

Foreword



At the December 2005 annual meeting of the Commission on Colleges, keynote speaker Derek Bok, acting president of Harvard University, indicated that the development of critical thinking skills among college students was perhaps the most important initiative to be undertaken by college and university faculties.

Years before Bok's keynote address, numerous faculty at Cape Fear Community College had reached the same conclusion as individual CFCC instructors and/or various departments had already incorporated a variety of instructional strategies to develop and/or enhance critical thinking skills among their students.

That "critical thinking" therefore immediately emerged as the most important institution-wide student learning outcome to be enhanced through the development and implementation of a Quality Enhancement Plan came as no surprise to the broad coalition of faculty, staff, administrators, and students involved in selecting the topic and in developing the initiatives of the QEP.

Now critical thinking rises to the level of being a major institution-wide initiative to which Cape Fear Community College is strongly committed, and the specific strategies and measurable goals detailed in *Critical Thinking: Lighting the Path to Lifelong Learning* hold exciting promise for enhancing CFCC's vision of "---building a future-oriented world-class workforce and a community of lifelong learners."

Cape Fear Community College has enthusiastically begun its walk along the critical thinking "path."

Eric B. McKeithan, President

Contents

Foreword p. I

Executive Summary p.4

I. Focus of Plan p.6

I.1 Background, Rationale, and Outcomes p.7

I.1.1 Background Narrative p.8

I.1.2 CCSSE Results as Rationale p.9

I.1.3 Review of Critical Thinking Initiatives at Other Colleges p.9

I.1.4 How Topic Relates to the College's Mission and Vision p.11

I.1.5 Summary of Rationale p.12

I.1.6 Expected Outcomes p.12

I.2 Key Concepts and Definitions p.13

I.2.1 Definition of Critical Thinking p.14

I.2.2 Student Learning Outcomes p.16

I.2.3 Key Concepts p.18

I.2.4 Summary p.21

I.3 Professional Development Initiative p.22

I.3.1 Initiative Objectives p.22

I.3.2 Rationale and Strategies p.24

I.3.3 Outcomes and Assessments p.26

I.3.4 Implementation Calendar p.27

I.3.5 Professional Development Initiative Resources p.31

I.3.6 Summary p.32

I.4 Student Success Initiative p.34

I.4.1 Initiative Objectives p.35

I.4.2 Rationale and Strategies p.35

I.4.3 Outcomes and Assessments p.36

I.4.4 Implementation Calendar p.36

I.4.5 Student Success Initiative Resources p.40

I.4.6 Summary p.41

I.5 General Education Initiative p.42

I.5.1 Initiative Objectives p.42

I.5.2 Rationale and Strategies p.44

I.5.3 Outcomes and Assessments p.45

I.5.4 Implementation Calendar p.46

I.5.5 General Education Initiative Resources p.52

I.5.6 Summary p.53

2. Assessment of the Plan p.54

2.1 Principles of Assessment p.55

2.2 Assessment Tools p.57

2.2.1 Direct Assessment p.57

2.2.2 Indirect Assessment p.59

2.3 Measures of Success p.59

2.3.1 Professional Development Initiative p.59

2.3.2 Student Success Initiative p.60

2.3.3 General Education Initiative p.60

2.3.4 Global Assessments p.60

2.4 Assessment Calendar p.61

3. Institutional Capability p.63

3.1 The QEP and College Goals p.63

3.2 Implementation Responsibilities p.65

3.2.1 Committees p.66

3.2.2 Organizational Structure to Support Implementation p.67

3.3 Implementation Resources p.67

3.3.1 Budget Estimates by Year p.67

3.3.2 Detailed QEP Budget Estimates by Year p.68

4. Broad-based Involvement p.72

4.1 Selecting the Topic p.72

4.2 Developing the Plan p.76

4.3 Summary p.77

5. Attachments p.78

Attachment I: References p.78

Attachment II: Overview of Outcomes and Objectives p.81

Attachment III: CCSSE Information p.82

Attachment IV: QEP Team and Contributors p.83

Attachment V: VECTR (CFCC Critical Thinking Rubric) p.84

Attachment VI: General Education Assessment Procedure p.86

Attachment VII: Summer 2006 Assessment Summary p.88

Attachment VIII: CFCC's 2006-2010 College Goals p.91

Attachment IX: QEP Director Job Description p.92

Attachment X: Glossary p.94

Attachment XI: Quick Facts About CFCC p.95