

ACADEMIC AUDIT

A.A. and A.S. University Parallel Degree Programs Nashville State Community College

I. Introduction

In 2002, Nashville State Technical Institute became Nashville State Community College (NSCC), thus making A.A. and A.S. University Parallel degrees available for the first time. Currently, NSCC offers Areas of Emphasis in the following General Education Core course disciplines: Studio Art, Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish, and Communication Studies. These degrees are designed for students planning to earn a baccalaureate degree at a four-year university. Transfer of courses to a Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) four-year university is assured by completion of the A.A. or A.S. degree or completion of an entire subject area which may then be transferred as a block. NSCC also develops transfer agreements with local universities.

Data from Spring 2006 indicates 2237 full-time students and 4628 part-time students attended NSCC. Age demographics show that from 1998 to 2005, the population shifted in the 35-64 year old category from 2287 in 1998 to 2126 in 2005. In the 18-34 year old range, numbers have consistently increased each year. (Appendix 1) The ethnic origins of our student population have remained statistically the same with Caucasians comprising the largest percentage of students followed by African American students. (Appendix 2) From 1996 to 2005 the number of male students declined from 3707 to 3019, and the female student population rose from 3306 to 4179. (Appendix 3)

Student Credit Hour (SCH) production in the English, Humanities, and Arts Division increased from Spring 2000 to Spring 2005 with art, music, theater, and English courses having the greatest overall increases. (Appendix 4 and Addendum A-1) Twenty-eight full-time faculty and approximately 25 adjuncts teach in the division which also houses our developmental education program. Because of the recent significant enrollment increase and the mission change, the division is still in the process of creating an identity and presence, both in the campus community and the community at large. Most faculty are very involved in campus projects, professional development, and support of our arts program. Our music program director is working to create a curriculum for music majors that will offer a seamless transition into university, and our arts professors continue to work towards offering additional courses in Studio Art.

The Mathematics and Sciences Division comprises of five subject areas: Biology, Chemistry, College Math, Developmental Math, and Physics, which includes astronomy, geology, and physical science, as well as physics courses. For the purposes of this self-study, we have divided the areas into (1) College Math and (2) Sciences. Developmental math is not a part of the audit. Our division serves majors in math, biology, chemistry, and physics; non-majors, students taking our courses to fulfill general education requirements for the University Parallel degrees or an A.A.S. or Technical Certificate; and others, transient

students taking our courses for transfer to a four-year institution, to fulfill a prerequisite for another program, or for basic continuing education. Twenty-nine full-time faculty and thirty-six adjuncts teach in our division. The SCH report from Spring 2001 to Spring 2006 shows an increase of 47%. Renovation of science labs resulted in low numbers for Spring 2006, but Fall 2006 shows an increase of 80%. (Appendix 5)

The Social and Life Sciences Division consists of three instructional components: the general education core's social sciences, history, and foreign languages; university parallel areas of emphasis; and career program certificates and degrees. Within these instructional components, academic areas include: Technical Certificates in Horticulture, Early Childhood Education, Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting; Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees in Early Childhood Education, Occupational Therapy, Police Science, Sign Language and Social Services; the Associate of Science in Teaching (A.S.T.) degree; sixteen areas of emphasis; and courses in social science, history, and foreign language for the common general education core. The division also administers the college's English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Twenty-nine full-time and 80 adjunct instructors provide instruction for Social and Life Sciences courses. Dramatic growth has been noted in the division in recent years. (Appendix 4) Currently, the division generates 15,677 Student Credit Hours with five programs producing more than 1100 Student Credit Hours fall semester 2006: History, Psychology, Surgical Technology, Spanish and ESL. As a result of the increasing growth among Middle Tennessee's international population, the division anticipates continued growth in the ESL program, as well as additional growth from the new AST degree which prepares students for transfer into teacher education baccalaureate programs, and growth in the new Police Science concentration, Crime Scene Investigation (CSI). For purposes of this academic audit, which examines the college's general education core, the division has reviewed history, the social sciences, and foreign languages.

II. Overall Performance

English, Humanities, Arts - In general, the English, Humanities, and Arts division's strengths are instructional: creating, communicating, and aligning outcomes and developing curricula. Faculty gave high scores to Teaching and Learning principles in "learn from best practices" and "continuous improvement." Primary weaknesses are assessing student achievement of outcomes and using data to ascertain achievement of outcomes. Faculty scored the division lowest in the area of Best Practices, noting that we have no consistent means of formalized review of courses and teaching methodology, do not base decisions on facts, and do not work towards coherence. Furthermore, faculty identified a need for collaboration among full and part-time faculty in virtually all disciplines, particularly as it relates to grading standards and expectations. Finally, since the division has been focused on assessment and evaluation of instruction for a mere two years, we are very early in the process of developing and implementing structured methods that are effective across disciplines and that help us find, create, and use data to assess student learning.

Math and Science - Overall, faculty feel their strongest areas are in learning outcomes, curriculum and co-curriculum, and teaching methods. Faculty have spent a considerable amount of time collaborating on the course outcomes and making curriculum decisions in an

effort to support new assessment procedures that were started in spring 2006. Formalized assessment is a new focus for the division and there is a need for greater sophistication in the process. Our initial results showed that 71% of math questions were answered correctly on our assessment tools that tested course and student degree outcomes related to math. In the sciences, the success rate was 66% as it relates to scientific thought processes. Theoretically, the standardized assessment coupled with the grade distribution should point to our program success. For example, for grades posted between Fall 2002 and Spring 2006 in math courses, 85% of the grades were a “C” or better.

Faculty have identified an area of weakness as being quality assurance. Though quality is gauged through conversations with faculty at other institutions, student evaluations, assessment of course outcomes, and classroom observations, there is very little hard evidence to support the quality assurance area. In fact, the most widely identified tool associated with quality assurance is the new IDEA evaluation tool that was initiated in Fall 2006.

Social and Life Sciences - The Social and Life Sciences division relies on a number of means to gauge the quality of programs and courses. Associate of Applied Science and Technical Certificate programs rely heavily on formal program reviews, exit tests and accreditation results to effect program improvements. For the division's general education core, history, social sciences and foreign language courses, assessments have been more limited and include primarily student course/instructor evaluations, classroom observations, pass/fail rates and one-on-one student input. Information from these sources has been used by faculty and administrators to make improvements; when needed, the dean, coordinator and instructor may choose to develop an instructional improvement plan to improve teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Implementation of the general education common core has also helped by providing more consistency among courses. For proposed new and revised courses, the campus wide curriculum committee process allows for an additional review of courses.

As the division began the Academic Audit process, it became obvious that a more systematic assessment process would be helpful. For example, three assessment tools, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Alumni Survey, are useful for providing insight into improvements needed. Although the college disseminates data from these surveys, very few formal discussions or meetings with faculty, coordinators and dean have occurred. Consequently, minimal attention has been devoted to the survey results, and more importantly, to the use of findings for course/program improvements. It also became obvious that more collaboration and a more systematic plan for classroom observations would be helpful. The Academic Audit team agreed that plans were needed to address these issues with the intent to bring about improvements in the history, social science and foreign language courses

Summary – As faculty came together in their respective divisions to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their programs, several common themes emerged. The individual and group responses to questions relating to the five focal areas, as well as a survey completed by faculty in all three divisions, indicate similar strengths and weaknesses. Faculty perceive that

we are strongest in the areas of learning outcomes, curriculum and co-curriculum, and in teaching and learning methods, and weakest in assessment and quality assurance. (Appendices 6-10) The consensus is that we have not systematically and consistently measured student success in achieving learning outcomes; we have no formalized review of teaching methodology; and there is little hard evidence to support efforts in quality assurance. Recent efforts have been made in these areas, but faculty agree that our focus should be toward developing more consistent structures to measure student success and to assure quality throughout the disciplines. With similar strengths and weaknesses across the disciplines, we still have not addressed how to achieve better collaboration among the divisions.

III. Performance by Focal Area

A. Learning Objectives

English, Humanities, Arts - Faculty used TBR General Education Learning Outcomes to develop program learning outcomes. (Addendum A-2) Through emails, meetings, and informal discussions by content area, review drafts were sent to faculty for feedback. Learning outcomes produced course objectives, defining what our students should know and be able to do when they leave our classes. Standard course objectives and course descriptions are included on Master Syllabi created Fall 2006. The EHA mission statement created by faculty in division meetings Fall 2005 articulates our collective vision. (Addendum A-3)

Faculty use outside sources to design course objectives. English Writing and Literature faculty use conferences such as TYCA, TYCAT, NCTE, TNADE, and AWP, and catalogs from other colleges to evaluate comparable programs. While we have not effectively used Job Placement and Cooperative Education's employee feedback surveys in curriculum design for writing and communication courses, this information can help us assure that learning objectives meet employer's expectations for our graduates. (Addendum A-4)

Competencies of students exiting philosophy courses vary by the instructor, but faculty agree on most general learning objectives. (Addendum A-5) The instructors' collective expertise in the field of philosophy created course objectives that facilitate students' development of critical thinking skills, arguably the requirement of higher education. Art and music faculty consulted syllabi from several four-year universities. Communication Studies faculty list objectives on student speech critique forms, on syllabi, and outline objectives on the division website. (Addendum A-6)

Until two years ago, review of program objectives was not a priority, but our division has made tremendous strides in this area. A formal review involving adjunct faculty on a regular basis, perhaps every three years, and when curriculum changes occur is necessary. This fall, NSCC is using IDEA as our campus-wide student evaluation tool, allowing focus on particular objectives for particular classes. While full-time faculty may select varying objectives from the standard IDEA group for a given course, learning outcomes remain constant. Full-time faculty chose IDEA objectives for adjuncts to use in all courses. (Addendum A-7) This trend of formulating and/or reformulating Learning Objectives will

continue; it is how our division approaches learning.

Math and Science - Faculty in the Mathematics and Sciences Division participate on one or more discipline committees depending on the courses that they teach. These committees are comprised of division faculty as well as outside members and function as a steering committee in making decisions about course curriculum and assessment issues. In spring 2005, the discipline committees developed and approved course outcomes for each college-level course offered in the division.

In making decisions regarding the outcomes, the committees relied on input from full-time as well as adjunct faculty. In addition, some discipline committees sought outside references to aid in designing the outcomes. For example, the sciences point to using information from the American Chemical Society, American Association of Physics, American Society of Microbiology, and Human Anatomy and Physiology Society to help define the course outcomes. The math program relies on faculty attendance at regional or national conferences such as TMATYC, TNADE, and TMTA to provide insight into content and course outcomes. For example, at the spring 2006 TMATYC conference, faculty led roundtable discussions on course content in statistics and finite math. For the development of our Math for Elementary Education I and II courses, the instructor not only collaborated with faculty from the Early Childhood Education program but also attended national conferences and worked with faculty from Austin Peay State University, Volunteer State Community College, Pellissippi State Technical Community College, and math coordinators for the surrounding county school districts. The math program reviews course outcomes during textbook selection and the science programs review outcomes each year.

Faculty, including full-time and adjunct, communicate the course outcomes to the students on the first day of class. The outcomes are available on master syllabi available at the NSCC website, in Public Folders, and on every syllabus distributed to the students. Instructors discuss the outcomes with the students and some instructors will reference the outcomes throughout the semester as material is covered.

Overall, outcomes were developed based on faculty expertise as well as input from outside sources. There is a high degree of collaboration among faculty due to the presence of discipline committees. Adjunct input is solicited as well as some input from faculty in other programs. A greater effort should be made to consult faculty in other programs such as Engineering Technology or Occupational Therapy. It should also be noted, that the science program sees a need to expand the membership on the discipline committees as well as to write specific learning objectives to further define each course outcome.

Social and Life Sciences - Learning outcomes for all courses were developed within the broader outcomes identified by the TBR system-wide general education committee when establishing the common general education core. In preparation for the forthcoming SACS accreditation, faculty worked collaboratively to be sure that all syllabi in common courses contained the same learning outcomes. Faculty members have the freedom to design their own methods and strategies for achieving those outcomes and may add more objectives within their specific course. Faculty (full-time and adjunct) clearly state learning outcomes

on all syllabi and indicate that they review the syllabus orally the first day of class and restate or review the learning objectives throughout the course.

The learning outcomes for history courses were designed collaboratively by the two full-time faculty based on the model provided by the TBR for history courses. The social sciences faculty, which includes three full-time faculty in psychology, two full-time in sociology, two adjunct lecturers in political Science, and one adjunct lecturer in geography, meet periodically to discuss learning outcomes and methods they find successful in helping students achieve the outcomes. Spanish and French are the primary courses of choice for students completing their foreign language requirements or areas of emphasis. Three full-time instructors, including one full-time Spanish and two full-time instructors who split their teaching assignments with languages, participate in some collaboration regarding course content, learning outcomes and objectives. The division's full-time Spanish lead instructor is currently in the process of developing guidelines to ensure more consistency among instructors in the teaching methodologies and depth of learning that occurs. Full-time faculty work collaboratively with each other, as well as with the coordinator and dean, in making course changes. Input from the Academic Audit surveys suggested that additional time for collaboration could be more beneficial.

Full-time faculty have access to professional development activities, including meetings and subscribing to professional journals; information from these sources is used to revise and redefine objectives. Instructors review learning outcomes and objectives based on students' evaluations, feedback and performance throughout the semester, and revise their objectives based on the performance of previous classes taught. Although results from a number of college surveys are available for discussion, no formal process currently exists for faculty to examine the findings in depth or to collaborate on how to use the data for making improvements in learning outcomes.

The foreign language faculty report that at the lower level Spanish courses, all instructors rely on the methodology explicitly incorporated in the text, as well as the website which complements the text, to fulfill learning objectives. Instructors use a variety of resources provided by the text website to achieve their objectives (handouts, interviews and comprehensive cultural information); some consult foreign language websites at other institutions to make comparisons and maintain an on-going dialogue with colleagues at other institutions.

Adjunct faculty are encouraged to collaborate informally with the program coordinator. Among adjunct faculty, some expressed interest in working more collaboratively on such things as learning outcomes, while others did not.

Summary: Learning Objectives – Faculty in all three divisions use the TBR General Education Learning Outcomes as a basis to develop program outcomes. It is common for faculty to add their own objectives, within the parameters of the standard course objectives. The new IDEA tool encourages instructors to do so. Collaboration among faculty is generally good, but there is a need to work with adjuncts more closely. Faculty seek information about comparable programs at other institutions when designing objectives and

find professional development activities useful in staying current. Institutional data can be used more effectively. Review of learning objectives is currently a high priority, in preparation for the SACS accreditation.

B. Curriculum and Co-Curriculum

English, Humanities, Arts – Recently revised catalog descriptions specify course content. We determine order by prerequisites, and Learning Outcomes define curriculum and co-curriculum development. Full-time faculty may also choose specific objectives for courses. Content Area Goal committees, based on respective disciplines, further defined specific requirements.

We consult external sources when designing curriculum and co-curriculum. For example, new course development requires research of similar programs at other TBR schools, such as MTSU and TSU, and local universities such as Belmont, to insure transferability. For ENGL courses, TYCAT has the Syllabi Exchange Program, and information from TYCA, TYCAT, TNADE, AWP, and NCTE impact curriculum and co-curriculum design by allowing us to compare our programs with those at other colleges. We should consult The Career Employment Center Employee surveys and graduate student surveys more directly to tell us our students' strengths and weaknesses and tie that information to the competencies we want them to have when leaving our program.

Collaboration between Developmental Writing/Reading courses and ENGL 1010 instructors would provide more consistent curriculum since Basic and Developmental Writing learning outcomes are geared toward preparing students for English Composition I. For instance, students in Basic and Developmental Writing should use the same handbook as English Composition I and II, but not all DSPW instructors are implementing this requirement. English and writing faculty collaborate to determine the emphasis in English Composition I and II and approaches to rhetoric and literature, although course content reflects instructor preferences. English Composition I faculty may teach the course from the perspective of either Literature or Rhetoric, but course outcomes remain consistent.

Faculty use WebCT shells, Smarthinking, Learning Center Workshops, computer classrooms in the library, required online library orientation and quizzes, handbook websites, the Visiting Writers Series, field trips, guest lecturers, concerts, and readings. (Addendum A-8) Faculty clearly communicate curricular and co-curricular requirements and the reasoning behind these requirements to students.

In Communications Studies, the two full-time instructors generally cover the same material, at the same points in the semester, and in many of the same ways, but this may not be the case with adjuncts. We need to explore ways to create a more consistent course design and implementation with our adjuncts. We use student evaluations to informally review curriculum and co-curriculum and identify areas for improvement. Consistent design and delivery among all faculty would require a formal process and a universal syllabus and curriculum.

Each philosophy instructor teaches in a manner that reflects his or her professional interest in the subject matter and so that students recognize perennial questions that provoke critical thinking. For example, the Introduction to Philosophy course explores ways that different thinkers, Socrates, Kant, Hume, and Nietzsche approach the concept of the “self.”

Art instructors use the textbook outline to organize course material. In-class discussion, student response, and outside activities determine the pace and direction of each class. The artist’s and art historian’s unbiased, global perspective is considered. Pre-requisite needs of upper level classes at the university level determine most course content. For example, at MTSU, juniors are expected to have taken Drawing I & II, Survey I & II, and 2D Design, so our studio art classes cover basic/fundamental materials and techniques.

Music courses are taught chronologically, ensuring course objectives match those at four year universities such as University of Memphis, TSU, MTSU, and Belmont University. To stay current, the music director reviews learning outcomes, methods, and texts at local four year universities such as University of Memphis, TSU, MTSU, and Belmont University.

Math and Science - The curriculum is designed and evaluated by the discipline committee and is intended to specifically address the course outcomes. The discipline committees afford a level of collaboration between faculty with some groups receiving input from adjunct faculty. Because adjunct faculty are often unable to attend scheduled meetings, some groups mainly receive input through email communications. Outside sources have also been sought when designing curriculum. For example, the math program has solicited input in the past from faculty in the Engineering Technology, Business Technology, and Early Childhood Education programs. In addition, the math faculty have found conferences such as TMatYC to be an important resource. Lastly, the math faculty have some limited individual efforts to discuss curriculum with faculty at other TBR institutions.

For the science program, curriculum recommendations for best practices or suggested areas of improvement from the American Chemical Society, American Association of Physics, American Society of Microbiology, Human Anatomy and Physiology Society, National Research Council, National Science Foundation, and Tennessee Board of Regents have been consulted when designing curriculum. In an effort to address evolving industry demands for technology, the National Research Council’s recommendation to increase use of technology tools by students, and the National Science Foundation’s recommendation to improve the quality of science education resulted in the adoption data acquisition probes interfaced with laptop computers in biology and chemistry. These are used to evaluate physical phenomena and explore concepts of experimentation. The chemistry program applied for and received a National Science Foundation Course, Curriculum, and Laboratory Improvement Adaptation and Implementation Grant to purchase a FTIR spectrometer to incorporate into the chemistry curriculum at all levels.

Faculty in various math courses have developed out-of-classroom activities to complement curriculum. The use of MyMathLab exercises in Finite Mathematics and Precalculus II reinforce concepts being taught. Faculty have created assignments around real-world experiences with loans and investments in Business Mathematics. Even math-related

television programs such as NUMB3RS have been incorporated in Math for Liberal Arts and College Algebra. In Calculus and Analytic Geometry I, projects are assigned to expose students to applications in differential calculus, including related rates, optimization problems, and curve sketching. The science faculty have individually incorporated some out-of-classroom activities but see a need to use more of these.

The curricular and co-curricular requirements are communicated to students; however, a greater effort is needed to explain the reasoning behind the requirements to the students. The curriculum is reviewed by math faculty at the time of textbook selection. This means the course is evaluated about every three years. The science faculty review curriculum yearly and incorporate changes such as the design of new lab manuals for Anatomy and Physiology I and II as well as for Intro to Biology I and II and General Biology I and II.

Overall, the degree of collaboration in curriculum design is increasing as we utilize the discipline committees more fully. An expansion of the membership of the committees to those with a vested interest in our courses would further enhance the effort. There is a greater need for out-of-classroom activities as well as review of curriculum on a more regular basis.

Social and Life Sciences – Courses in our division have been identified and approved for the TBR common general education core. Each course description and prerequisites received approval through the college's formal process, which includes approvals by the program coordinator, dean, curriculum committee, vice president and faculty senate. Faculty collaborate informally to determine curriculum and co-curriculum issues. Because the learning outcomes have been prescribed through the common general education core, more consistency exists among instructors' instructional framework. The instructor determines additional learning objectives. The curriculum design meets students' needs, and by using the TBR common general education core, ensures consistency among transfer courses to four-year colleges and universities.

No requirement exists as to a particular order for students to follow in completing history courses. While history faculty must teach the facts of history for the courses they are teaching (following the text), some may place more emphasis on the political, social and cultural, geographic, intellectual, or economic aspects of a particular topic. Focus on a particular topic or approach in a different way is an individual instructor choice. Faculty may assign readings for each course in addition to the text. All full-time faculty and most adjunct faculty include some out-of-classroom activities to complement or to be integrated into the curriculum, such as historic site visits, field trips, volunteer service, museums, archives, as well as encouraging student attendance at on-campus activities appropriate to the study of history, such as Constitution Day and Veteran's Day. Most faculty encourage or require out-of-classroom internet research, news article research, journal reading, book reviews, oral presentations, and other activities.

In the fall 2006 surveys, most faculty state that they consult other sources to help design their own courses. Adjunct faculty who teach at other colleges and universities consult sources and colleagues at those institutions. Some consult former professors, web sources, and their own students. Through professional development, full-time faculty attend conferences and

workshops which provide new ideas or “a fresh look” at various topics. A number of faculty return and host seminars to share information with other instructors. All faculty state they periodically review their courses for changes that may improve instruction. Some state they are willing to make adjustments even during the semester if they have determined change/improvement is needed.

Full-time psychology and sociology faculty work collaboratively within each discipline in deciding which courses require specific prerequisites. These recommendations are processed through the formal curriculum process for approvals. For disciplines with no full-time faculty (political science and geography), suggested course revisions can originate from the adjunct lecturers, who discuss changes desired with each other and the program coordinator.

Recommendations for textbook adoptions occur through an informal process, originating typically from full-time instructor collaboration and discussions with the program coordinator. As part of the accreditation preparation, committees comprised of representatives from each division are currently working collaboratively on instructional issues that will be accessible campus-wide and will impact curriculum and co-curriculum of programs. These include: Quality Enhancement Planning (QEP) committee, which is developing best practices for teaching critical thinking and establishing a grading rubric for critical thinking, and Computer Literacy committee, which is identifying computer needs for programs and developing an assessment means to identify students' levels of computer competency.

Students getting the AA Degree must complete two semesters of a foreign language. Students also complete courses for the area of emphasis. Courses must be taken in a sequential order. If a student has already achieved some level of proficiency at another institution, a full-time faculty member evaluates the student to determine whether or not the student can enroll in a higher-level foreign language course. Overall, each instructor makes individual decisions regarding the teaching perspective and preferences for instructional activities, while simultaneously abiding by the methodology and expectations set forth by the textbook authors.

Instructors often work collaboratively on an informal basis. Many instructors use out-of-classroom activities, although no formal documentation or analysis occurs for these assignments. For example, students are encouraged to participate in cultural activities such as the International Food Day, planned by the campus International Students Association. Classes receive announcements about Spanish writers, plays and movies, E Dia de los Muertos, and other events.

Instructors consult other sources beyond faculty, such as similar programs at other institutions, professional affiliations, as well as feedback from former students. Many instructors are aware of national competencies advocated by ACTFL and TFLTA. Instructors review their courses on an ongoing basis to reflect innovations in technology and what has worked best in their classrooms. Assignments may vary to cover timely cultural issues and create a spirit of inquiry and intellectual curiosity. Some instructors place lessons in a logical order, according to both text presentation and students' questions, adjusting

course content accordingly to include certain topics as needed. Others consult alternative program language texts to add variety and creativity to their lessons. Throughout informal conversations with faculty members and comments from students, it became clear that a discrepancy exists among instructors' use of the target language during most of the class period. While some conduct most of their lessons in the target language, others do not. Discussions with the full-time foreign language faculty, program coordinator and dean concluded that this problem should be addressed, so that students should progressively be introduced to more usage of the target language as they advance to different levels in their studies.

Summary: Curriculum and Co-Curriculum – Faculty in all 3 divisions point to research of comparable programs at area universities and other TBR institutions when considering curriculum/co-curriculum issues. Collaboration takes place among full-time faculty, and campus-wide committees are at work on instructional issues that impact curriculum. Analysis of textbooks takes place periodically through committees and informally. Faculty recognize the importance of balancing academic freedom and course consistency.

C. Teaching and Learning

English, Humanities, Arts - Faculty consciously consider program and course learning objectives (desired skill outcomes) to determine teaching methodology. For example, using multi-media projectors to teach how to compose an email, using discussion and group work to engage the students, and going live to a website to show students how to use the library's online resources achieves Objective #3 on the English 1020 syllabus. (Addendum A-9)

Periodic review of instruction includes student evaluations, faculty evaluations, and supplemental evaluations. IDEA provides specific student information about the effectiveness of our teaching methods. Routine, informal feedback from students identifies which texts, ideas, strategies, etc., are most valuable. Since we lack a systematic review of our teaching methods, "reflective practice reports" can serve as a formal review process.

Conferences, Brown Bag Salons, and in-services are forums for discussion of teaching practices. Content area goals, learning outcomes, and learning objectives are a result of such collaborative efforts. In Spring 2006, music instructors mandated a written concert review of a live performance as a way for students synthesize and experience the course material. English Writing and Literature faculty suggest that compiling the Adjunct Notebook, working with the Learning Center, and sharing syllabi, grading standards, handouts, and other course materials enable us to see what teaching practices others use and will consequently improve our teaching. (Addendum A-10) A formalized exchange of ideas with colleagues would help to identify, implement, and measure best practices. Faculty contributions to the Communication Studies' activity file created a collaborative environment. Based upon determined need, students are now required to use PowerPoint in one speech in Speech 1010.

Philosophy faculty use a detailed evaluation form for student feedback on course material and teaching methods, to better understand what students find helpful, problematic, or

detrimental to their learning experience. (Addendum A-11)

Art faculty use studio critiques to create communication between students and faculty. Music faculty analyze teaching and learning methods by comparing the average grade for each test in each class with class averages of previous years. Typically, the class average rises by .5%-1% per year. Informal averages 5 years ago were at 69% and now average 73%. Test questions for which less than 20% of the class has answered correctly usually indicate areas in which the instructor needs to improve. (Addendum A-12)

Math and Science - Course learning objectives are used as a basis for determining which teaching methods are used. For example, one discipline committee required all anatomy and physiology instructors to integrate within their courses a laboratory which applies the scientific method of investigation and evaluates the effectiveness of the laboratory activity. Teaching practices have primarily been an individual responsibility. However, faculty have routinely sought and shared experiences on an informal basis that hopefully would improve teaching and learning.

While we recognize the importance of considering alternative teaching methods, we also recognize that we have individual teaching styles and that what works well for one instructor may not be successful for another. Interaction within discipline committees has been used as a method to exchange ideas and work collaboratively. Additionally, division in-services have been conducted to share best practices. For example, as a requirement for receiving travel stipends for professional development, faculty must provide an in-service opportunity on campus to share knowledge and experience gained at conferences, workshops, etc.

Outside resources have been used on various levels within the math and science programs. Research on best practices for College Algebra published by NCTM, ATME, and AMATYC has been used by instructors to improve teaching methods in Precalculus I. The sciences have relied on recommendations for best practices from the American Chemical Society, American Association of Physics, American Society of Microbiology, Human Anatomy and Physiology Society, National Research Council, National Science Foundation, and Tennessee Board of Regents when selecting teaching practices.

The implementation of the IDEA evaluation should help faculty evaluate their teaching methods. During spring 2005, seven full-time and six adjunct science faculty and two full-time and six adjunct math faculty participated in a pilot implementation of the IDEA evaluation of teaching effectiveness. The pilot program led to unilateral use of the IDEA evaluation tool which specifically evaluates teaching methods and styles and methods for improving teaching effectiveness.

Overall, faculty share teaching and learning methods on an informal basis, but there are avenues available for faculty to formally discuss their teaching methods. These include discipline committee discussions and division and college in-service activities. Faculty are aware of national standards for their subject areas and incorporate best practices on an informal basis though there is a need to improve in this area. It is believed that the new IDEA evaluation will provide objective information regarding teaching effectiveness and provide

insight into areas that need improvement.

Social and Life Sciences - Full-time faculty collaborate informally about successful teaching methodologies. No organized process is currently in place for review and analysis of instruction, and limited interaction occurs with adjunct faculty, but currently the emphasis on critical thinking and improved instruction as a result of the campus QEP, has focused more discussion among faculty on best practices in teaching. The formal review process for improvements in teaching/learning outcomes currently consists of annual full-time faculty evaluations and semester course evaluations for adjunct and full-time faculty. Additionally, classroom observations, individual student input, and informal collaboration also provide insight into improvements needed.

Full-time faculty and most adjunct faculty encourage active participation of students in class discussions, team work, student-led discussions, and activities and projects that promote “critical thinking.” For example, in-class activities have been added to facilitate teamwork on projects, and students’ use of the internet. In history, full-time faculty and most adjunct faculty require some type of class presentation, which supports the campus goal of improving “Speaking Across the Curriculum.” Full-time faculty and most adjunct faculty require research and writing, which supports the campus goal of improving “Writing Across the Curriculum.”

Full-time faculty and adjunct faculty use multi-media sources, film clips, Power Point, and other technical teaching aids in their classroom teaching. Comments indicated the need for a more organized effort to ensure that all instructors could maximize their use of technology in teaching. Many of the language instructors rely extensively on technology to accomplish their learning outcomes. Sources and electronic tools that are frequently used include PowerPoint presentations, recording devices, video and music, and movie clips. This methodology helps address different learning styles. Some instructors include classroom projects dealing with language, culture, and current events.

Classroom observations for full-time faculty are conducted by the Dean, and adjunct instructors are observed by the program coordinator using a standardized form for ratings and comments. The process of observations should be improved to include not just classes experiencing a problem or issue at the time.

Campus-wide committee activities now in place will contribute to improvement of instruction. The QEP committee is developing a critical thinking activity databank of instructional activities that will be accessible to all faculty. The Computer Literacy committee is developing a one-hour course to prepare students for using computers in their college studies. Throughout the academic year, faculty participate in campus-wide inservices that provide a variety of topics. Sessions address such topics as ways to improve instruction; use of technology in the classroom; updates on advising students in transfer programs; and ways to utilize the new IDEA course evaluation process that focuses on assessment of learning outcomes. Inservice sessions bring faculty together for discussion and learning that can help improve teaching methods and practices.

Foreign language instructors suggest that even though informal sharing of ideas occurs, many instructors work independently in identifying best practices. They rely on their own experience in the classroom, texts and website resources, as well as their participation in regional and national meetings such as the TFLTA and ACTFL. Since the same text is required for all courses at the same levels, some consistency and coherence occurs as to what is taught, the order in which it is taught, and the methodology used. This helps ensure that students achieve progress from level-to-level. The foreign language lead instructor is developing a plan to continue improvement of consistency among course levels.

Summary: Teaching and Learning – Common themes across the divisions include the need for a more measurable way to identify and gauge best practices and a more organized, systematic way to review instructional methods. Collaboration takes place informally but the need is noted for a more formal exchange of ideas. Efforts are in place to promote critical thinking across the divisions, to maximize the use of technology, and to institute reflective practice reports to establish a formal process of instructional review.

D. Student Learning Assessment

English, Humanities, Arts Assessment methods include: essays using various rhetorical modes, quizzes, group work, oral projects, classroom discussions, peer review, periodic response papers, critique forms, and rubrics. Art faculty often add studio critiques, portfolio reviews, art exhibition reviews, and spontaneous analysis of unfamiliar art. Music faculty include listening tests, critique of performances, and concert reviews.

A music class assignment links assessments to learning objectives: “Compare and contrast secular vocal and instrumental music from the Renaissance with secular vocal and instrumental music from the Baroque.” The student must know the specific style of music and also its context and meaning. (Addendum A-13)

Informal assessment also exists. A philosophy student strongly opposed to the death penalty, as a result of critical thinking about her own position, may realize that important opposing arguments deserve consideration. (Addendum A-14)

Although many assessment strategies are employed, we need to measure achievement of outcomes using more specific, uniform criteria. Efforts are in place to develop writing, reading, and research rubrics that can be used and modify as needed across disciplines. Resulting rubrics will be published in the Student Handbook, and workshops will be offered to train users to interpret the rubrics. We need to collaboratively, formally develop and implement assessments, to use findings from assessment data to improve our instruction, and to periodically review assessment methods.

Outside consultations provide anecdotal evidence acquired from casual, personal conversations with students, former students, and employers. Suggested changes are to consult employee and graduate surveys to aid in developing the rubrics, to use the California Critical Thinking Skills Test for feedback on comprehension, logic, and reading skills, and to devise a student survey that looks at analysis and evaluation. One exception in

Communication Studies is the 2005 NSCC Alumni survey that directly asks students to “Indicate the degree to which your education at NSCC added to your ability to speech effectively.” Students responded with a 2.5 out of 3. In the National Community College Benchmark Project Student Success Survey, NSCC ranked above average in speech success (completion) in 2004, 2005 and 2006. (Addendum A-15)

In assessing student competencies, we need a plan to collaboratively, periodically review student learning success. Possibilities are a mandatory end-of-semester assessment assignment, holistic grading workshops, standard tests, critique forms, an end-of-semester survey. Also, a working definition of “best practices” is needed. More consistent speech curriculum and grading for speeches is needed. (Addendum A-16)

Math and Science - Formalized assessments of learning outcomes began in spring 2006 with each discipline committee developing the tool for their courses. Input was solicited from adjuncts as well as faculty at our satellite campuses. Some discipline committees consulted outside resources such as The American Chemical Society, American Association of Physics, American Society of Microbiology, The Human Anatomy and Physiology Society, or other TBR institutions. The exams were comprehensive multiple-choice exams. The goal was to determine if students were achieving the course outcomes as well as the college’s student degree outcomes. The course outcomes are correlated with the college’s student degree outcomes. During spring semester of 2006, students scored 66% on questions related to applying scientific thought processes to a range of situations in biology, chemistry, and physics classes. Students scored 71% in applying mathematical concepts to problems and situations. Since our division has only recently gained experience using a common assessment tool, it is anticipated that modifications to the instrument will be considered to improve assessment of learning objectives. We realize that greater care and sophistication should be given to the development of assessment at the divisional level and that faculty training related to developing and implementing assessments is essential. Our assessment in spring 2006 represents an initial effort to formalize our assessment procedures. Faculty will continue throughout the academic year to evaluate the results and formalize a plan for using the data to improve our curriculum and teaching methods.

Informally, instructors assess students by a variety of methods depending on the course. These assessment tools include quizzes, tests, group projects, laboratory reports, laboratory practical exams, essays, and oral reports. To ensure that students are achieving the prescribed course outcomes, faculty rely mainly on grade distribution. With the addition of formalized assessment tools for each course, we can correlate the individual assessments with the course assessment.

Overall, we have definitely moved from relying on individual efforts for assessing student achievement to a collaborative, formalized effort. The discipline committees will spend the academic year completing the assessment and improvement plans. Traditionally, this has been an area of weakness but steps are being taken to make this an area of strength.

Social Sciences - Faculty teaching the social sciences use a variety of methods to assess student competencies such as exams, writing assignments, graded outside projects, class

discussions, team projects, oral presentations, tests, activities, homework, and class participation. Some instructors survey students to evaluate their mid-semester class activities and use this input to identify most effective practices, making adjustments accordingly.

On a campus-wide level there are several surveys given to students to test the development of their skills, such as the California Critical Thinking Skills test. Results from this standardized test are publicized for faculty use. No organized activity on how to use the test findings is available, although all full-time instructors have actually taken the test to acquaint themselves with the assessment tool.

Faculty design their own exams to measure learning, and most faculty regularly revise these exams based on student responses, test-items analyses and overall analysis of the test/exam. Instructors within each discipline meet informally to discuss, create, and modify student assessments to improve the testing process. There is not a formal process for reviewing the different methods used by instructors to assess student learning outcomes and objectives.

Students evaluate each course. These evaluations are reviewed by the Dean and Coordinator and any indication of problems are addressed with the faculty member. Each faculty member then receives the student evaluations for each course taught. Most faculty take the student evaluations very seriously and make appropriate changes based on student input. In some instances, if an instructor's course evaluations indicate a specific weakness, the instructor will be asked to develop an improvement plan. NSCC has adopted IDEA, an instrument designed to evaluate faculty and the instructional process based on accomplishment of pre-set learning outcomes and objectives for students. It is anticipated that the use of the IDEA evaluation instrument will improve the assessment process.

Summary: Assessment – Although a variety of formal and informal assessment methods are used across the divisions, we lack a formal process to develop more specific, uniform criteria to assess student competencies, to review assessment methods, and to identify best practices. Some progress has been made in using common assessment tools and in linking assessments to learning objectives, and collaboration exists in some instances related to developing and implementing assessment, but faculty notes the need for a more systematic approach.

E. Quality Assurance

English, Humanities, Arts – We do not have a uniform method of ensuring quality throughout the curriculum, a method for reviewing quality assurance practices, and identified best practices in quality assurance. More effective oversight is needed in regard to what adjuncts do in specific courses, such as English Composition 1, and more stringent coverage of standard content may be suggested. Coordinators visit adjunct classrooms, provide feedback to adjuncts, and review student folders, but there is no consistent quality control. The current mentoring system and adjunct orientation is primarily for policy and procedure questions, not curriculum or teaching effectiveness. Grade inflation exists: Students who have received A/B grades in developmental and introductory courses may come into higher-level courses without the necessary competencies.

Syllabi review ensures all syllabi include accurate course descriptions and learning outcomes. Common resources (public folders/online catalog) and inservices help us advise students, and checks ensure that faculty meet registration scheduling duties, but no method ensures that faculty advise students appropriately and consistently. Tools such as area of emphasis advising checklists assure accurate and consistent advising. (Addendum A-17)

There are currently two institutional measures that provide meaningful, timely feedback to faculty: the tool for annual faculty performance evaluations was changed to measure performance; and the Outstanding Teacher of the Year, a peer award that recognizes teaching excellence and provides \$500 professional development funding.

Some faculty have concerns about academic freedom and adopting a student as “product” mindset. Philosophy faculty note that teaching philosophy is resistant to pedagogical uniformity and that it is impossible to mandate required material for instructors.

Math and Science – Faculty agree that there is a strong administrator component to quality assurance. Quality assurance includes a review of syllabi from all faculty by the coordinator and dean, the use of IDEA student evaluations of all courses, assessment of course outcomes, and classroom observations of all faculty by either the coordinator or dean. It is felt that feedback from the evaluations of faculty by students and administrators is in a timely manner. These methods represent a more global, overall approach to quality assurance and not a divisional or program efforts to assess quality. In this regard, if quality of a program is viewed in terms of student success in subsequent courses, then we have no meaningful data.

In the Mathematics and Sciences Division, a faculty mentoring system has been established for our adjunct faculty members. Each adjunct is assigned a full-time faculty member in their teaching area to provide assistance and advice regarding curriculum, teaching methods, and assessments.

We have not identified best practices in quality assurance.

Overall, quality assurance is mainly on an institutional-level and not divisional or program. Greater efforts could be made to identify best practices and implement them in the division.

Social Sciences – The constant influx of new adjunct instructors and replacements makes it difficult to maintain quality assurance over a long-range period. Use of uniform learning outcomes and use of the same text by all instructors teaching a specific course are geared toward ensuring that content, teaching practices and assessments are effective.

Faculty within each discipline meet informally throughout the semester to share ideas, but more collaboration between full-time and adjunct faculty would be helpful for quality assurance, and to assist adjunct faculty. Formal collaboration takes place in committees such as the QEP committee, where faculty discuss instructional issues with emphasis on teaching and learning outcomes in critical thinking for students. A databank of best practices in teaching will be available to all faculty, which is intended to help improve the teaching

process and thus help assure quality of instruction.

Classroom observations of full-time faculty by the dean and adjunct faculty by the coordinator are completed sporadically, but should be completed on a regular basis, with prompt feedback provided to the faculty member. Student evaluations of each course are reviewed by the dean and coordinator who address any problems noted in the instructor course evaluations.

Foreign language instructors comment that it is difficult to quantify quality due to lack of communication among most of the foreign language instructors. This is partially due to the disparity in faculty schedules. As a result, there are no formal meetings among foreign language faculty; consequently, it is difficult to review, assure, and maintain quality assurance. Full-time faculty members, who teach in the language program, do occasionally discuss course quality, but do not participate in any planned group effort towards this end. Most students in the foreign language classes do not complete an employer survey since the majority take language courses as a requirement to transfer to another institution, or for obtaining the A.A. Degree.

Creating formal written guidelines or a manual for foreign language faculty to use as a curriculum guide would help in maintaining consistency across the foreign language curriculum.

Summary: Quality Assurance - Faculty agree that there is a need for a formal, more uniform method for ensuring quality throughout the division and for reviewing quality assurance practices. Observation by Deans and coordinators and faculty evaluation forms are presently used. The number of adjuncts teaching in our divisions make the task of quality assurance more difficult. Closer supervision of adjuncts and a more meaningful dialogue between adjuncts and full-time faculty is needed.

IV. Potential Initiatives

English Humanities Arts

Uniform rubrics - Develop common rubrics applicable to division courses and courses in other disciplines to assess these skills: Writing, Critical Reading, Research, and Critical Thinking (addressed by QEP Implementation Committee). We should solicit faculty for rubrics currently used, create a small committee to draft new rubrics, send to division faculty for review, and test in classes. Developing rubrics will require weekly meetings for several months; testing and getting feedback will take significant faculty time. We will consult employee and graduate surveys to aid in developing the rubrics, use the California Critical Thinking Skills Test for feedback on comprehension, logic, and reading skills, and devise a student survey that looks at analysis and evaluation.

Division resource site (WebCT) - A WebCT instructional resource site on the Developmental Server is a division-wide project. Proposed inclusions are: Adjunct Notebooks (Comp 1, Developmental, etc.); PowerPoint Presentations (or other types of

electronic presentations); Activity Modules (“Academic and Professional Email,” for example); Handouts; Discussion Boards (“Brown Bag” online); Best Practices; Essay Topics; Research Projects.

Develop two new communication courses to complete the Communication Studies area of emphasis 19 credit hour requirement. These courses will be determined based on research of transferability to other TBR schools. Implementing these courses requires faculty time for research and development. One course will be ready by Fall 2007.

Develop Communication Studies Area of Emphasis outcomes for students. Outcomes will consist of 3-4 major objectives that should be met in Communication Studies courses. This initiative will be accomplished when these goals are a part of all syllabi in the Communication Studies area, and when they can be advertised to all potential and current Communication Studies area students. We intend to have accomplished this initiative by the Fall 2007. Faculty time is the only resource needed.

Create a course syllabus checklist for SPCH1010 and critique form to provide a consistent framework to insure course consistency. The tasks will include creating the checklist and critique form and then checking faculty syllabi each semester for the required elements. We expect to begin in Spring 2007 and implement in Fall 2007. The only resource needed will be our time.

Expand course offerings in Philosophy - Medical Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, and Continental European Philosophy. Once the courses are developed, listed in the catalog, and offered to students, we will have accomplished this goal. We do not anticipate additional costs other than faculty time.

Create a Philosophy Club by mid-spring 2007 – Club will meet regularly to discuss special topics, providing an informal, non-graded forum for philosophical discourse. This activity will extend student participation in philosophy beyond the classroom and increase campus-wide awareness of our discipline. Charter Members will have an initial organizational meeting to elect officers and set agenda. Required paperwork will include organization’s constitution and bylaws. We do not anticipate additional costs or required resources other than faculty time.

Strengthen the cohesiveness of the Philosophy faculty by developing closer relationships between full time faculty and adjunct instructors - Arrange meetings of all Philosophy faculty at the beginning and end of every semester to discuss common concerns, interests, and instructional strategies. We do not anticipate additional costs or required resources other than faculty time.

Offer new classes in studio art: Ceramics, Printmaking, and Sculpture and, for our community education facet, specialty art courses such as Stained Glass and Papermaking. A possible area for studio art productions has already been identified and reserved on the main campus; expansion to our Southeast campus is possible. Current studio art faculty may have to allocate 50% of their time in order to implement this program effectively.

Improve communication between instructors of MUS 1030 by having consistent, topical meetings for full-time and adjunct instructors. There would be no additional cost.

Identify possible large scale problems in Music instructor teaching methods –Areas of weakness often hinder students' successful completion of MUS 1030 and create non-intentional grade inflation. This initiative will provide a baseline to track growth and lay groundwork for finding out which units provide the most trouble to students, why, and if there are problems with instructor presentation that are hindering student success. Individual instructors will submit grade distributions for each test and final grades.

Math and Science

Increase contact with external sources when designing assessments of program learning objectives for Math. Sources may include comparable programs in other schools, professional organizations, or employers. This impacts our students, some of which will be transferring to four-year institutions or moving into the workforce. Tasks required to accomplish the initiative include gathering data on assessment practices from local TBR schools, as well as professional organizations such as AMATYC. Where possible, documentation may be kept to catalog the assessment tools being implemented by area schools. Several of our faculty members attend state and national conferences, where assessment practices are discussed among the participants.

Implement a division-wide periodic review of our assessment methods to determine possible areas of improvement in Math. Tasks required to accomplish the initiative include discipline committees reviewing the instruments that faculty use to evaluate students in each course, including sharing ideas on effective practices. A review of assessment practices within discipline committees will take place every 2 years, to be concluded by the end of the Spring 2007 semester. An assessment plan was initiated in Spring 2006 as standardized final exams were used to measure learning outcomes. This is now being reviewed and may continue on a periodic basis to identify areas of improvement.

Implement a division-wide periodic review of our quality assurance procedures to identify possible areas of improvement in Math. A possible task to accomplish this initiative involves tracking students across their college-level math courses to determine their success rate as they progress through their studies. On a broader scale, alumni surveys may be used to gather data on the quality of our program in preparing students for their future coursework. Mid-term course surveys, coupled with the IDEA evaluation instrument, are means to providing faculty with feedback on the effectiveness of current teaching practices.

Implement periodic standardized assessments of students in science using comprehensive discipline specific exams developed by national organizations - Entrance and exit exams developed by NSCC faculty are presently administered to students taking many science courses. The relationship between NSCC administered tests and national, standardized assessments is unknown. To validate the usefulness of the tests currently being used, the performance of NSCC students needs to be compared with national, standardized

norms. The cost for conducting standardized assessments would be approximately \$4,000 per year.

Develop quality assurance surveys as an addendum to the IDEA teaching evaluations and have students complete them to evaluate non-teaching activities – A lack of data pertaining to areas other than instruction currently exists. The available data related to areas other than instruction is provided through alumni surveys and is not specific to the Math and Science Division. The data represents a small segment of our students, because many students taking science classes are transient students. A survey that addresses areas such as academic advisement and student services should be developed to address the deficiency of quality data. Assistance from Institutional Research would be necessary to devise a robust survey.

Expand existing discipline committees. We want to include representation from students, alumni, transfer programs, and allied industries. Isolated efforts have been made to seek information from students, alumni, and faculty in co-curricular programs. Increased information from outside sources pertaining to learning objectives, curriculum, methodology, assessment, and quality assurance is needed. Existing discipline committees presently provide an organized method of sharing information and decision making. Discipline committees presently do not include representation from students, alumni, transfer programs, co-curricular programs, or allied industry representation. The addition of key voices in these areas would enhance the information provided to discipline committees to make program decisions.

Define specific learning objectives for each existing course outcome and delineate how instructors should be achieving the course outcomes. Learning outcomes for each course have been defined. To develop consistency within courses, specific learning objectives tied to each course outcome need to be further defined. Specific learning objectives would include course as well as laboratory learning objectives.

Expand the Math and Science divisional website - Learning outcomes are presently made available on all course syllabi, on WebCT for many courses, and are available in public folders for off-campus sites. The Math and Science divisional website should have information added pertaining to all science courses presently taught including detailed course descriptions, learning outcomes, and specific objectives associated with each learning outcome. Assistance from the Computer Services Division and Instructional Resource Center would be necessary to accomplish this initiative.

Social and Life Sciences

Develop a plan to improve the use of technology in all disciplines - Survey all faculty to determine what technology is currently being used by full-time and adjunct instructors in history, social sciences and foreign language classes. Offer two round-table discussion sessions each semester for sharing of information among the instructors about technology being used: what works, what doesn't work. Provide information to instructors on training opportunities that are available on how to integrate technologies into classroom instruction.

This could include such activities as: on-campus sessions, arranging for book reps to demonstrate technology that accompanies textbooks, compiling and distributing a list of sources and other activities.

Implement activities that will foster collaboration among all faculty, full-time and adjuncts instructors – A more organized effort is needed to assure collaboration activities in all three areas, history, social sciences and foreign languages. Provide a written plan for each semester, outlining such activities as round-table discussions, brown-bag lunch meetings, discipline meetings that include full-time and adjunct instructors and other activities that may be suggested. Develop a mentoring plan for each of the three areas to assist in collaboration between adjunct and full-time instructors.

Develop and implement a plan for ensuring consistency among instructors in teaching content and student learning outcomes for the three areas, history, social sciences and foreign languages - Review syllabi more closely for consistency. Provide one discipline meeting each semester that will give full-time and adjunct instructors a time to interact and discuss course content, student learning outcomes, and other teaching/learning issues and ideas.

V. Commitment to Improvement

Recommendation	Brief description and end result	Who will have overall responsibility	Who will participate	When work will begin	How long work is expected to take
Create a private faculty resource site on WebCT to which all EH&A division members, both full- and part-time will have access and certain faculty will have designer access for quality control	Post materials that are currently distributed to adjuncts on CDs; also share activities, presentations, topics assignments.	Sheucraft-Scelza and Church, Coordinators	Designer access: Belew, Lozier, Singletary, Grall, McCreedy, and Adkerson; Tucker, Church, Sheucraft-Scelza	Now	Available by end of Spring 2007 but is ongoing process
Develop common rubrics applicable to EH&A division courses to assess these skills: Writing, Critical Reading, Research, and Critical Thinking.	This initiative will build on the work of the QEP committee and tie into ideas in the focal areas about assessment and quality control.	Church, Coordinator	All instructors in division	Spring 2007	Fall 2007
Implement periodic review of assessment practices utilized by Math faculty	May track students across college-level math courses, use alumni surveys, course surveys, and	Jones, along with chairs of discipline committees – Frierson,	All faculty teaching college-level math, including instructors at	Spring 2007 with full assessment plan set for Fall 2007	2009 – comprehensive analysis of practices

	IDEA evaluation tool to provide feedback	Grigg, Roddy, and Smith	satellite campuses		
Implement periodic standardized assessments of students in Science	Use comprehensive discipline specific exams developed by national organizations to compare NSCC students with national standardized norms	Each discipline committee responsible for implementing appropriate tests	All science faculty	Plan during Spring 2007 use of standardized exams begin Spring 2008	Use of standardized exams begin Spring 2008
Social and Life Sciences survey full-time and adjunct faculty to determine the use of technology in teaching; develop plan of activities to bring faculty together to share information; work toward more integration of technology into classroom activities	Increase faculty knowledge in using technology designed to help improve student learning outcomes	Cornelius-Thompson, Coordinator	All full-time and adjunct faculty will be surveyed. Activities will be open to all instructors.	Plan of activities developed by Mid-Spring semester 2007; activities begin Spring 2007	Activities continue through Fall/Spring semesters 2007-2008
Social and Life Sciences will develop plan with attention to survey results of the CCTST, the CCSSE, and the Alumni Survey; this plan will encourage and motivate full-time and adjunct faculty to collaborate on instructional issues: successful learning strategies, new ideas for instructional success, and other topics related to accomplishing learning outcomes and student success	Increase communication and sharing among faculty, both adjunct and full-time, and improve use of creative and successful teaching / learning strategies	Perry, Ortiz, Cornelius-Thompson, Social Science and Language instructors	Full-time and adjunct instructors	A plan of activities will be developed by Mid-Spring semester 2007; activities will begin Spring 2007	Activities will continue through Fall/Spring semesters 2007-2008

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Student Demographics - Age

Parameter	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
17 and Under	131	202	147	186	258	189	137	171
18 to 20	1114	1173	1158	1233	1305	1274	1372	1424
21 to 24	1455	1448	1511	1535	1526	1564	1651	1672
25 to 34	2254	2198	2152	2067	1963	1929	2021	2126
35 to 64	2287	2347	2228	1962	1790	1783	1803	1786
Over 65	30	32	35	32	32	27	29	19
No Data		2	14	2	0	0	0	0
Total	7271	7402	7315	7017	6874	6766	7013	7198

Appendix 2: Student Demographics - Ethnic Origins

Ethnicity	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
African American	1,221	1,375	1,494	1,508	1,617	1,643	1,651	1,758	1,853	1,956
Asian or Pacific Islander	213	231	318	332	359	340	309	280	259	260
Caucasian	5,338	5,036	5,227	5,363	5,065	4,720	4,598	4,308	4,355	4,333
Hispanic	90	86	113	109	129	142	137	123	154	166
Native Alaskan	0	1	0	0	4	5	12	5	8	8
Native American	20	18	29	26	28	19	26	20	18	19
Other Unclassified	131	154	90	64	113	148	141	272	366	456
Total	7,013	6,901	7,271	7,402	7,315	7,017	6,874	6,766	7,013	7,198

Appendix 3: Student Demographics - Gender

Gender	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Male	3,707	3,234	3,805	3,772	3,636	3,271	3,153	2,878	2,944	3,019
Female	3,306	3,667	3,466	3,630	3,679	3,746	3,721	3,888	4,069	4,179
Total	7,013	6,901	7,271	7,402	7,315	7,017	6,874	6,766	7,013	7,198

Appendix 4: SCH production Spring 2000 to Spring 2005
English Humanities and Arts
Social and Life Sciences

Credit Hour Distribution Summary	Spring 00	Spring 01	Spring 02	Spring 03	Spring 04	Spring 05
EH & A	8532	8655	9609	10570	11267	12618
EH&A (RODP)	0	0	0	0	0	276
Social and Life Sciences	5196	6104	7025	9347	10781	12832
Social and Life Sciences (RODP)	0	0	24	227	0	342

Credit Hour Distribution Summary	00S/01S	01S/02S	02S/03S	03S/04S	04S/05S
EH & A	1.44%	11.02%	10.00%	6.59%	11.99%
Social and Life Sciences	17.47%	15.09%	33.05%	15.34%	19.02%

(Detailed reports of individual courses will be included as a document available for site visit.)

Appendix 5: Increase of SCH production for Math and Science - Spring 2001 to Spring 2006

Course	01S	02S	03S	04S	05S	06S
Astronomy		124		84	92	100
Biology	1417	1322	1856	2475	3143	2847
Chemistry	148	191	428	659	679	562
Geology		104	104	128	120	168
Math	2457	2805	2753	3040	2671	2745
Physical Science	20	48	164	76	124	32
Physics	560	388	427	745	560	329
Total SCH	4602	4982	5732	7207	7389	6783

Course	01F	02F	03F	04F	05F	06F
Astronomy		48	48	44	56	48
Biology	1374	1680	2202	2576	2981	3736
Chemistry	246	358	666	709	802	853
Geology		168	164	180	224	228
Math	2904	3039	3176	2907	3312	3500
Physical Science	96	64	44	56	68	88
Physics	304	430	609	435	324	422
Total SCH	4924	5787	6909	6907	7767	8875

**Appendix 6: Summary assessments of how each of the 7 quality principles is applied:
Learning Objectives**

Quality Principle	Numerical Score <i>EH&A</i>	Numerical Score <i>Math/Science</i>		Numerical Score <i>Social Sciences</i>
Define quality in terms of outcomes	3.79	5.0	4.0	4.0
Focus how things get done	3.85	4.0	3.6	4.0
Base decisions on facts	3.43	4.0	3.6	4.0
Strive for coherence	4.28	4.0	4.4	4.0
Learn from best practice	3.86	3.0	3.8	3.0
Work collaboratively	3.86	4.0	4.0	4.0
Make continuous improvement a priority	3.86	4.0	4.0	3.0

**Appendix 7: Summary assessments of how each of the 7 quality principles is applied:
Curriculum /Co-Curriculum**

Quality Principle	Numerical Score <i>EH&A</i>	Numerical Score <i>Math/Science</i>		Numerical Score <i>Social Sciences</i>
Define quality in terms of outcomes	3.5	5.0	4.0	4.0
Focus how things get done	3.57	4.0	3.6	4.0

Base decisions on facts	3.5	4.0	3.6	4.0
Strive for coherence	3.78	4.0	4.4	4.0
Learn from best practice	3.93	3.0	3.8	3.0
Work collaboratively	3.5	4.0	4.0	4.0
Make continuous improvement a priority	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0

**Appendix 8: Summary assessments of how each of the 7 quality principles is applied:
Teaching and Learning**

Quality Principle	Numerical Score <i>EH&A</i>	Numerical Score <i>Math/Science</i>		Numerical Score <i>Social Sciences</i>
Define quality in terms of outcomes	3.86	5.0	3.8	4.0
Focus how things get done	3.57	3.0	3.8	4.0
Base decisions on facts	3.5	3.0	4.0	4.0
Strive for coherence	3.93	4.0	4.0	4.0
Learn from best practice	4.21	3.0	4.0	3.0
Work collaboratively	3.79	2.0	3.8	4.0
Make continuous improvement a priority	4.21	3.0	4.8	3.0

**Appendix 9: Summary assessments of how each of the 7 quality principles is applied:
Assessment**

Quality Principle	Numerical Score <i>EH&A</i>	Numerical Score <i>Math/Science</i>		Numerical Score <i>Social Sciences</i>
Define quality in terms of outcomes	3.57	4.0	4.0	4.0
Focus how things get done	3.36	3.0	3.4	4.0
Base decisions on facts	3.57	3.0	3.8	4.0
Strive for coherence	3.57	4.0	3.4	4.0
Learn from best practice	3.14	2.0	3.6	3.0
Work collaboratively	3.0	3.0	3.4	4.0
Make continuous improvement a priority	3.29	2.0	4.0	3.0

**Appendix 10: Summary assessments of how each of the 7 quality principles is applied:
Quality Assurance**

Quality Principle	Numerical Score <i>EH&A</i>	Numerical Score <i>Math/Science</i>		Numerical Score <i>Social Sciences</i>
Define quality in terms of outcomes	3.14	4.0	3.4	4.0
Focus how things get done	3.29	3.0	3.2	4.0
Base decisions on facts	2.78	3.0	3.6	4.0
Strive for coherence	2.29	4.0	3.6	4.0
Learn from best practice	3.21	2.0	3.6	3.0
Work collaboratively	3.14	2.0	3.0	4.0
Make continuous improvement a priority	3.29	1.0	3.8	3.0

Appendix 11: Notebook Materials for Mathematics and Sciences Division

The following is a list of information and documents that will be available for the site visit.

General Information

- Academic Audit Faculty
- Area of Emphasis
- Sample of course syllabi
- Sample of course assessment exams
- Assessment data
- Grade distribution report
- IDEA Course Evaluation Form
- IDEA Course Objectives
- Discipline Committee Membership
- Original responses from the focal area questionnaire
- Classroom visit evaluation form

Science Program Materials

- Examples of journals and/or guidelines from American Chemical Society, American Association of Physics, American Society of Microbiology, Human Anatomy and Physiology Society, Tennessee Board of Regents and National Science Foundation
- Curricular and co-curricular requirements outlined in the catalog
- Sample of new biology lab manuals
- Sample of Discipline Committee Meeting Minutes
- Sample of course questionnaire with summary data

Mathematics Program Materials

- Sample of MyMathLab assignments
- NCTM, ATME, and AMATYC standards and Best Practices