded 32 topic suggestions that were then sent to the QEP Viability Team.

QEP Viability Team

In order to ensure that topics considered for the QEP met all the SACSCOC criteria, the QEP Viability Team (Appendix A) met three times to vet each of the 32 topic suggestions, using a rubric that asked the following questions:

- Can clear student learning outcomes be established?
- Is the topic measurable?
- Is the topic affordable?
- Does it fit the mission of A-B Tech?
- Can this be combined with another topic? If so, which one?
- Is this a good topic?

- Do data already exist on this topic?

Based on the results of the rubric, the QEP Viability Team determined that 16 of the topics did not meet the requirements SACSCOC sets forth for the QEP. Due to similarities, the remaining 16 topics were combined into five. Table 1: Submitted Topics shows the five topics, the name of the person who submitted each topic, and his or her title.

Table 1: Submitted Topics

Topic	Submitted By	Title
Mathematic Skills	Tammy Sullivan	Chair of Mathematics
	Karen Pauly	Director of Basic Skills
	Ron Layne	Chair of Developmental Studies
	Sharon Trammel	Chair of Visual and Performing Arts
	Vernon Daugherty	Dean of Engineering and Applied Technology
Writing Across the Curriculum	Heath Moody	Chair of Construction and Sustainability Technologies
	Peter Carver	Drama Instructor
	Dr. Chuck Cummings	Psychology Instructor
	Lisa Johnson	Writing Center Director
Science Skills	Lisa York	English Instructor
	Sue Olesiuk	Dean of Academic Success
	Dr. Kathie Doole	Business Computer Technology Instructor
Distance Learning	Dr. Gene Loflin	Associate Vice President of Instructional Services
	Rusty Holmes	Chair of Communication
Judging Sources of Information		

Campus Vote

On February 29, 2012, the QEP Development Committee Chair sent out an email invitation to vote on the QEP topic. The email contained a brief description of each topic and the link to a Survey Monkey survey as well as instructions on how to vote. On March 2, 2012, a second email was sent reminding the campus to vote. The voting closed on March 5, 2012, at noon. A total of 265 people participated in the vote. The top

three topics, Mathematic Skills, Writing Across the Curriculum, and Distance Learning, moved to the ELT for final consideration.

Executive Leadership Team Selection

On March 7, 2012, the QEP Development Committee Chair presented to the ELT the top three topics as selected by the campus. ELT chose Distance Learning as the topic for the QEP. Their decision was based on the campus data available, the anticipated resources needed for implementation, and the number of students who may be positively impacted by the project.

Why 100 Percent Online?

Early in the process, the QEP Development Committee determined that the topic of Distance Learning was still too broad. The QEP Development Committee examined various campus data and decided that, given the College's resources, the greatest impact on student success could be made by focusing on 100 percent online classes.

Table 2: Snapshot of 100 Percent Online Classes provides data related to 100 percent online classes from Fall 2010 through Spring 2013.

Table 2: Snapshot of 100 Percent Online Classes

	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
Number of courses with at least one 100 percent online section	101	96	91	102	103	106
Total number of courses	512	563	494	559	497	561
Unduplicated number of students who took at least one 100 percent online class	3,128	2,882	3,521	3,536	3,844	3,694
Duplicated headcount in 100 percent online sections	4,849	4,498	5,755	6,031	6,551	6,280
Percentage of courses with 100 percent online sections that had student success rates of 70 percent or higher	33.7%	44.8%	34.1%	45.1%	36.9%	47.6%
Percentage of courses with 100 percent online sections that had student success rates <i>lower</i> than face-to-face and hybrid sections	58.6%	60.9%	51.7%	49.2%	56.5%	Available in Fall 2013

As indicated above, enrollment in 100 percent online classes has increased annually in both unduplicated and duplicated headcount since 2010-2011. Unduplicated headcount increased from 6,010 in 2010-2011 to 7,538 in 2012-2013 (25.4 percent increase). Duplicated headcount increased from 9,347 in 2010-2011 to 12,831 in 2012-2013 (37.2 percent increase). These increases in online enrollment suggest a need to confront the issue of student success rates in classes delivered 100 percent online.

A comparative statistical analysis shows that student success rates are typically lower in courses delivered 100 percent online than in those with face-to-face or hybrid delivery.

Fall to fall and spring to spring success rates are showing minor improvement. These improvements may be attributed to existing efforts to increase success rates in all distance learning through the following strategies:

- Developing and implementing a required online teaching orientation for all faculty (Fall 2012),
- Establishing in faculty evaluations a competency for technology as a tool for teaching and learning (Summer 2012),
- Refocusing the charge of the Distance Learning Steering Committee to gain College-wide participation in reviewing and recommending continuous improvements for distance learning (Fall 2012),
- Adopting Quality Matters as a model for course development (2012-2013).

Although there are slight improvements in student success rates in all distance learning modalities, there is still much room for improvement. In light of this finding, the QEP Development Committee established the goals of increasing student retention and student success rates in 100 percent online classes.

Development of the QEP

Dr. Beth Stewart, QEP Development Committee Chair, and Dr. Dennis King, Special Assistant to the President for Accreditation, established the QEP Development Committee (Appendix A: Committees) that was approved by ELT. The Committee was populated with representation from across the campus, including faculty members from each of the College's academic divisions. The Committee began meeting on a regular basis in April 2012.

Review of Distance Education-Related QEPs

To help determine the scope and possible directions for the QEP, the Committee reviewed successful distance-education related QEPs from Bainbridge College in Georgia; Blue Ridge Community College in North Carolina; Germanna Community College in Virginia; J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Virginia; and the State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota. Based on this review, the Committee determined that there were four initial areas of focus to investigate: student improvements, faculty improvements, curriculum improvements, and improvements to supporting college policies and procedures. After initial discussion of these possible projects, the Committee determined that, regardless of the direction taken, supporting College policies and procedures would become an integral part of the QEP. Thus, the Committee began reviewing literature for the student project, the faculty project, and the curriculum project.

Literature Review

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2011), "4.3 million undergraduate students, or 20 percent of all undergraduates" took at least one distance-learning course in 2007-2008. Approximately 769,000 undergraduates completed a program of study entirely through distance education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). According to the most recent statistics available through the North Carolina Community College System for 2010-2011, Distance Learning Internet Courses (100 percent online) generated 35,613 Full Time Enrollment (FTE) systemwide. The Southern Regional Education Board (2011) reported that e-learning accounted for 22.6 percent of all community college instruction in North Carolina in 2010-2011.

Unfortunately, as the sources reviewed make clear, retention and success rates for online courses are lower than for traditional courses. Nationwide, it is estimated that retention rates for distance education courses are 10 percent to 20 percent less than retention rates for traditional courses (Stover, 2005; Angelino, Williams, & Natvig, 2007; Dietz-Uhler, Fisher, & Han, 2007). McPhail (2011) cited success rates for online students as an obstacle to the American Association of Community Colleges'

Completion Agenda Challenge. Literature shows multiple reasons for lower retention and success rates for online learners.

Sources reviewed provided evidence that students are often not prepared for online learning on many fronts. Many students have the misconception that online classes are easier than face-to-face classes (Nash, 2005). However, students found online classes to be more difficult due to challenges associated with group assignments (Willging & Johnson, 2009), the lack of one-on-one interaction with faculty and other students (Willging & Johnson, 2009), and the lack of regular study times and locations (Nash, 2005; Willging & Johnson, 2009). Sources reviewed indicated that technology poses problems as well. Moody (2004) wrote that students often find online classes more difficult because they are not comfortable with the technology used to deliver the course. Willging & Johnson (2009) found that students did not receive the necessary technical support to be successful and/or did not have the necessary technical preparation in advance of taking the class. Many students complained about the de-personalization of the learning environment and that technology overwhelmed the content of the class (Willging & Johnson, 2009).

Faculty preparation for teaching online is, according to sources reviewed, a contributing factor to poor student retention and success rates. Faculty struggle with changing technology (Hixon, et al., 2011; Hobgood, nd; Lu, Todd, & Miller, 2011) and a lack of technical training (Faculty Attitude Preparation..., 2004; Bassou & Davison, 2007; Hixon, et al. 2011). A working knowledge of the technology used to deliver classes online is not enough to be successful in an online environment, as the reviewed sources emphasized. Faculty and administration often do not understand the amount of time involved with teaching online (Lackey, 2011; Hixon, et al., 2011, and Faculty Attitude Preparation..., 2004). Faculty have trouble adapting their traditional courses to the online environment (Hixon, et al., 2011). Faculty complain that training focuses too much on the technical aspect of teaching online while ignoring best practices of the pedagogy of online learning (Lackey, 2011).

Institutions often do a poor job in planning online education programs, a problem revealed in the sources reviewed. According to Roberts (2008), there is still considerable resistance to embracing technology in higher education, especially in online education. Howell, Williams, and Lindsay (2003) cited 32 overlooked trends that need to be considered when planning online education. Lion and Stark (2010) studied 364 institutes of higher education that have online education. Only one half provided guidance to faculty teaching online in four key areas: guidance to assist with online course design, course design requirements, specific instructional competencies for faculty, and collection of online student feedback. Institutional tools, such as access to technology and training as well as institutional incentives to entice faculty to teach online, are also lacking (Lion & Stark, 2010).

The review of literature also revealed that online course design can contribute to poor student retention and success rates. Assignments that are not challenging or stimulating (Willging & Johnson, 2009; Dietz-Uhler, Fisher, & Han, 2007), classes that are too

demanding (Willging & Johnson, 2009), and the length of the online class (Diaz & Cartnal, 2006; Ferguson & DeFelice, 2010) can all be contributing factors to a student's likelihood of being unsuccessful in a course. Organization of materials and assessments are additional factors (Dietz-Uhler, Fisher, & Han, 2007).

Just as multiple reasons for the lower retention and success rates for online learners exist and have been illustrated in the literature, so do sources of information on distance learning offer multiple suggestions for improving retention rates and success of online learners. Noting that student preparation can be addressed through better communication, the American Federation of Teachers (2001) recommends clearly stating the requirements for online courses in advance, including information about weekly time commitment, computer skills required, practical difficulties of working at a distance, and skills needed to be successful in online classes. Young (2006) recommends carefully designed written communication with online students as well as timely feedback.

The review of the literature on distance education revealed the need for attention to student engagement, appropriate training and assistance, and diagnostics for placement. Angelino, Williams, and Natvig (2007) stress the importance of student engagement through use of learner-centered approaches, use of learning communities, and development of online student services. As in face-to-face classes, faculty must engage students through motivation and by showing concern for the student (Young, 2006). Students must have extensive technology support (American Federation of Teachers, 2001; Angelino, Williams, & Natvig, 2007; Willging & Johnson, 2009) and technology training (American Federation of Teachers, 2001; Dupin-Bryant, 2004) available to them. Online student services should include assistance for students with poor written communication skills as part of online student services (American Federation of Teachers, 2001). Additionally, students must be evaluated prior to beginning online education to see if they have the proper technology skills needed to be successful, although technology skills alone do not guarantee student success in online education (Hall, 2009). To achieve this type of evaluation, multiple tools already exist to assess student skills in online education (Hall, 2009).

Distance learning literature asserts that faculty must become better prepared to teach online through well-designed, ongoing faculty development. This development should be designed to enhance understanding of the pedagogical value of technology and the knowledge of specific technology-based skills (Lackey, 2011; Hixon, et al., 2011; Lu, Todd, & Miller, 2011). Pedagogical topics should include preparation, design, and teaching (Hobgood, nd). Assessment must be covered under design and teaching (Lu, Todd, & Miller, 2011). The amount of time involved in teaching online and specific time management skills must also be addressed (Lackey, 2011; Hixon, et al., 2011; Lu, Todd, & Miller, 2011; Hobgood, nd; American Federation of Teachers, 2001). Workshops are helpful, but other types of faculty development, such as one-on-one assistance, access to resources, and mentoring programs, are also important (Lackey, 2011; Hixon, et al., 2011).

Planning and guidance at the institutional level are, according to the literature, critical to the success of online education. When planning online education, institutions must consider student trends (enrollment, retention, and changing demographics), faculty trends (changing roles and competence with technology), academic trends (accountability, decentralization, and standardization), technology trends, distance learning trends, and economic trends (Howell, Williams, & Lindsay, 2003). Implementation of new technologies must be based on sound analysis and implemented in an orderly fashion (Roberts, 2008). Support for faculty teaching online must include guidance, tools, and incentives to be successful (Lion & Stark, 2010). Institutional guidance should include guidelines for curriculum design for online courses (Dietz-Uhler, Fisher, & Han, 2007).

Much of the literature on improvement is capsulated in Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, 2000). The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) provides five best practices of institutional activity relevant to distance education and provides protocols for each area. The five best practices, as well as the SACSCOC description of each, are provided below.

1. **Institutional Context and Commitment** - Electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of educational institutions. Increasingly they are integral to academic organization, with growing implications for institutional infrastructure. There are ten protocols for institutional context and commitment.
2. **Curriculum Instruction** - Methods change, but standards of quality endure. The important issues are not technical but curriculum-driven and pedagogical. Decisions about such matters are made by qualified professionals and focus on learning outcomes for an increasingly diverse student population. There are five protocols for curriculum instruction.
3. **Faculty Support** - As indicated above, faculty roles are becoming increasingly diverse and reorganized. For example, the same person may not perform both the tasks of course development and direct instruction to students. Regardless of who performs which of these tasks, important issues are involved. There are four protocols for faculty support.
4. **Student Support** - Colleges and universities have learned that the 21st century student is different, both demographically and geographically, from students of previous generations. These differences affect everything from admissions policy to library services. Reaching these students, and serving them appropriately, are major challenges to today's institutions. There are four protocols for student support.
5. **Evaluation and Assessment** - Both the assessment of student achievement and evaluation of the overall program take on added importance as new techniques evolve. For example, in asynchronous programs the element of seat time is essentially removed from the equation. For these reasons, the institution conducts sustained, evidence-based and participatory inquiry as to whether distance learning programs are achieving objectives. The results of such inquiry

are used to guide curriculum design and delivery, pedagogy, and educational processes, and may affect future policy and budgets and perhaps have implications for the institution's roles and mission. There are six protocols for evaluation and assessment.

Please see Appendix G for a complete list of Best Practices and Protocols.

Based on the literature review, the Committee decided to combine the faculty and curriculum project under the heading curriculum project. The initial QEP concept then focused on the curriculum project and the student project.

Proposed Curriculum Project

The initial plan for the curriculum project included implementing Quality Matters, a peer-based approach to continuous improvement in online education and student learning (Quality Matters, 2013). Twelve courses were selected to undergo a Quality Matters review over the five-year period. The criteria for selection included low success rates, number of adjunct instructors teaching sections, and number of sections offered coupled with enrollment. Extensive faculty development would be offered to all faculty teaching online based on Quality Matters principles and perceived needs identified through the implementation of Quality Matters.

Proposed Student Project

The initial plan for the student project included requiring all entering students to take a readiness assessment. Students deemed unprepared to be successful in online education would be required to take an intervention prior to enrolling in an online class. Additionally, student services provided by the College would have an increased online presence.

Further Narrowing of Focus

In late Fall 2012 and Spring 2013, five events led to further narrowing the QEP.

- Survey of Faculty - A faculty survey conducted in August 2012 indicated that 89.9 percent of faculty felt their students were only “somewhat prepared” or “not prepared” for 100 percent online classes. Faculty listed several skills they felt students needed to have prior to enrolling in a 100 percent online class. This survey is discussed in the Input from Campus Community section below.
- Survey of Students - A student survey conducted in November 2012 indicated that 41.4 percent of students felt only “somewhat prepared” or “not prepared” for 100 percent online classes. Students listed several skills they felt they needed prior to enrolling in a 100 percent online class. Also, 58.6 percent of the students surveyed said they either would not enroll or were unsure if they would enroll in

another 100 percent online class. This survey is discussed in the Input from Campus Community section below.

- Difficulty identifying student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the curriculum project – The QEP Development Committee determined that it would be difficult to establish SLOs for the curriculum project due to the variety of disciplines that offer classes in a 100 percent online format. In January 2013, the QEP Development Committee Chair as well as members of the Committee met with Dr. Mark Smith, SACSCOC Vice President, to discuss these concerns.
- Statewide Redesign of the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees and the Mathematics Curriculum Improvement Project – These statewide initiatives are expected to eliminate many of the courses previously identified as courses that would have undergone Quality Matters review.
- Visits to Germanna Community College and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (JSRCC) – Two members of the QEP Committee met with QEP committees from Germanna and JSRCC in March. These are two comprehensive community colleges that recently produced successful distance education QEPs. Faculty at both colleges believed that A-B Tech’s QEP was still too broad and needed to be further focused.

The results of the faculty survey indicate that students are not entering 100 percent online classes with the skills they need to be successful. The results of both the faculty survey and the student survey indicate that faculty and students agree upon many of the skills deficiencies that need to be corrected (see discussion of surveys below) in order to better prepare students for online learning. Given these data, along with the difficulty identifying SLOs for the curriculum project, the impending changes in the AA and AS degrees, and the advice of colleagues at colleges with similar successful QEPs, the QEP Development Committee decided to eliminate the curriculum project and focus resources solely on the student project.

Input from Campus Community

Input from Faculty

In August 2012, 89 faculty responded to a survey regarding 100 percent online classes. The following questions and responses were particularly helpful to the development process.

How prepared do you feel our students are to take a 100 percent online course?

Well prepared	= 10.1%
Somewhat prepared	= 79.8%
Not prepared	= 10.1%

What skills do you feel students should possess to be successful in 100 percent online classes?

Self-discipline
Time Management
Reading Skills
Internet Skills
Organization
Troubleshooting Skills
Emotional Intelligence
Communication Skills

Motivation
Computer Skills
Research Skills
Independence
Word Processing Skills
Keyboarding Skills
File Management Skills
Email Skills

Results of this survey assisted the QEP Development Committee with narrowing the focus of the QEP and in developing the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) discussed in a later section.

Input from Students

In November 2012, a survey was sent to students enrolled in 100 percent online classes. The following questions and responses were particularly helpful to the development process.

How prepared were you to take a 100 percent online class?

Well prepared	= 58.6%
Somewhat prepared	= 34.5%
Not prepared	= 6.9%

Would you prefer to take 100 percent online classes versus typical face-to-face courses in the future?

Yes	= 41.1%
No	= 27.6%
Unsure	= 31.0%

What skills and/or knowledge would have been helpful to have prior to taking 100 percent online classes?

Time Management Skills	Computer Skills
Internet Skills	Communication Skills
Work Processing Skills	Self-Motivation

Results of this survey assisted the QEP Development Committee with narrowing the focus of the QEP and in developing the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) discussed in a later section.

The A-B Tech Student Government Association (SGA) was instrumental in providing student input on the QEP. Two members of the QEP Development Committee, Cris

Harshman and Dr. Beth Stewart, met with the SGA on April 17, 2013, to give an overview of the QEP. SGA members received a description of major components of the QEP via e-mail on Friday, April 26 and were asked to solicit feedback on the document from their constituents. On Wednesday, May 1, three members of the QEP Development Committee, Jennifer Browning, Erika Lytle, and Cris Harshman, met with 17 SGA members and six student guests to receive input on the QEP. To guide the discussion, the following questions were asked:

1. How does the on-boarding process feel to students?
2. Do you see benefits to making the *Fast Track to Online Learning* mandatory before enrolling in online classes?
3. Regarding the SLO addressing common learning situations, what are suggestions for situations to use, based on your experience as online learners?
4. Regarding the SLO addressing strengths and weaknesses, what strengths and weaknesses should we focus on?
5. What surprised you about taking an online class? Was there anything that you didn't anticipate or that you weren't prepared for?
6. After reviewing the professional development piece, and taking into account that SmarterMeasure assesses technology familiarity and soft-skills, what do you hope faculty will learn from the aggregate responses?

Members of the SGA showed resounding support for using SmarterMeasure to assess students and to provide interventions for students who are not prepared for online classes. They were pleased that *Fast Track to Online Learning* will be a free service provided to students and that it would be offered as a half-day workshop instead of a semester-long class. When discussing the CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage, students were concerned that they would have to pay for this course out of pocket and that this course might not be covered by financial aid. It has since been determined that financial aid will pay for this course.

Regarding common learning situations, SGA members recommended that *Fast Track to Online Learning* should address communication, use of various Moodle tools including the grade book, and a process to follow when encountering various problems. Regarding strengths and weaknesses, SGA members recommended that *Fast Track to Online Learning* should address motivation, time management, awareness of learning styles, and communication. Regarding faculty professional development, SGA members hoped that faculty would learn about student learning styles, communication, and new technical skills.

A list of SGA members and the organizations they represent are found in Appendix A. Notes from the May 1 meeting are found in Appendix B.

Input from Department Chairs

In June 2013, department chairs met with the QEP Development Committee Chair to discuss the QEP and recommended that CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage should be

required for students who score “Low Readiness”. Initially, CTS 060 was to be recommended but not required.

Additionally, it was determined that there needed to be some clarification in the QEP document about the frequency of offerings of *Fast Track to Online Learning*, the length of the CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage course, and the path for students scoring “High Readiness” on SmarterMeasure.

Forty-one people were in attendance at the meeting. All agreed that the QEP was measurable, affordable, and accomplishable in five years. Notes from the meeting with department chairs may be found in Appendix C.

Input from the Instructional Administrators Team

The Instructional Administrators Team was instrumental in giving feedback on the QEP. Dr. Stewart, a member of the Instructional Administrators Team, gave reports to and solicited input from this group on ten occasions between March 2012 and June 2013. During these meetings, the Team discussed the following topics:

- Population of QEP Development Committee,
- Identification of colleges with similar QEP topics and with best practices in online learning,
- The Curriculum Project and the Student Project,
- Narrowing the focus of the QEP,
- Data used to identify problems and measure success,
- Supporting policies and procedures.

On June 11, 2013, the Instructional Administrators Team was given a draft of the QEP. There was overwhelming support for all components of the plan.

Members of the Instructional Administrators Team may be found in Appendix A.

Naming the QEP

In a June 27, 2013, meeting, the QEP Development Committee discussed marketing the QEP. The QEP was officially named **Student Online Success (SOS)**.

QEP Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

There are two goals for **Student Online Success (SOS)**:

1. Increase end-of-class retention rates in 100 percent online classes over baseline established in Academic Year 2013-2014,
2. Increase student success rates (defined as C or better) in 100 percent online classes baseline established in Academic Year 2013-2014.

Criteria for success will be developed during Year One for Years Two through Five.

The QEP Development Committee hypothesizes that, in order to increase success of students in 100 percent online classes, increasing student understanding of three critical topics is necessary. Those three topics are basic technical knowledge, life factors and personal attributes, and the College's Learning Management System (LMS) and related support resources.

With these topics in mind, a subcommittee drafted student learning outcomes (SLOs) for **SOS**. Inspiration for these SLOs came from multiple sources:

- Assessment points from SmarterMeasures,
- SLOs from CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage,
- The previously mentioned faculty survey,
- The previously mentioned student survey,
- Instructional Support and Online Learning (ISOL) staff experience,
- The Literature Review.

There are six SLOs for **SOS**. Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments;
- Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for seeking assistance for online classes;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for navigating a Moodle class.

Table 3: Student Learning Outcomes employs curriculum mapping to indicate where students will be introduced (I) to the SLOs, where the SLOs will be reinforced (R), and where the SLOs will be assessed (A). The table depicts actions that will be taken as part of **SOS**. These actions are discussed beginning on page 22. Faculty will also be

exposed to these student learning outcomes, which will form the framework for faculty development discussed on page 27.

Table 3: Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes	Smarter-Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	100% Online Classes	Skills Survey
Demonstrate file management	I/A	R/A	R/A	R	R	A
Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files	I/A	R/A	R/A	R	R	A
Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments	I/A	R/A	R/A	R	R	A
Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner	I/A		R/A	R	R	A
Identify the appropriate procedures for seeking assistance for online classes			I	I/R	R	A
Identify the appropriate procedures for navigating a Moodle class				I/R	R	A

The retention and success goals, as well as the SLOs, serve as a means of assessment and will be discussed further under the heading Assessment and Continuous Improvement beginning on page 30.

Actions

The following actions will be taken to meet the previously mentioned SLOs and to accomplish the goals of **Student Online Success (SOS)**. Actions fall into one of four categories: Readiness Indicators, Interventions, Assessments, or Support Actions.

SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator (Readiness Indicator)

SmarterMeasure is a web-based assessment that measures a learner's readiness for participating in an online and/or technology-rich learning program. SmarterMeasure assesses components that can lead to online success: individual attributes, life factors, learning styles, on-screen reading rate and recall, technical competency, technical knowledge, and typing speed and accuracy (www.smartermeasure.com).

Independent research by Applied Measurement Associates shows statistically significant relationships between SmarterMeasure scores and student academic achievement, engagement, satisfaction, and retention. Additional research, found in Appendix D, shows the reliability of the assessment in the areas of learning styles, individual attributes, life factors, technical knowledge, and technical competency.

According to the SmarterMeasure website, many community colleges currently use SmarterMeasure as a readiness assessment for online education. SACSCOC colleges that use SmarterMeasure include:

- Austin Community College District, Texas;
- Bainbridge College, Georgia;
- Collin County Community College, Texas;
- Germanna Community College, Virginia;
- Houston Community College System, Texas;
- J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Virginia;
- Lone Star College System, Texas;
- Miami Dade College, Florida;
- Piedmont Community College, North Carolina;
- Southwestern Community College, North Carolina;
- Tarrant County College, Texas.

A complete list of colleges and universities using SmarterMeasure may be found at <http://www.smartermeasure.com/about/clients/>.

Beginning in Year One of **SOS**, SmarterMeasure will be administered to students as part of the existing New Student Orientation. New Student Orientation is required of most students entering A-B Tech for the first time. In Year Two, students who earn a

“High Readiness” score, as defined by SmarterMeasure, will be allowed to enroll in Moodle Online Orientation for Students (see below) and take online classes without further intervention. Students who earn a “Medium Readiness” score will be required to take *Fast Track to Online Learning* (see below) prior to enrolling in Moodle Online Orientation for Students and prior to enrolling in online classes. Students who earn a “Low Readiness” score will be required to take CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage course and *Fast Tract to Online Learning* prior to enrolling in Moodle Online Orientation for Students and prior to enrolling in classes that are 100 percent online.

SmarterMeasure has four SLOs:

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments;
- Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner.

The cost of SmarterMeasure is \$165,000 over five years.

CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage (Intervention)

Successful completion of CTS 060 will be required for those students scoring “Low Readiness” beginning in Year Two. This course covers the basic functions and operations of the computer. Upon completion, students should be able to perform basic computer commands, access files, print documents, and complete fundamental application operations.

CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage has three SLOs:

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments.

CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage is an existing credit course. It will be offered in the fall and spring semesters as an eight-week and sixteen-week class. There is a possibility that this course could also be offered as a four-week class should need arise.

Since CTS 060 generates Full Time Enrollment (FTE), no funds will be budgeted for the course. Additional sections will generate additional FTE, thus paying for faculty salaries.

Fast Track to Online Learning (Intervention)

Fast Track to Online Learning is an intervention program that will be developed for students who are deemed inadequately prepared for online education based on their SmarterMeasure score. *Fast Track to Online Learning* will be a half-day workshop offered free to students. Multiple sections will be offered weekly with additional sections

offered during peak registration times. *Fast Track to Online Learning* will have five SLOs.

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments;
- Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner.;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for seeking assistance for online classes.

Data gathered from SmarterMeasure and the Faculty and Student Skills Surveys (discussed below) will be used to develop *Fast Track to Online Learning* in Year One.

Beginning in Year Two, students scoring “Medium Readiness” or “Low Readiness” on SmarterMeasure will be required to complete *Fast Track to Online Learning* prior to entrance into online classes. Data will be gathered in Year Three (student retention and success data and Faculty and Student Skills Surveys) to provide feedback for any needed revisions to the workshop.

The cost of *Fast Track to Online Learning* is \$21,500 over five years.

Redesign of Moodle Online Orientation for Students (Intervention)

Moodle is A-B Tech’s Learning Management System (LMS). The current optional Moodle Online Orientation for Students will be redesigned in Year Two based upon the results of SmarterMeasure data and Faculty and Student Skills Surveys. Once redesigned, the Moodle Online Orientation for Students will become mandatory for all 100 percent online classes. The process of launching students into their first online class will be assessed to ensure that the College is providing important technology orientation at the most appropriate time and with the most appropriate forms of instruction.

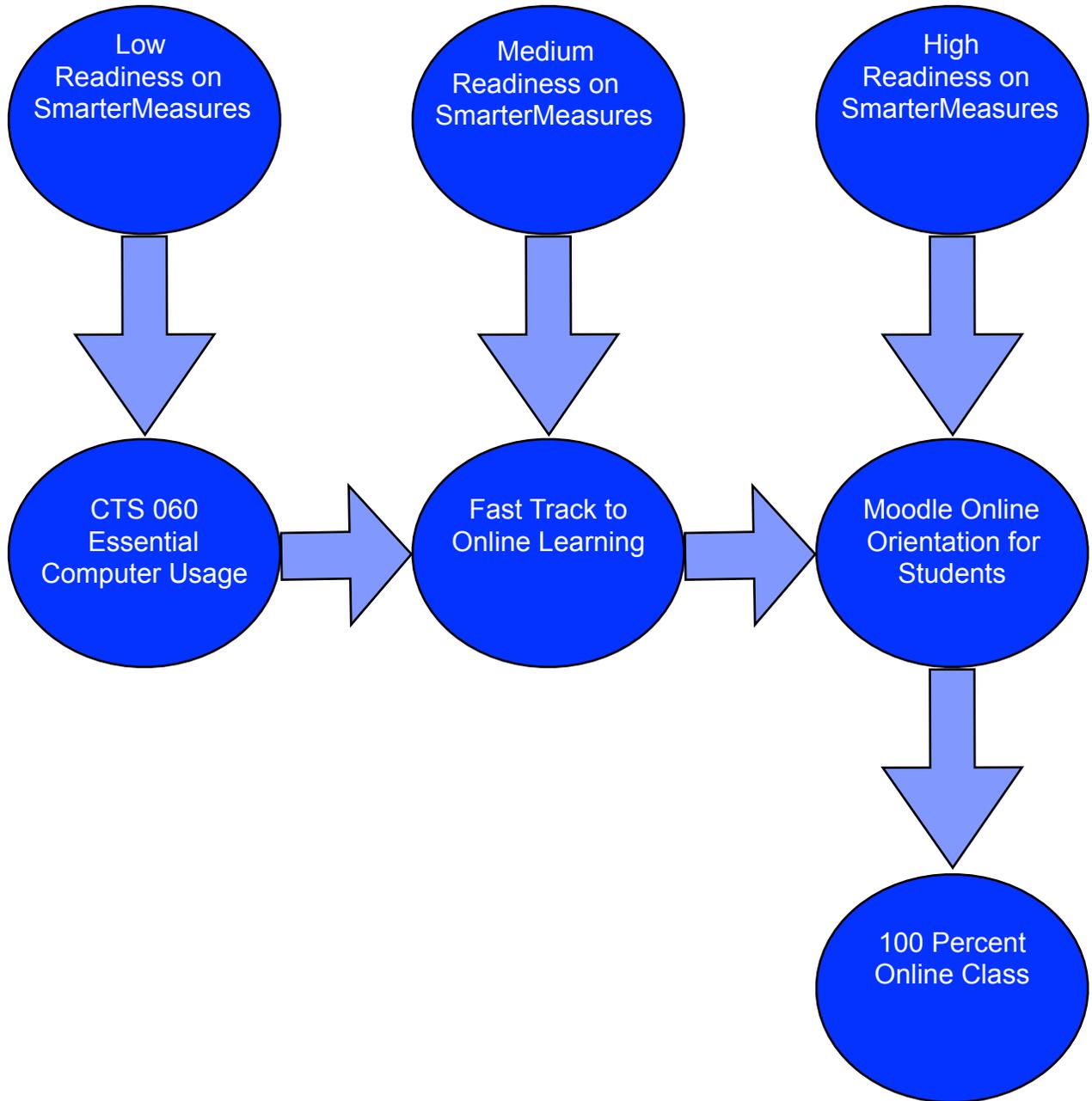
As previously mentioned, Moodle Online Orientation for Students will have six SLOs.

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments;
- Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for seeking assistance for online classes;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for navigating a Moodle class.

The cost of the redesign of Moodle Online Orientation for Students is \$5,000.

As mentioned above, based on SmarterMeasure scores, students will proceed through one of three pathways to an online class and will be exposed to at least one of the three interventions. Figure 1: Student Pathways to 100 Percent Online Classes, found on the next page, illustrates the pathways.

Figure 1: Student Pathways to 100 Percent Online Classes



Student and Faculty Skills Assessment Surveys (Assessment)

Two surveys will be developed. The Student Skills Survey will be given to students enrolled in online classes to assess their perceived readiness for online learning and the usefulness of online skills they learned in *Fast Track to Online Learning*, CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage, and/or Moodle Online Orientation for Students. The Faculty Skills Survey will be given to faculty teaching online classes at the completion of each term. This survey will assess faculty perceptions of how successful students were in using their online success skills. Both surveys will assess the previously mentioned SLOs. Their intent is to assess the successful transfer of learning from theory to practice.

The cost of the Skills Assessment Surveys is \$3,900 over five years.

Faculty Development (Support Action)

The goals of faculty development related to **SOS** are to support faculty to improve the overall online learning experience of students and to strengthen instructional approaches that increase student success in online courses. Faculty development will focus on how to help students master the previously mentioned SLOs. Information related to impediments to student success in online courses will be reviewed and analyzed. Data derived from SmarterMeasure, Student Skills Surveys, and Faculty Skills Surveys, as well as research-based, promising practices will be used to create faculty development. Faculty development will be designed in Year Three and be implemented in Year Four and Year Five.

The cost of faculty development design and implementation is \$11,500 over three years.

QEP Coordinator (Support Action)

In the summer prior to Year One, a QEP Coordinator will be hired to oversee the development and implementation of all actions. The QEP Coordinator will also be responsible for all assessment activities. A description of the QEP Coordinator position may be found in Appendix E. The QEP Coordinator will report to the Associate Vice President of Instructional Services/ SACSCOC Liaison.

The cost of the QEP Coordinator position is \$233,700 to \$292,080 over five years for salary and benefits.

QEP Steering Committee (Support Action)

The QEP Steering Committee will be established and populated in the summer prior to Year One. Voting membership will include:

- QEP Coordinator - Chair,
- One representative from each of the six curriculum divisions,
- Two representatives from Student Services,
- One dean,
- One representative from IT,
- Director of ISOL,
- Coordinator of the Writing Center,
- Associate Vice President of Instructional Services/ SACSCOC Liaison,
- Director of Faculty Development,
- Director of Curriculum Quality Assurance and Assessment.

All standing committees have an ELT sponsor. The ELT sponsor will be the Vice President of Instructional Services.

The charge of the committee follows:

Provides oversight for implementation and assessment of the Quality Enhancement Plan. Makes recommendations for improvements based on data. Communicates progress to constituents.

There is no cost associated with the QEP Steering Committee.

Programming (Support Action)

Programming of Ellucian Colleague, A-B Tech's data management system, will be required to establish blocks for registration. Additional programming will be needed to establish ways to track students for assessment purposes.

The cost of in-house programming is \$5,000.

Figure 2: Actions, found on the next page, illustrates the categories of the above actions.

Figure 2: Actions

<p>Readiness Indicator</p>	<p>SmarterMeasure</p>
<p>Interventions</p>	<p>CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i> Moodle Online Orientation for Students</p>
<p>Assessments</p>	<p>Retention and Success Goals SOS SLOs Faculty Skills Surveys Student Skills Surveys</p>
<p>Support Actions</p>	<p>Faculty Development QEP Coordinator QEP Steering Committee Programming</p>

Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Two measures will be used to determine the success of the [Student Online Success \(SOS\)](#):

- Retention and success rates of students in 100 percent online classes,
- Achievement of student learning outcomes.

Retention and Success Rates

As previously mentioned, there are two goals for [SOS](#):

- Increase end-of-class retention rates in 100 percent online classes,
- Increase student success rates (defined as C or better) in 100 percent online classes.

Data will be gathered in 2013-2014 to establish baselines for these two goals. In Year One of the [SOS](#), the QEP Steering Committee will establish criteria for success for Years Two through Five.

In order to gain a full understanding of how successful [SOS](#) is, the College will track retention and success based on student paths to 100 percent online classes. The pathways are those defined by SmarterMeasure placement categories:

- “High Readiness” - Students who take SmarterMeasure and are only required to take Moodle Online Orientation for Students before entering 100 percent online classes
- “Medium Readiness” - Students who take SmarterMeasure and are required to take *Fast Track to Online Learning* and Moodle Online Orientation for Students before entering online classes
- “Low Readiness” - Students who take SmarterMeasure and are required to take CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage, *Fast Track to Online Learning*, and Moodle Online Orientation for Students before entering online classes

In order to determine the effectiveness of faculty development, student success and retention will be tracked based on faculty development participation beginning in Year Five:

- Students enrolled in classes taught by faculty who have successfully completed relevant faculty development,

- Students enrolled in classes taught by faculty who have *not* successfully completed relevant faculty development.

Figure 3: Assessment Based on Student Pathways, found on page 32, and Figure 4: Assessment Based on Faculty Development, found on page 33, illustrate the different assessment pathways discussed above.

The Director of Research and Planning will assist the QEP Coordinator and the QEP Steering Committee with data collection and analysis.

Student Learning Outcomes

As previously mentioned, there are six Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Demonstrate file management;
- Apply word processing to create, save, edit and print basic document files;
- Utilize the Internet to browse, search, and introduce web mail with attachments;
- Identify the characteristics of a successful online learner;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for seeking assistance for online classes;
- Identify the appropriate procedures for navigating a Moodle class.

Assessment of SLOs for curriculum programs at A-B Tech are tracked using a modified SLO Assessment Report (Appendix F). SLOs for **SOS** will be tracked using the same SLO Assessment Report. Criteria for success will be established annually by the QEP Steering Committee. SmarterMeasure data, as well as assessments from CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage, *Fast Track to Online Learning*, the Moodle Online Orientation for Students, the Faculty Skills Survey, and the Student Skills Survey, will be used to inform continuous improvement actions.

The Director of Curriculum Quality Assurance and Assessment will assist the QEP Coordinator and the QEP Steering Committee with data collection and analysis.

Figure 5: **SOS** Continuous Improvement, found on page 34, illustrates how data from **SOS** Goals and **SOS** SLOs, as well as the Faculty Skills Survey and Student Skills Survey, will be used for continuous improvement of **SOS** Actions.

2013-2014 Strategic Plan

As an additional measure of assessment, an item has been added to the 2013-2014 Strategic Plan regarding the QEP:

1A.6 New, entering students completing distance college-level courses with a “C” or better during their first year.

In the Strategic Plan as in the QEP, a distance course is defined as 100 percent online. In 2011-2012, 59.8 percent of new, entering students completed distance college-level courses with a “C” or better in their first year. In 2012-2013, 64 percent of new, entering students completed distance college-level courses with a “C” or better in their first year. The goal for Year One of **SOS** is 70 percent and for Year Two the goal is 72 percent.

Figure 3: Assessment Based on Student Pathways

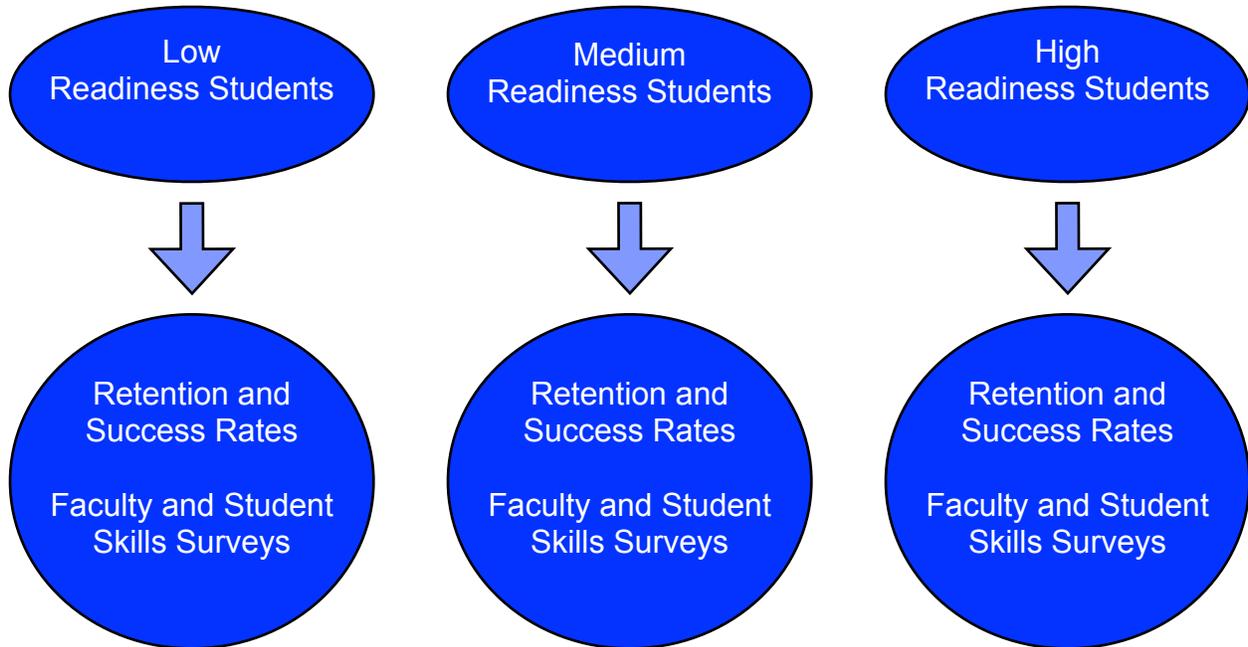


Figure 4: Assessment Based on Faculty Development

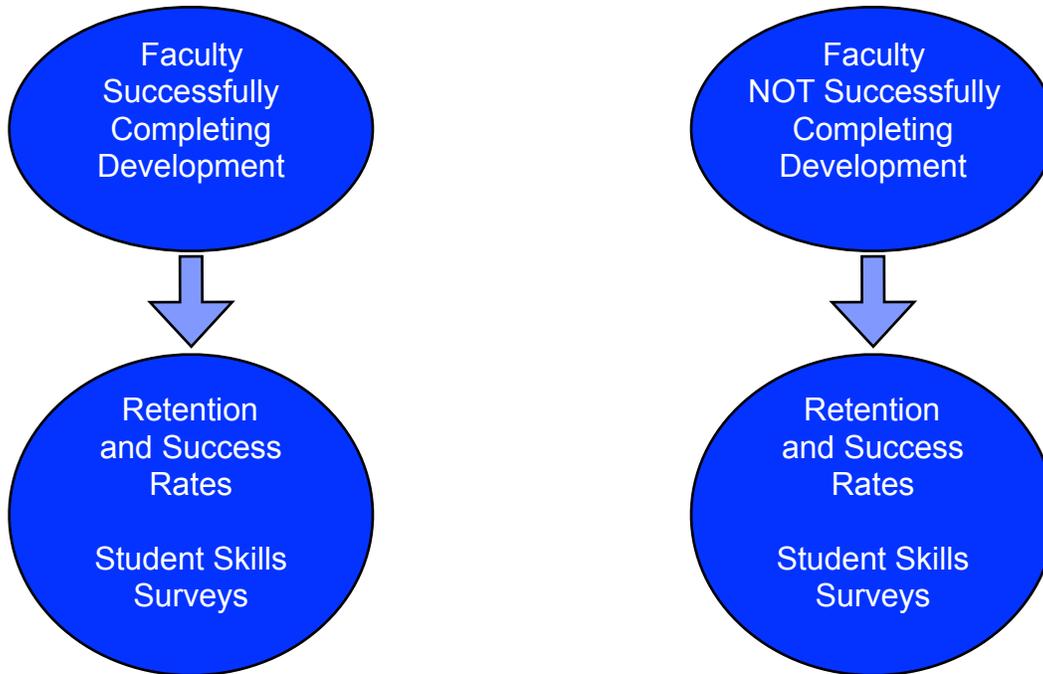
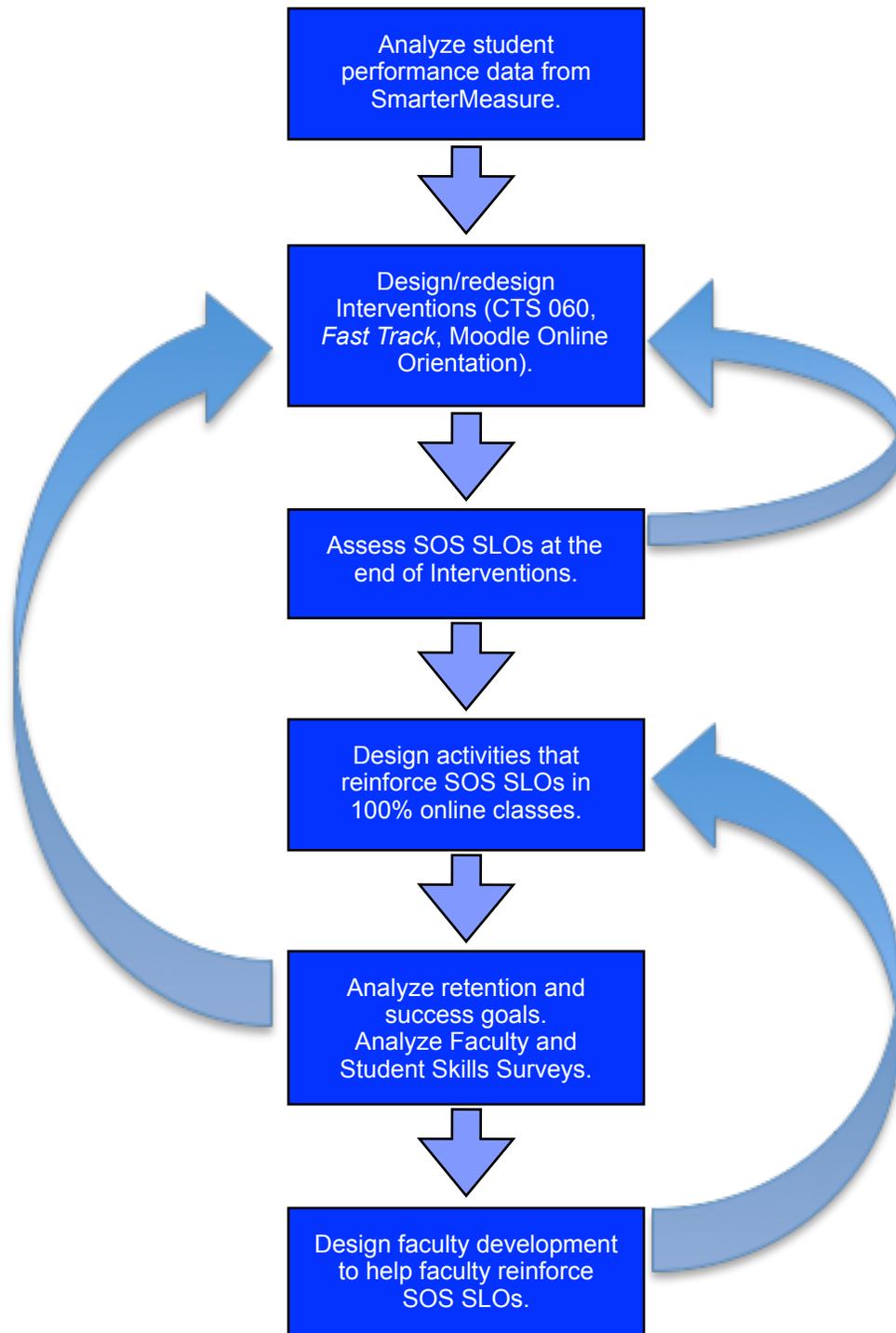


Figure 5: SOS Continuous Improvement



Timeline

PRE-QEP (2014)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Hire QEP Coordinator	Associate Vice President for Instructional Services/ SACSCOC Liaison
Summer	Establish QEP Steering Committee	QEP Coordinator and Vice President for Instructional Services/SACSCOC Liaison
QEP Year One (2014-2015)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Purchase SmarterMeasure	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Administer SmarterMeasure to new A-B Tech students in Student Orientation (ongoing once established)	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Develop Student and Faculty Skills Surveys	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Pilot Student and Faculty Skills Survey	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Collect Data	QEP Coordinator / Director of Curriculum Quality Assurance and Assessment / Director of Research and Planning
Fall	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Administer Student and Faculty Skills Survey	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Design <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i>	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Establish Retention and Success benchmarks for Years Two through Five	QEP Coordinator and QEP Development Committee
Spring	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
QEP Year Two (2015-2016)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Program Ellucian Colleague for registration blocks based on SmarterMeasure scores	QEP Coordinator / System Web Administrator
Summer	Begin Redesign of Moodle Online Orientation for Students	QEP Coordinator / Instructional Designer
Summer	Analyze previously collected data	QEP Coordinator
Summer	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Pilot <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i> by referring students who fall below a certain cutoff score on SmarterMeasure	QEP Coordinator

QEP Year Two (2015-2016)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Fall	Require students who fall below a certain cutoff score on SmarterMeasure to take CTS 060 Essential Computer Usage prior to registration for an online class	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Require students who fall below a certain cutoff score on SmarterMeasure to take <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i> prior to registration for an online class	QEP Coordinator / Registrar
Spring	Implement required redesigned Moodle Online Orientation for Students	QEP Coordinator / ISOL Director
Spring	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
QEP Year Three (2016-2017)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Revise <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i> based on data	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Design faculty development based on data	QEP Coordinator / Director of Faculty Development / Director of ISOL
Spring	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
QEP Year Four (2017-2018)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Implement new faculty development workshops	QEP Coordinator and Director of Faculty Development
Fall	Revise Moodle Online Orientation for Students based on data	QEP Coordinator and Instructional Designer
Fall	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Revise <i>Fast Track to Online Learning</i> based on data	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator

QEP Year Five (2018-2019)		
Semester	Action	Responsible
Summer	Begin five year QEP Impact Report	QEP Coordinator and SACSCOC Liaison
Summer	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Fall	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator
Spring	Continue implemented actions	QEP Coordinator

Budget

Table 4: Budget

Action/Expense	Year 1 2014- 2015	Year 2 2015- 2016	Year 3 2016- 2017	Year 4 2017- 2018	Year 5 2018- 2019	Total
Purchase SmarterMeasure software to determine student readiness for online classes	25,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	\$165,000
QEP Coordinator to oversee initiative	46,740 to 58,416	46,740 to 58,416	46,740 to 58,416	46,740 to 58,416	46,740 to 58,416	\$233,700 to \$292,080
Survey Monkey Membership for Skills Survey - Students and Faculty	780	780	780	780	780	\$3,900
Materials for <i>Fast Track to Online Education</i>	1,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	\$21,500
Faculty Development			1,500	5,000	5,000	\$11,500
Conference Travel	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	\$17,500
Redesign of Moodle Online Student Orientation		5,000				\$5,000
Programming Costs	5,000					\$5,000
Total	82,520 to 94,196	96,020 to 107,696	92,520 to 104,196	96,020 to 107,696	96,020 to 107,696	\$463,100 to \$521,480

A-B Tech is funded by the state of North Carolina based on Full-Time Enrollment (FTE). Each of the last three years, enrollment has grown at A-B Tech; therefore, the state appropriation has grown annually. Based on 2012-2013 enrollment, it is anticipated that the state appropriation will increase approximately \$500,000 for 2013-2014. Funding for the QEP will come from the increase in state appropriation.

Additionally, A-B Tech budgets approximately \$2 million dollars annually for non-recurring expenses. Should the state appropriation decrease during the five-year QEP cycle, **Student Online Success (SOS)** can be funded using a portion of those funds.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 fiscal year, **SOS** will be assigned a unique budget detail (account). The QEP Coordinator will have responsibility for this account.

Best Practices

As mentioned in the literature review, SACSCOC published Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs in 2000. There are five best practices that contain 29 accompanying protocols. A brief discussion of how the best practices are met follows.

Institutional Context and Commitment - All aspects of **Student Online Success (SOS)** are consistent with A-B Tech's mission statement.

A-B Tech inspires, nurtures, and empowers students and the community toward a better quality of life through progressive teaching, bold innovation, and supportive collaboration.

Providing students with needed skills to be successful in 100 percent online classes empowers students to be successful. The QEP Coordinator and the instructional interventions that will be implemented are examples of supportive collaboration. Budgeting approximately \$500,000 over five years to this project, as well as implementing the actions previously discussed, reflects the College's commitment to distance learners.

Curriculum and Instruction - Appropriate college level SLOs have been developed and are introduced, reinforced, and assessed at multiple points during students' progression from entry to completion of a 100 percent online class. Instructional interventions will be easily accessible to students required to take them. Appropriate interactions between faculty and students will be stressed throughout the project.

Faculty Support - Faculty development will help faculty understand how to reinforce the SLOs in their 100 percent online classes regardless of discipline. The QEP Coordinator will provide regular data to help keep faculty informed of the challenges that distance students face.

Student Support - **SOS** will improve admission protocols to assure students will be prepared prior to entering 100 percent online classes. Interventions will include discussions of available student support. The five year plan demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement of distance learning.

Evaluation and Assessment - The previously discussed assessments will provide documented proof of achievement of SLOs and goals. They will also provide a way to determine if **SOS** is being successful and what continuous improvements need to be made during the five-year plan and beyond.

Charts demonstrating protocols being met by the **SOS** may be found in Appendix G.

Appendices

Appendix A: Committees

QEP Development Committee

Ms. Shelly Blackburn, Chair of Academic-Related Instruction
Mr. Ben Blake, Mathematics Instructor
Ms. Barb Browning, Instructional Designer
Ms. Jennifer Browning, English Instructor
Ms. Barbara Brownsmith Campbell, Director of Faculty Development and Assessment
Ms. Kimberly Coon, Community Member
Dr. Kathie Doole, Business Computer Technology Instructor
Mr. Scott Douglas, Registrar and Director of Enrollment Operations
Ms. Bethany Emory, Director of Instructional Support and Online Learning
Ms. Jean Finley, Business Computer Technology Instructor
Ms. Stella Galyean, Phi Theta Kappa President
Mr. Cris Harshman, Director Customer Relations and Technology Services
Mr. Darin Jackson, Emergency Medical Science Instructor
Ms. Lisa Johnson, Coordinator of the Writing Center and English Instructor
Dr. Dennis King, Special Assistant to the President for Accreditation
Dr. Gene Loflin, Associate Vice President Instructional Services
Ms. Erika Lytle, Communication Instructor
Ms. Kathy Pfluger, Administrative Assistant, Accreditation
Mr. Alikhan Salehi, Coordinator, Transfer and Distance Services
Dr. Beth Stewart, Dean of Arts and Sciences and QEP Development Committee Chair
Ms. Sharon Suess, Chair Mechanical Engineering Technology

QEP Viability Team

Ms. Barbara Brownsmith Campbell, Assistant Director of Faculty Development and Assessment
Mr. Rusty Holmes, Chair of Communication
Dr. Dennis King, Special Assistant to the President for Accreditation
Dr. Beth Stewart, Dean of Arts and Sciences and QEP Development Committee Chair
Ms. Zanetta Summers, Academic Success Instructor
Dr. Dave White, Director of Research and Planning

Executive Leadership Team

Dr. Hank Dunn, President
Dr. Terry Brasier, Vice President, Student Services
Dr. Debby Harmon, Vice President, Student Services (retired)

Dr. Dennis King, Special Assistant to the President for Accreditation
Mr. Scott McKinney, Vice President, Business and Finance/CFO
Ms. Melissa Quinley, Vice President, Instructional Services
Ms. Sara Smith, Special Assistant to the President (retired)
Ms. Kaye Waugh, Vice President, Human Resources and Organizational Development
Ms. Shelley White, Senior Executive Director, Economic & Workforce Development /
Continuing Education
Mr. Brian Willis, Vice President, Information Systems Technology/CIO

Instructional Administrators

Mr. R.J. Corman, Dean of Business & Hospitality Education
Mr. Vernon Daugherty, Dean of Engineering and Applied Technology
Dr. Dolly Horton, Dean of Allied Health & Public Service Education
Dr. Phil Leftwich, Dean of Business & Hospitality Education (retired)
Dr. Gene Loflin, Associate Vice President, Instructional Services
Ms. Skye Myrick, Dean of Emergency Services
Ms. Sue Olesiuk, Dean of Academic Success
Ms. Melissa Quinley, Vice President of Instructional Services
Dr. Beth Stewart, Dean of Arts & Sciences
Ms. Sheila Tillman, Associate Dean of Hospitality Education
Dr. Jon Wiener, Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences

Student Government Association

SGA Executive Team

Lin Orndorf, President
Ashley Edwards, Vice President
Jayne English, Secretary (will be SGA president for 2013-2014)

Senators/Club Presidents

Jennifer Northup, Surgical Technology Club
Katy Dellinger, Practical Nursing Club
Rachel Burke, Veterinary Tech Club
Brenda Burrell, Medical Assisting Club
George Johnson, Hospitality Club
Molly Walters, Dental Hygiene Club
Rebecca Hayley, Phi Theta Kappa
Jennifer Heath, Phi Beta Lambda
Dru Musgrove, Student Paramedic Club
Ashley Sweeney, Culinary Club
Amanda Sellers, Dental Assisting Club
Cassie Stockton, Baking and Pastry Club
Christopher Penland, RENEW Society
Taylor Holcombe, Green Power Society

Appendix B: Notes from May 1, 2013 SGA Meeting

Review student on-boarding process - how does this feel to students?

Things slow down instruction when you have basic things to overcome - resounding yes for this process.

Can we take test online, or off-site?

Don't want to see students have to slog through a long course to develop skills - need to be chunked and very short.

Can you take 060 AND other courses? Can this be an exception to the only one four week class rule?

Who pays for the 060 course?

Test out, particularly if you've taken online courses at other institutions?

Review date by which fast track will be mandatory - do you see benefits to making the fast track course mandatory before enrolling in online courses?

In the student best interest - hopefully student would recognize that

Does it cost money? no, then good

multiple sessions

recorded/off site

SLO for Fast Track mentions "common online learning situations" - what are some suggestions for situations to use, based on your experience as online learners?

Not having proper communications with teachers - sending questions and not receiving answers from instructors. Could be student didn't communicate effectively, could be technology issue, could be instructor simply didn't reply. Scenario - how do you communicate with instructor?

MyLab - getting signed up and registered seems to be common student problem.

Pearson shows videos, other documentation from other sources.

Links on Moodle - didn't go anywhere. Could be problem with Moodle, could be instructor issue. Scenario - what do you do when you run across this? Throw your hands up, ask instructor, etc?

Lab component does a lot of forum discussion - scenario on connecting with other students?

Scenario - how do you identify an instructor or class that suits your online learning style? How do you address an experience that's not positive?

Scenario - how do you ask for features that a particular instructor doesn't use, like a student feedback forum?

Scenario - what do you do if you have a question that you know the instructor won't answer within an allotted time?

Gradebook - two ways, one is start at 100 and go down, other is start at 0 and go up.

Scenario - how do I understand the gradebook?

Finding things from previous course like assignment due dates, that didn't get changed for new semester. What do you do?

SLO for Fast Track mentions assessing strengths/weaknesses - based on your experience, what strengths/weaknesses should we focus on?

Very easy to wait until the due date for multiple assignments - personal motivation, this is due two weeks, will take a long time to complete - even though it's not due now, do I have the personal motivation to start now?

How do you handle the lack of personal responsibility from other students? Forums where have to have replies to other students and a closed forum.

Using calendar - faculty sometimes use them, students can use them now. Other people here didn't know they could use the calendar themselves, and didn't know what the color coding is.

Do you look at your syllabi? Resounding yes.

Weekly assignments versus long-term assignments. Set goals in calendar or some other way when you have long-term assignments, or somehow encourage students have self-motivation?

Calendar is a more in your face tool than the syllabus.

Little reminders - face to face they're easier to throw in than online. "Don't forget next week blah blah" Availability of instructors via Skype, on phone, etc like "virtual office hours."

Need more live connectivity between instructors and students for growing online presence

Another student likes Skype. Some programs have strict absent rules, could relax with Skype and recorded lectures

Amount of distraction with online course. Can do whenever you want, but this is not necessarily easier even though it seems like it might be.

Study for 2-3 hours for every hour - online learners don't think to build those hours in themselves. Often online is more work, not less - no lecture to absorb, have to create your own learning

Learning styles - one course did both word and recorded assignment lectures/demonstrations/instructions

Face to face classes- some of them use Moodle, some don't. Gauge instructor interest in using online, arm twisting versus curious - impacts their invitational investment in the online portion.

Maybe instructors need fast track too!

Erika - develop a parallel assessment/fast track for students, along with scenarios?

What surprised you about taking an online course? Anything that you didn't anticipate, or that you weren't prepared for?

Instructor had every single assignment available on day one, so student could complete entire course at once. Student didn't realize there were due dates throughout, thought they were due whenever student wanted to complete.

Instructor who was outstanding in classroom, but disappeared online - communication was great in person, but not online. Communication very important for online. Interactive the class can be online, how willing the instructors are to work with schedules and make changes to accommodate entire class. Flexibility was a surprise Long chapters, 8-week mini-mester, two quizzes a week - surprise was absorbing when only reading and not discussing in a course. Also a surprise taking quizzes with random generated questions.

Instructor's perception of how long an assignment should take - commenting on reading earlier than perhaps the reading should take

Timed tests - tests are much shorter than they perhaps should be

How much time online courses really take

In some courses, you build a rapport with instructors that gain you leniency; doesn't really exist in online. Can't develop the same sort of relationship with your instructors online as face to face.

How nicely things can work together, particularly with hybrid. Instructor posted videos to support face to face lecture, helped students understand complex concepts.

Review the professional development piece - Taking into account this test assesses technology familiarity and soft-skills, what do you hope faculty is able to learn from the aggregate responses?

What's going to help students best learn and be successful

Recognize they need to learn something new about posting things on Moodle

Recognize different learning styles

How to use the tools that are available to them

Straight up lecturing doesn't work as well online

Looking at the whole picture of assignments, time wise - what is realistic, and add all assignments together

At beginning of course, ask students - how do you learn best? Instructor would be able to gear communication to specific students.

Appendix C: Notes from June 24, 2013 Department Chairs Meeting

Department chairs were given an advance draft of **Student Online Success (SOS)** to review on June 20, 2013. The following issues were raised at the June 24 meeting.

Chairs felt that CTS 060 should be required for students scoring “Low Readiness” instead of recommended. Questions were raised about the amount of time students will need to complete this course. CTS 060 will be offered in eight-week and sixteen-week classes and may be offered as a four-week class in the future.

A problem with the flow chart was identified. The path for students scoring “High Readiness” was unclear.

A question was raised about student populations required to take SmarterMeasure. All students taking New Student Orientation will take SmarterMeasure. Only a small number of students are not required to take orientation.

Chairs were asked if **SOS** is measurable. They unanimously indicated “yes.” Chairs were asked if **SOS** can be accomplished in five years. They unanimously indicated “yes.” Chairs were asked if **SOS** is affordable. After clarification about the cost of the QEP Coordinator position, they unanimously indicated “yes.”

Forty-one people attended this meeting.

Appendix D: Reliability of SmarterMeasure

The following is provided by SmarterMeasure on its website (www.smartermeasure.com/research/item-reliability/).

Figure 6: Reliability of SmarterMeasure

In 2011 Applied Measurement Associates of Tuscaloosa, Alabama was commissioned to conduct reliability coefficient calculations for the questions\items in SmarterMeasure. An expected range for Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient values is expected to be from .70 to .95 to indicate a reliable assessment.

Scale	Cronbach Alpha Reliability	Scale Type	Number of Items	Sample Size
Learning Styles	.81	0,1,2	21	873
Learning Styles	.81	0,1,2	35	28,056
Individual Attributes	.80	1,2,3,4	24	29,989
Life Factors	.76	1,2,3,4	20	30,004
Technical Knowledge	.75	0,1	23	29,992
Technical Competency	.38	0,1	10	30,001

Appendix E: Job Description for QEP Coordinator

The QEP Coordinator will directly report to the Associate Vice President of Instructional Services and will provide all leadership for the implementation. The QEP Coordinator will:

- Work with student services to administer SmarterMeasure during student orientation,
- Design, implement, and teach *Fast Track to Online Learning*,
- Assist ISOL with redesign of Moodle Online Orientation for Students,
- Design and implement faculty survey,
- Design and implement student survey,
- Work with Director of Assessment to collect and analyze related QEP data,
- Work with Director of Faculty Development and Director of ISOL to design and implement faculty development opportunities to improve online teaching,
- Chair QEP Steering Committee,
- Serve on Distance Learning Steering Committee,
- Work with SACSCOC liaison to prepare 5 year report,
- Manage QEP budget,
- Other duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements

- Masters degree in education or related field,
- Online instructional experience,
- Higher education teaching experience.

Preferred Requirements

- Instructional Design experience,
- Demonstrated project management experience,
- Experience with the QEP process,
- Online student experience,
- Data analysis experience and the ability to write effective surveys.

Appendix F: SLO Assessment Report

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO) ASSESSMENT REPORT			
Division:		Year:	Program:
Credential:		Chair:	
Mission:			
SLO 1:			
Current Actions for Continuous Improvement (What are we doing this year to improve student performance based on last year's results?):			
Methodologies for Triangulated Assessment (Include Where Assessed, How Assessed)	Criteria for Success: Performance Metric	Results (Actual Data)	
Direct:			
(In)Direct:			
(In)direct:			
Analysis of Results: (What did we do? What do the results mean?):			
Proposed Actions for Continuous Improvement (What are we going to do next year to improve student performance on this outcome based on results? Why?):			

Appendix G: SACSCOC Best Practices and Protocols for Online Education Table

Each of the five best practices established by SACSCOC is listed below. The chart that follows each best practice depicts the various actions taken in **Student Online Success (SOS)** and the protocol that is followed.

Institutional Context and Commitment - Electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of educational institutions. Increasingly, they are integral to academic organization, with growing implications for institutional infrastructure.

Protocol	Smarter Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	Skills Surveys	Faculty Dev.	Assessment	QEP Coordinator	Budget
Consistency with institutional mission and role	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Accreditation and substantive change									
Reflection of commitment through budget and policies	X							X	X
Adequacy of technical facilities								X	X
Organizational structure	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Achievement of learning outcomes	X	X	X	X			X		
Consistent and coherent technical framework									
Reasonable technical support									X
Technologies appropriate for students and curriculum	X								X
Legal and regulatory requirements									

Curriculum Instruction - Methods change, but standards of quality endure. The important issues are not technical but curriculum-driven and pedagogical. Decisions about such matters are made by qualified professionals and focus on learning outcomes for an increasingly diverse student population.

Protocol	Smarter Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	Skills Surveys	Faculty Dev.	Assessment	QEP Coordinator	Budget
Appropriate college level SLOs, coherent and complete programs, general education requirements	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Academically qualified persons making decisions about program curricula and oversight						X		X	X
Student access	X	X	X	X	X				X
Appropriate consortial agreements	X								X
Interactions between instructors and students	X	X	X	X		X		X	X

Faculty Support - As indicated above, faculty roles are becoming increasingly diverse and reorganized. For example, the same person may not perform both the tasks of course development and direct instruction to students. Regardless of who performs which of these tasks, important issues are involved.

Protocol	Smarter Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	Skills Surveys	Faculty Dev.	Assessment	QEP Coordinator	Budget
Workload, compensation, and ownership of intellectual property						X			X
Technical, design, and production support for faculty						X		X	X
Orientation and training for program develop					X	X		X	X
Orientation and training for student support staff					X	X		X	X

Student Support - Colleges and universities have learned that the twenty-first century student is different, both demographically and geographically, from students of previous generations. These differences affect everything from admissions policy to library services. Reaching these students and serving them appropriately are major challenges to today's institutions.

Protocol	Smarter Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	Skills Surveys	Faculty Dev.	Assessment	QEP Coordinator	Budget
Commitment to continuation of program for a sufficient period	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Admission protocol	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Appropriate student support services									
Sense of community									

Evaluation and Assessment - Both the assessment of student achievement and evaluation of the overall program take on added importance as new techniques evolve. For example, in asynchronous programs the element of seat time is essentially removed from the equation. For these reasons, the institution conducts sustained, evidence-based, and participatory inquiry as to whether distance learning programs are achieving objectives. The results of such inquiry are used to guide curriculum design and delivery, pedagogy, and educational processes, and may affect future policy and budgets and perhaps have implications for the institution's roles and mission.

Protocol	Smarter Measure	CTS 060	Fast Track	Moodle Online Orient.	Skills Surveys	Faculty Dev.	Assessment	QEP Coordinator	Budget
Documented assessment of student achievement	X	X			X		X	X	X
Student identification	X				X		X	X	X
Security of personal information	X				X		X	X	X
Determination of program effectiveness					X		X	X	X
Self-evaluation leading to program improvement					X	X	X	X	X
Context of evaluation of electronically offered programs							X	X	X

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