Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) Topic

Ms. Shaver, Vice president of Institutional Development, stated that the SACS Leadership Team met and after much discussion, the Team decided that Critical Thinking would be the recommendation for the QEP topic. Ms. Shaver asked Jason Chaffin, English Instructor, to speak to College Council about Critical Thinking because Mr. Chaffin had conducted preliminary research on Critical Thinking and was representing other faculty very interested in pursuing this as the QEP topic.

Mr. Chaffin then gave an overview of “What is Critical Thinking?” He explained that there were many definitions, most of which deal with the ability of thinkers to comprehend, assess, and respond to arguments, information, and problems. CFCC will develop its own specific definition to include what elements of critical thinking we feel are most important across all departments. How we define critical thinking will determine how we measure critical thinking.

Why critical thinking for the QEP? Critical thinking prepares students to deal with diverse economic and academic situations. It is a skill set and habit that can be developed and encouraged to make our students successful in their future endeavors – in the job market as well as further education. The critical thinking initiative would encourage synergy between departments and divisions, would unite CFCC in spirit and purpose, and would put us all on the same page. An emphasis on critical thinking would require us to be mindful of teaching techniques - how we are teaching, what we are teaching, and an opportunity to revitalize routines and assignments.
CFCC would need to look at the challenges and available resources – other institutions that have developed critical thinking initiatives, such as Tennessee Tech University, Washington State University, and Surry Community College.

Many ask, “How will this affect our workload?” Critical thinking happens and is taught in many of our classrooms. A critical thinking initiative would seek to identify where and how critical thinking already happens. Rather than adding on to course material, the critical thinking initiative would help us be more mindful of how pre-existing strategies and materials encourage critical thinking. We would look at practices and results with a critical thinking focus. Research demonstrates that making students and instructors aware of critical thinking theories, then actively practicing critical thinking is most effective.

At the close of Mr. Chaffin’s remarks, Ms. Shaver asked College Council to agree on a deadline for forming the QEP Team and for selecting the QEP Team Chair so the team could begin their work. Dr. McKeithan asked that Ms. Shaver coordinate with the Executive VP, deans and college departments to develop a list of names for a QEP Team and QEP chair to be presented for approval at the next College Council meeting.

President McKeithan emphasized that CFCC needs knowledgeable, dedicated people on the QEP team and suggested that the team be made up of 11-15 members.

**Out-of-State Travel**

Mrs. Rice, Vice President of Business Services, reviewed state accounting procedures for out-of-state travel. She emphasized that college employees on official college business may use their private cars for personal convenience according to the rate established and adopted by the college’s local Board of Trustees. Travel transportation reimbursement is limited to whichever is less - mileage of car or air-coach rate by airplane. Subsistence expense is reimbursable only for the period required for airplane travel.

**Nominations for Excellence in Teaching Award**

President McKeithan asked Faculty Association President, John Ward, to solicit nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Award and forward the nominations through the Deans to the Vice President of Instruction.

**Announcements**

- Philpott - *R/V Dan Moore* is in the Bahamas and will return April 20.

- Hardin - Reminder that the Bond Referendum voting day is May 10. Last day to register to vote is April 15. “One-stop” voting begins on April 21 and ends on May 7 at the Market Place Mall. Last day to request an absentee ballot to be mailed is May 3.

- Brown - OSHA investigated a complaint filed concerning CFCC and found no serious infractions. Several employees when asked by OSHA officials about a Safety
Plan reported they were not aware of the plan. Please convey to your staff that the college’s Safety Plan is posted on the CFCC website. Hard copies are available in Maintenance for all housekeeping staff to review.

Zigler - The Wilmington Women’s Club Coastal Living Show was held in the Schwartz Center on the weekend. Mr. Zigler thanked the Media Center and Maintenance for their services.

Smith - A Fire Seminar will be held on April 22 – 24 at Hoggard High School. Over seven hundred participants have registered.

McKeithan - The City of Wilmington approved the third part of funding (CFCC, County, and City) for the Safety Center at the North Campus. The memo of understanding between the parties is being “fine tuned” at this time.

Cullum - The Golf team lead by Rick Stewart, who was named “Coach of the Year,” won the Carolinas Junior College Conference Tournament.

Seeger - CFCC received a letter from the NC Instructional Administrators expressing their appreciation for CFCC’s help with the recent meeting at the Blockade Runner. President McKeithan thanked Mr. Seeger for his assistance to this group.

Hickman - North Carolina legislators will gather in Wilmington this weekend and CFCC will host a Legislative Breakfast on Saturday, April 16, in the cafeteria. Mr. Hickman thanked supporting staff, maintenance, and the media center for their help with this upcoming event.

Upton - It is time for annual evaluations to be completed. Dr. McKeithan needs to know if there is anyone who will not be rehired or will be on probation. Reappointment letters will be mailed at the end of May.

Shaver - The College’s Annual Report of Progress towards College Goals and Planning Priorities and other Accomplishments for 2004-05 is still being compiled. Ms. Shaver stated that she still needs information from several departments to complete this report and they will be notified.

Annual Planning – Ms. Shaver asked that all supervisors take a good look at the objectives for the planning units reporting to them to make sure everyone is on target and to make sure instructional units are addressing learning outcomes. If any unit manager appears to be behind or need help with writing objectives, supervisors are asked to send an email to those unit managers with a cc to Ms. Shaver so she can meet with them as needed, especially in the case of new employees who are responsible for planning and need an orientation to SPOL.

McKeithan - Institutional effectiveness is stronger than ever with the Commission on Colleges, which looks for comprehensive, systematic, on-going planning on line.
President McKeithan stated that he would be very upset if written up for this when SACS reviews. CFCC cannot go at it with haphazard planning.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

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Eric B. McKeithan, President

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