

**QEP Impact Report
Cape Fear Community College
August 2022**

Submitted as Part V of the Fifth Year Interim Report
to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges

Executive Summary

Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was submitted to SACSCOC: March 2017. Entitled “Take to the Waves,” the plan was designed to enhance a student’s first-year experience with the goal to improve course success rates for first-year in college (FTIC) students. Originally CFCC was to utilize various engagement strategies, training, and assessments. Just as all learning institutions, we have had to adjust what we have been able to do because of COVID 19. Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, CFCC found pockets of success in regard to student course success for FTIC students.

Section 1 – Initial Goals and Intended Outcomes

The QEP Committee designed the College's plan to leverage the use of various engagement opportunities with FTIC students in order to increase the overall course success rates of each cohort of FTIC students, using Fall 2017 as the data baseline. While many strategies were employed, this impact report focused on data that could be directly tied to identifiable FTIC and non-FTIC students.

Goal 1: Increase FTIC students' engagement during their first year of enrollment.

Objective 1.1: FTIC students will utilize campus resources at a higher rate.

Objective 1.2: FTIC students will report higher levels of engagement as a result of increased utilization of campus resources during their first year of enrollment.

Goal 2: Improve FTIC students' first year academic success.

Objective 2.1: FTIC students will improve the study and personal management skills necessary for academic success during their first year of enrollment.

Objective 2.2: Faculty will enhance instructional strategies to support FTIC students' first year success.

Goal 3: Improve FTIC students' academic and degree completion planning.

Objective 3.1: FTIC students will develop a degree completion plan within the first 30 hours of attendance.

Objective 3.2: FTIC students will report higher levels of satisfaction with advising and their academic planning.

Section 2 – Changes Made to the QEP

Like many community colleges, there were many personnel changes during the course of the QEP implementation. Two positions that saw turnover were key positions of the QEP, namely the *Director for Center for Teaching Excellence* and in the *Director for Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning*. The Center for Teaching Excellence became the Center for Professional Excellence and saw three directors during the execution of the five-year plan. This position was to be in-charge of the Teaching Academy, the professional development component of the QEP. As a result of this turnover, this component was jointly completed by the QEP Director and the Dean of General Education and Sciences, who was a previous Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. This provided continuity to the key role of the QEP and its success.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness also saw three individuals serving in the director role during the course of the QEP. This, coupled with the effects of the pandemic, caused a disruption of data collection and its subsequent analysis. As a result of these factors, there was a year and a half break in which the College was unable to put in place necessary changes and interventions to some components of the QEP.

Changes made to assessment were exclusively due to the pandemic. The first was the administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). As a “paper-pencil” test, the CCSSE must be administered in person. As a result of the COVID pandemic, this assessment was not administered in Spring 2021. While there is an online version of the CCSSE, the two instruments could not be used in tandem to accurately measure any changes as a result of the QEP’s interventions. The college was forced to use the other measures of engagement contained in the plan, specifically use of academic advising and tutoring.

Because of COVID, new student orientation took on a couple of different forms. In the original plan, student orientation was conducted as an in-person event. This plan had to be altered due to COVID in Fall 2020. Additionally, the program was taken over by Student Services in Fall 2019 and Fall 2020. CFCC held in-person new student orientation (Sea Devil Summer) as follows:

Chart 1 – First Year in College Student Orientation

TERM	CAMPUS	NAME OF EVENT	DELIVERY METHOD
Fall 2017	Wilmington Campus	Sea Devil Summer	In-person
Fall 2018	Wilmington Campus	Sea Devil Summer	In-person
Fall 2019	Wilmington Campus and North Campus	Sea Devil Summer	In-person
Fall 2020	Online/Video	Sea Devil Summer	Online/Video--COVID
Fall 2021	Wilmington and North Campus	Welcome Week-Resource Day	In-person

The degree plan was carried out in ACA 122 College Transfer Success courses with small revisions and adjustments made as needed based on student needs, data needs, and the available staffing in the Academic Advising Center each term.

Other changes that occurred was the role that the Student Success Committee and the General Education Committee took in the original QEP. That role has been replaced by the Performance Measures Work Teams, which have been given continuing status beyond the life of the QEP. The purpose of the work teams is to improve institutional understanding of performance and success data in order to make recommendations to improve student success as measured in CFCC’s performance in each of the following state measures: (1) Basic Skills Progress, (2) Success in College level English, (3) Success in College level Math, (4) First Year Progress, (5) Curriculum Completion, (6) Licensure and Certification Pass Rate, and (7) College Transfer Success. The Performance Measures Work Teams are comprised of faculty and staff from across the college who have knowledge of both the measures and the students represented in the measures. The composition of the Performance Measures Work Teams is documented in standard 8.1 of CFCC’s Fifth-Year Interim Report.

Section 3 – QEP Impact on Student Success for First-Time in College (FTIC) Students

Goal 1: Engagement with services

New Student Orientation

As noted previously, new student orientation was conducted in a couple of different ways because of COVID. The data for the first four years of the QEP saw a strong growth of key engagement strategies identified in the enhancement plan (see Chart 3). Students reported an increase in awareness of key services—Counseling and Advising—after orientation. Additionally, despite a decline in the growth (difference) between the pre-survey and the post-survey over the length of the QEP’s implementation, the surveys seem to indicate an improvement in students’ perception of success after having attended student orientation.

Chart 3 – Student Orientation Survey Trend Data Key Questions

Semester	Questions	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Difference
Fall 2017	aware of counseling-advising	71%	95%	24%
	feel a connection	41%	72%	31%
	have plan to succeed	37%	93%	56%
Fall 2018	aware of counseling-advising	70%	97%	27%
	feel a connection	32%	62%	30%
	have plan to succeed	94%	94%	0%
Fall 2019	aware of counseling-advising	59%	96%	37%
	feel a connection	37%	61%	24%
	have plan to succeed	95%	94%	-1%
Fall 2020	aware of counseling-advising	81%	89%	8%
	feel a connection	48%	48%	0%
	have plan to succeed	97%	97%	0%

Resources to Engagement – Advising and Tutoring

Due to the COVID-prompted increase in online instruction and the corresponding decline in seated classes, student use of campus services, including advising, counseling, and tutoring declined for a period. During the course of the QEP the overall usage of students availing themselves to advising increased, comparing the first year of the QEP to the last (see Chart 4). During that same time FTIC students increased their usage of advising by 25%. Tutoring saw quite a different story, seeing a 70% decrease of FTIC students using tutoring services comparing the first and last year of the QEP. Non-FTIC students also saw a drastic drop in usage. (see Chart 5) The last two years of the QEP saw a reduction of students coming to campus.

Chart 4 – Trend Comparison of Student Usage of Advising and Career Counseling

Academic Year (SU-FA-SP)	FTIC student count	FTIC who used Advising-Counseling	Percent of FTIC who used	Average Success Rate for FTIC (Advising-Counseling)	Average Success Rate for non-FTIC (Advising-Counseling)
2017-18	1,341	715	53%	65%	70%
2018-19	1,371	656	48%	65%	73%
2019-20	1,583	117	7%	69%	73%
2020-21	1,853	1,017	55%	70%	73%
2021-22	1,853	896	48%	66%	72%
Average	1,600	596	39%	66%	72%
Overall Increase	38%	25%	-9%	2%	3%

Chart 5 – Trend Comparison of Student Usage of Tutoring

Academic Year (SU-FA-SP)	FTIC student count	FTIC who used tutoring	Percent of FTIC who used	Average Success Rate for FTIC (tutoring)
2017-18	1,341	211	16%	79%
2018-19	1,371	161	12%	76%
2019-20	1,583	182	11%	75%
2020-21	1,853	99	5%	71%
2021-22	1,853	64	3%	84%
Average	1,600	143	10%	77%
Overall Increase	38%	-70%	-78%	6%

The number of students taking courses on campus went from 51% to 0.4% and has returned to 13% in Fall 2021 (see Chart 6). During the same time online courses went from 32% to 74% and was 52% in Fall 2021. This fact greatly reduced the number of students availing themselves of a tutor, even though online tutoring was available.

Chart 6 – Percentage of Student in Course Types

	Percentage of Students in Course Types		
	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
only online	32%	74%	52%
traditional	51%	0.4%	13%
mixed	17%	25.6%	35%
Total students (duplicated)	27,526	27,289	27,409

Goal 2: First year academic success

Professional Development – Teaching Academy

In Goal 2, Objective 2.2, we recognized faculty development as being key to improving student success. In the Fall of 2017, CFCC established the Teaching Academy as a professional development opportunity aimed at increasing student engagement and success, particularly in first year students. A series of five modules were developed and offered over the course of one academic year, with each module focused on one student engagement topic selected from the CCSSE Benchmark Report (see Chart 7).

Chart 7 – Teaching Academy Module Topics

Module	Focus	Hours per Semester
1	“Support for Learners”	2.5
2	“Active and Collaborative Learning”	2.5
3	“Academic Challenge”	2.5
4	“Student Effort”	2.5
5	“Student-Faculty Interaction”	2.5

Two cohorts of the Teaching Academy operated each year, with approximately 30 faculty members in each cohort. A total of 291 full-time instructors went through the Teaching Academy during the five-year period of the QEP. The Teaching Academy workshops were facilitated by the Center for Teaching Excellence (which became the Center for Professional Excellence in Fall 2018), the Online Learning Coordinator, and the Instructional Technologist, joined later by graduates of the Teaching Academy. Each of the five modules consisted of an assigned topical pre-reading; a topic workshop; and a follow-up collaboration to review revised assignments or classroom practices. Using the faculty members’ initial year in the Teaching Academy as a baseline, we compared non-Academy participants' course success rates in the years that followed (see Chart 8). Instructors that completed the Teaching Academy had higher course success rates with their FTIC students than instructors who had yet to participate in and complete the Academy training.

Chart 8 – Comparison of Course Success Rates by Teaching Academy Cohort

Course Success Rate - FTIC students by Teaching Academy Cohort

	2017-18*	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Difference**
Teaching Academy Cohort - Fall 2017	63%	66%	65%	67%	71%	8%
Non-Teaching Academy Instructor	67%	67%	56%	64%	61%	-6%

	2017-18	2018-19*	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Difference**
Teaching Academy Cohort - Fall 2018	N/A	74%	60%	79%	63%	-11%
Non-Teaching Academy Instructor	N/A	74%	55%	79%	61%	-13%

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20*	2020-21	2021-22	Difference**
Teaching Academy Cohort - Fall 2019	N/A	N/A	56%	69%	68%	12%
Non-Teaching Academy Instructor	N/A	N/A	56%	68%	61%	5%

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21*	2021-22	Difference**
Teaching Academy Cohort - Fall 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	70%	72%	2%
Non-Teaching Academy Instructor	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	61%	-14%

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22*	Difference**
Teaching Academy Cohort - Fall 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	70%	N/A
Non-Teaching Academy Instructor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	61%	N/A

*serves as baseline data

** difference between baseline and last year of QEP

Goal 3: Improve academic and degree completion planning

ACA Degree Plan (ACA-122)

The overall completion of academic degree plans had mixed results over the five years of the QEP (see Chart 2). During fall semesters, there was an increase in the second year, but there was a drop in the year that followed. Spring semesters saw an inverse of these results with an increase in the second year of the QEP, and a drop in the three years that followed. None of these trends seem to be pandemic related as the changes in trend did not occur during transitions into or out of pandemic impacted semesters. (The data do not include the second mini semester due to COVID shutdown in March 2020.

Chart 2 - Completed Degree Plans

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Completed Degree Plans - All Students	662	467	605	518	410

	Spring 2018	Spring 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2021	Spring 2022
Completed Degree Plans - All Students	463	503	379	373	438

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Degree Plans - Annual Count	1,125	970	984	891	848

from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Compliance

Curriculum Completion

A related set of data, the North Carolina Community College System's (NCCCS) Performance Measures, was used in the analysis of the QEP data to alleviate an over reliance on course success data. In fall of 2017, as reported in the NCCCS Performance Measures, 41.5% of first-time curriculum students completed 42 non-developmental credits. In subsequent years, 2018 to 2020, that gradually increased to 44.6%, 47.7%, and 49.5%, respectively. The target semester, fall 2021, completion rates for FTIC students rose to 53.6%, showing a growth of 12.1% growth during the implementation of the QEP.

Section 4 - Conclusion

Overall, the key impact target measure, course success rates for FTIC students, improved by 9% when comparing the baseline/first year of the QEP to the last year of implementation (see Chart 8). The improvement in course success rates was significantly better than the improvement for non-FTIC students during the same time period. When comparing these course success rates by semester, it appears that FTIC students had higher aggregate success rates in fall semesters than in spring semesters. This suggests that there may be more opportunities for targeted interventions in spring terms.

Chart 8 – Comparison of Annual Course Success Rates

Academic Year (SU-FA-SP)	FTIC student count	FTIC Overall Course Success Rates	annual non-FTIC student count	non-FTIC Overall Course Success Rates
2017-18	1,341	64%	11,082	70%
2018-19	1,371	65%	9,748	74%
2019-20	1,583	69%	10,148	76%
2020-21	1,853	65%	10,019	72%
2021-22	1,853	70%	10,376	73%

Average	1,600	67%	10,275	73%
Overall Increase	38%	9%	-6%	4%

In terms of “engaging” students, the plan was not as successful as we would have liked. New Student Orientation, while doing an adequate job of informing students of various resources, did not translate to actual usage as indicated by the resources cited in the report (advising/career counseling and tutoring). A related discovery while analyzing QEP data revealed that tutoring had a significant positive impact on course success rates, both for FTIC and non-FTIC students.

Even though there was a marked decline in students’ participation in tutoring over the QEP period, most likely due to fewer students being physically present on campus during the pandemic, we discovered that FTIC students receiving tutoring achieved an average 77% success rate over the 5-year QEP cycle. The College will continue promoting the Learning Lab’s services and benefits to students and faculty. As our on-campus student population increases, so will FTIC students’ engagement in tutoring during their first year of enrollment. Other strategies implemented in Fall 2021 have included a mandatory Learning Lab tour/introduction for all developmental Math and English classes and direct email outreach about tutoring to students on academic warning and appeal. These strategies are aimed at reaching at-risk FTIC students early in their academic journey and connecting them with appropriate academic support services.

ACA 122 will continue to include a degree planning project requiring students to familiarize themselves with baccalaureate degree plans and the university transfer process in accordance with the required course objectives. Students will still be required to plan courses for degree completion at CFCC; we will add a narrative component to the project requiring students to explain the relevance of their course selections to their future educational goals. Faculty involvement in this degree planning process will be increased and additional training offered.

To better introduce new students to the campus resources available to them at CFCC, the Advising Center will encourage new students to schedule a 60-minute appointment, rather than 30 minutes as has been done in previous years, even if they are assigned a Faculty Advisor. As a first step, in the summer of 2022, we have transitioned to a new appointment scheduling system which takes new students directly to only the 60-minute appointment option. This affords advisors the time needed to provide proactive appreciative advising in addition to helping with class registration. Our hope is that this will translate into increased usage of resources such as tutoring, Career Counseling, the Nixon Leaders Center, and other student help resources. This additional time allows for relationship building, which will help students feel more comfortable in reaching out to their advisor when roadblocks or concerns are encountered. As time and staffing allow, staff will reach out more proactively via the *Aviso* messaging or by phone to engage students and to make them aware of campus resources, activities, and organizations that may be of interest or help to them.

Another step which the College has taken is to hire a First-Year Success Coach in March 2022. This coach began conducting outreach to students who were struggling according to the third course grade alert (68% or lower) for Spring 2022. First-year students with low grades received a text of encouragement and support from the coach. The coach met with students who required additional follow-up. In addition, the coach created outreach campaigns to current first-year students who had not yet registered for the next term. Of the students who received calls, 76 students were registered. Planned initiatives for Fall 2022 include a mentorship program in

conjunction with other offices across campus, a first-generation student club, and a Blackboard (LMS) group for first-year students completing their studies fully online.