

Nashville State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan

“Improving Student Success through the First Year Experience”

BACKGROUND

The mission of Nashville State Community College is to provide comprehensive educational programs and partnerships, exemplary services, an accessible, progressive learning environment, and responsible leadership to improve the quality of life for the community it serves. The college serves a broad geographic area comprised of Davidson, Cheatham, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, and Stewart Counties. Nashville State offers associate degrees and certificates that prepare students to think and perform well whether entering the workforce or transferring to a university upon graduation.

Since it first opened in 1970, Nashville State Community College has been a vital part of Nashville. Initially named Nashville State Technical Institute, the college had 398 students, and offered only five Associate’s degree programs. Graduation was held in the parking lot. White Bridge Road, where the main campus is still located, had only two lanes and very few businesses.

As the White Bridge Road area grew over the years, so did the college. In 1984, Nashville State joined the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) system of state universities and community colleges. In 2002, the Tennessee General Assembly and the Governor of Tennessee expanded the mission of Nashville State to that of a comprehensive community college. As a community college, Nashville State offers technical certificates, the Associate of Applied Science technical

and career degrees, and the Associate of Arts, the Associate of Fine Arts, the Associate of Science, and the Associate of Science in Teaching transfer degrees.

In order to better serve middle Tennessee, Nashville State has additional campus sites offering classes at locations throughout its service area and online. In Waverly, the Humphreys County Center of Higher Education serves students in Humphreys and surrounding counties. In Nashville, the Southeast Campus provides learning opportunities for all of southeastern Davidson County. Students can also take classes in Dickson at the Renaissance Center. In Clarksville, a campus provides educational opportunities for residents in Montgomery County. The newest campus location is in the Donelson neighborhood of the Metropolitan Nashville Area in east Davidson County.

In 2010, the legislature of the State of Tennessee passed the Complete College Tennessee Act, a comprehensive reform agenda that seeks to transform public higher education through changes in academic, fiscal, and administrative policies at the state and institutional level. The impetus for these reforms is to have more Tennesseans be better educated and trained to meet the overarching goal of Complete College Tennessee. This goal is commonly known as the “Drive to 55” initiative, i.e. that 55% percent of all adult Tennesseans will have a college degree or certificate by 2025.

As the “Drive to 55” initiative gained traction, State institutions such as Nashville State began transitioning from a culture of enrollment to one of retention and graduation. While Nashville State showed strong enrollment from 2009-2013 (Table 1), the retention and graduation numbers were discouraging (Table 2, Table 3).

Table 1. Total duplicated headcount for Nashville State Community College 2009-2013 fall semesters.

Semester	Headcount
Fall 2009	9426
Fall 2010	10,554
Fall 2011	10,703
Fall 2012	10,886
Fall 2013	11,324

Table 2. Fall to fall retention rates for full-time, first-time students for Nashville State Community College for 2010-2013.

Return Term	NSCC Rate
Fall 2010	58.6%
Fall 2011	62.4%
Fall 2012	57.4%
Fall 2013	56.4%

Table 3. 6-year graduation rates for fulltime, first-time students for Nashville State Community College for 2009-2013.

Cohort Year	1 st Time, Full-Time Freshmen	6-Year Cycle Graduation Year	# Graduates	Graduation Rate
2003	508	2009	127	25.0%
2004	640	2010	162	25.3%
2005	640	2011	135	21.1%
2006	643	2012	129	20.0%
2007	611	2013	149	24.4%

A review of data in Tables 1-3 illustrates that, while overall enrollment was trending upward during this period, student retention and graduation rates were actually declining, with a slight increase in 2013. During the summer of 2013, the decision was made to bring in a consultant to review the academic advising model and make recommendations for improvement. At the time, Nashville State operated on an academic advising model that was faculty driven on the Main Campus and heavily reliant on staff at satellite campuses. All degree seeking students were assigned an academic advisor, but meetings with advisors were not

mandatory and efforts by advisors to reach out to advisees varied widely. The summative report of the consultant concluded that Nashville State needed to improve academic advising in many ways, including, but not limited to, developing an advisor training process, improving the process of assigning advisees, and dedicating more faculty and staff time to academic advising.

In 2013, Nashville State instituted a policy dictating that all first-time students were required to meet with an academic advisor. The intent of the policy was to provide guidance to incoming students on the selection of their first semester of classes and demonstrate the usefulness of the academic advisor relationship. This policy was enforced by requiring a code for registration that was provided by the advisor. However, the code was the same for all students, and it seems likely that at least some first-time freshmen were able to obtain the code and bypass the advisor meeting. Another shortcoming of policy implementation was that academic advising during peak enrollment times took place in a centralized space that was staffed with faculty and staff. The result was that first-time students were seldom advised by the person assigned to them as their faculty advisor. It was thus difficult to forge the advisor-advisee relationship during the first meeting. It was also the case that faculty often ended up helping students in disciplines outside of their “comfort zone” with the result that many faculty came to dread advising service.

Regardless of the limitations of the policy, implementation continued unchanged until data could be reviewed. Fall to fall retention data for full-time, first-time students affected by the implementation of mandatory first semester advising can be seen in Table 4. While this data set tracked only a subset of first-time students, the continued decline in retention rate was not encouraging.

Table 4. Fall to fall retention rates for full-time, first-time students for Nashville State Community College and the State Average for Community Colleges for 2014-2016.

Return Fall	NSCC Rate	State Average
Fall 2014	56.1%	58.9%
Fall 2015	56.3%	58.2%
Fall 2016	53.8%	56.0%

In a continued attempt to improve the academic advising model at Nashville State, President Van Allen created an Advising Task Force in the summer of 2015. The charge of the 13 members was to develop a comprehensive advising plan as well as strategies to support student success. Work of the Task Force led to eight recommendations to improve the academic advising model and, by extension, student success. Those recommendations were as follows:

- Recommendation 1: Implement mandatory advising for all degree-seeking and certificate-seeking students
- Recommendation 2: Implement the Intrusive Advising Model
- Recommendation 3: Explore the "Appreciative Advising" approach to guide the advising programs and interactions with students
- Recommendation 4: Continue to employ and add staff advisors as needed
- Recommendation 5: Implement the First Year Experience class in fall 2016
- Recommendation 6: Strengthen advisor orientation, training, and development programs
- Recommendation 7: Define roles and responsibilities
- Recommendation 8: Implement an ongoing advising assessment and recognition program.

Concurrent to College discussions on student success, the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) made a determination that all learning support deficiencies would be remediated through co-requisite experiences with college-level courses. As a result, advising incoming students with learning support needs (~70% of incoming students) shifted drastically in preparation for fall

2015. For that reason, a first-time student advising manual was created in 2015 and mandatory advisor training took place for the first-time for all full-time faculty during August of that year. Both of those actions addressed recommendation 6 of the Advising Task Force to strengthen advisor training and define roles and responsibilities of both the advisor and the advisee. Fall 2015 was also the semester that Nashville State implemented Degree Works for all degree seeking students. Degree Works is a software package that provides degree audits so that students can see how their coursework applies to a degree or certificate and which classes they lack for a degree. With it, advisors and students can run “what-if” reports to determine how a change in an academic path would affect progression to graduation.

At the same time that the QEP topic was being developed, several other initiatives were occurring which aligned with the topic of improving student success through the first year experience. The President requested that a committee be formed to look into a formation of a First Year Experience (FYE) course, an identified high-impact practice. The work of the committee concluded with a class proposal that highlighted the importance of advising, an understanding of college resources, and time management and study skills to improve student success. TBR had started monitoring high impact practices across the community college system and, through actions at the level of the Board, all institutions were allowed to increase the number of hours necessary to earn an Associate’s Degree by as many as three to require a First Year Experience college success course. The President approved the recommendations of both the FYE Committee and the Advising Task Force, and, upon recommendation of the

Curriculum Committee, a one-credit, first year experience course (NSCC 1010: First Year Experience) became a graduation requirement for all degrees at Nashville State effective fall 2016.

QEP PHASE ONE: TOPIC FORMATION

During the summer of 2015, the President asked Margaret (Faye) Jones, the Dean of Learning Resources, to develop a team to lead the campus-wide effort to select the topic for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) associated with the 2017 reaffirmation of accreditation. Dean Jones formed a committee consisting of faculty and staff representing all divisions and major departments at the college. Once fall 2015 classes began, the committee asked members of their divisions or major department areas to send topics for a plan that would improve student success. The committee took that list of all suggestions, eliminated duplicate answers, and sent a survey to the entire college requesting individual opinions on which five topics should be selected for further research. While the committee expected the winnowing process to take several rounds of surveying, it turned out that there was a great deal of agreement among members of the College about the top five projects that would be beneficial to pursue.

Those five topics were as follows:

- More structured advising
- Developing college-level study skills
- Improving reading comprehension and following directions
- A mandatory freshman orientation
- A freshman experience course.

The committee then polled students enrolled at the time in ENGL 1020: English Composition II. The committee concluded that students enrolled in this second-semester

course could reflect on what would have been the most beneficial to them as beginning college students. One hundred and twenty-six students responded to the survey. “More structured advising” and “instruction on college level study skills” were the most frequent responses to the question in which students were asked to identify which activities would have been the most helpful to their success. At the same time, other stakeholders were polled for their opinion, including the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees of the Foundation (a 501c dedicated to supporting the college), and several divisions’ advisory committees.

The QEP topic formation committee held two open forums on each of the five topics on the following schedule, all in 2015.

- Developing College-level Study Skills: October 14 (noon) and October 15 (3 pm)
- Mandatory Freshman Orientation: October 19 (1 pm) and October 20 (2 pm)
- Reading Comprehension and Following Directions: October 26 (11 am), and October 27 (3 pm)
- Advising: November 2 (noon), and November 3 (3 pm)
- First Year Experience: November 9 (noon) and November 10 (2 pm).

All college-wide discussions were located on the Nashville campus but broadcast live to all campuses. Prior to each forum, the chair also sent out emails with links to other community colleges who had chosen the topic for their QEP to allow the campus community to learn of various ways the topic had been handled. Each open forum session had the following components:

- The need for improvement in the area of discussion
- Advantages/disadvantages of using the area as the QEP topic
- Ability to assess success of initiatives related to this area

After each session, the committee sent out a summary of the open forum to members of the college community and solicited feedback from those who had not been able to attend.

At the conclusion of all campus forums, a final survey was administered to the campus to gauge final opinions on the QEP Topic selection. One hundred and sixty-eight members of the campus community responded. The majority (61%) of respondents indicated that the QEP topic should be a combination of the presented topics with the highest rated three topics being a focus on student study skills, a mandatory freshman experience course, and a focus on academic advising. After further deliberation, the project was entitled “Improving Student Success through the First Year Experience,” so that the topics proposed by the campus could be incorporated into a holistic first year experience. The QEP topic was announced to the college community in February 2016, and planning of the project (phase two) began.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many colleges take a cafeteria approach to increasing student retention – creating a first year experience seminar, mentoring program, or some other singular activity meant to be a cure all (Tinto 2). Nashville State aims to take a comprehensive approach of improving students’ first year by helping them complete:

- Personalized academic plans
- Connections between academic and career planning
- An understanding of campus resources
- Connection between course material and their future
- Personal reflection experiences on their education.

While many of these activities are grounded in the freshman orientation course, as Tinto suggests, the aim is on altering the character of student experiences (2).

In a review of the literature on student success variables, Kimberly Burns at Middlesex Community College reported that the following student characteristics are highly correlated with graduation rates:

- Strong high school preparation
- Immediate entry to college right after high school
- High income families
- Parents who attended college
- Full-time students.

Unfortunately, many community college students have few of those characteristics, thus starting college at a disadvantage. This is certainly true of the average student at Nashville State Community College. In fact, many bring characteristics that adversely affect their chances of success:

- Caring for children at home
- Being a single parent
- Struggling financially
- Delaying college enrollment
- Being a first-generation college student
- Commuting
- Working full-time (Burns).

Turner and Thompson found four other factors that impede student success: a dearth of activities aimed at freshmen, ineffective study skills, weak relationships with faculty, and poor academic advisement and support (100). Students who feel stressed and alienated are also more likely to withdraw, despite their academic ability (Daugherty and Lane 356). Students with disabilities, those who suffer from mental health issues, and those from minority ethnic groups also tend to have lower retention rates during their first year of college (O’Keeffe).

The results are telling: Fewer than 33% of all community college students in the United States graduate in three years. Fewer than half graduate in eight. A small minority go on to earn a bachelor's degree (Burns). Graduation rates at Nashville State are even lower than these disappointing national trends. Even more discouraging, Irene Sanchez notes that while the number of minority students in college increased between 1976 and 1996, the retention rate did not. The annual *Condition of College & Readiness Report for 2015* (ACT) found that almost a third of students who took the ACT did not meet any of the College Readiness Benchmarks. The results for Tennessee were also discouraging: 58% met the English benchmark; 38% met the reading benchmark; 30% met the math benchmark; and 29% met the science benchmark. Nationwide, almost 25% of American freshmen must enroll in some sort of remediation coursework, costing a total of 1.5 billion dollars annually, and those students are more likely not to finish college (Barry and Dannenberg).

Robert Reason and his associates point out in their review of 6687 first year student National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) surveys, the majority of variables that affect student success happen to them during their first year of school and are not due to the personal characteristics they bring to college. Students' perception of the support they received in their first year served as a strong predictor of academic competence (164). In a Noel-Levitz survey in 2014, students in two-year colleges identified the following as needs to be addressed after their first semester of college: help in improving math and writing skills, discussion of qualifications necessary for certain occupations, help with an education plan to get a good job, and discussion of salaries and outlooks for careers. The question thus becomes how community

colleges can provide services that will make up for deficiencies and provide students with appropriate information for future careers.

For many colleges, the first step in this process is the freshman experience course. In 2009, almost 95% of universities had some type of program (Jamelske 375). According to Joe Cuseo, its very ubiquity means that the freshman experience course is one of the most heavily-researched college courses. Therefore, there is a wealth of information on correlations with student success and best practices. Cuseo found a positive correlation between participating in a freshman-experience course and

- Completion of first semester
- Completion of first year
- Completion of a degree
- Time taken to earn a degree
- Grade point average (3-5).

As George Kuh and his associates point out, colleges should investigate how they can make the freshman year “more challenging and satisfying” for student to increase their engagement and retention (557). A well-designed first year experience can give students the support they need, both academically and emotionally, to succeed in their college careers.

Research indicates that the following first year experiences improve student outcomes:

- A required FYE course
- Academic advising
- Academic and career planning
- Social interactions
- Awareness of campus resources
- Personal reflection.

A Required FYE Course

In a statistical analysis of the Virginia community college system, Cho and Karp found that students enrolled in a college success course during their first semester were more likely to earn college-level credits during their first year and to persist into their second than those not enrolled in such a course (86). Jamelske found a positive effect on the freshman experience course for below-average students, with those students tending to have a higher GPA than comparable students not enrolled in such a course (373). Using longitudinal data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, Ryan Padgett and his associates concluded that an academically rigorous freshman experience course can be a powerful tool in developing the successful student (145). Therefore, the FYE course is logical point to serve as the centerpiece of the first year experience.

Given the research that success in college requires more than academic skill (O’Gara, Karp, Hughes; Karp and Bork; Bers and Younger) and that students may perceive testing into a FYE course as validation that they do not belong in college, the FYE (First Year Experience) course needs to be a requirement for all students. Furthermore, FYE courses should have:

High Expectations

Courses should have high expectations (Tinto, Padgett, et al.; Cruce, Wolniak, et al.). If the freshman experience course is to teach students how to handle the demands of college, one of the best ways to do so is to have college-level expectations. This can also teach students the expectations they need to meet in order to remain in college. For example, Trotter and Roberts found that British colleges with strict policies on attendance had higher retention rates. Student success is related to how meaningful students perceive the course to be; therefore, the

curriculum should have concrete objectives that are narrow enough to allow for depth and practice. Research has found this to be much more effective in FYE courses than a lecture-based class that superficially covers a broad range of topics. Pedagogical decisions should focus on reflection and “learning-for-application” (Karp and Stacey; Karp et al).

Study Skills Instruction

Instruction in study skills should be a key part of the curriculum (Braunstein et al.; Barbatis; Soria and Stebleton; Porter and Swing). While students need to be able to handle the workload of college, many come to it ill-prepared to take notes, to write documented papers, and to study for multi-chapter tests. A freshman experience course can put them on a level playing field with students who have had such instruction. Namok Choi found that students who had study skills instruction reported both an increase in their skills as well as in their confidence in their ability to succeed. The FYE course should help students develop personal habits – time management, note-taking skills, study skills, self-assessment skills – and help them recognize how those habits contribute to success (O’Gara, Karp, Hughes; Karp). They should also address the unwritten expectations of college such as “cultural know-how” and allow students to practice help-seeking behaviors (Karp and Bork; Karp).

Administrative Effectiveness

To ensure successful implementation of an FYE course, one person should be assigned to oversee the project rather than adding responsibilities to multiple people who will not be as invested in its success. The FYE team should consist of campus-wide faculty and staff, and the purpose of implementing the FYE course needs to focus on more than only retention, as this could lead to lower standards (Mayo). Melinda Karp and Georgia Stacey also emphasize the

importance of campus-wide faculty involvement: “Disciplinary faculty should participate in developing learning objectives and reinforce concepts in their own courses” (5). Susan Bickerstaff and her associates note that in order to support faculty in this program, “Colleges may need to offer learning opportunities for instructors to develop strategies to create experiences of earned success for the students in their classes.” Jennifer Latino, the director of the first year experience at Campbell University, stresses the need to keep the focus on the current needs of students: “It’s easy to get too comfortable with the first year seminar. Often . . . institutions continue to focus on the same learning outcomes they identified years ago, without pausing to check if those outcomes still respond to the needs of . . . current students” (qtd. In Fusch).

Academic Advising

According to Jalynn Roberts and Robert Styron, “Perhaps the most crucial aspect of a student’s interaction and engagement with an institution of higher learning is the relationship with his/her advisor” (3). Charlie Nutt, executive director of NACADA, agrees stating that “any retention effort must clearly recognize the value of academic advising” and “academic advising is much more than scheduling courses.” For male black students, who are at a greater risk of not completing college, meeting with an advisor is a strong predictor of academic integration (Wood, Newman, and Harris 10). Some researchers (Fike and Fike) have found that withdrawals and the attendant drop in credit hours carried and completed in the fall semester can reduce fall-spring retention (83). The inclusion of a solid advising component as part of the first year experience may help students to identify options other than dropping a course when they become frustrated with their studies. Lauren O’Gara and her associates discovered in their

survey of students that “students perceive faculty to be the best source for academic advising” (12). Upcraft et al. stress that academic advising programs that include professional development and training for advisors can be an important component of creating a campus culture that improves student success.

Academic and Career Planning

In their seminal work “Challenging & Supporting the First-Year Student,” Upcraft, Gardner, and Barefoot focus on the need to frame academic advising within the context of the mission of the institution. Knowing best practices in advising, such as the need to develop a personalized degree plan, the need to make connections between academic plans and career goals, and a realization of personal commitments outside of the classroom is key, but a focus on institutional mission helps students realize that they are a part of an academic community. Work done in the state of Tennessee (Denley and Knox) showed that simple guidelines in academic planning, such as taking math, English composition, and hours in a student’s focus area, can make a significant difference in a student’s likelihood for success. Counseling and advising with career planning and internships are linked to increased retention in four-year public institutions (Habley and McClanahan 6). Voluntary dropouts – those students capable of college level coursework – most often leave due to the lack of a clear connection between their academic and career goals. As many as three out of four entering college freshmen are unsure of their career plans. These students are more likely to change majors, thus reflecting their need for academic and career goal setting (Fralick).

Faculty Interactions

Several studies (Pacarella and Terenzini; Roberts and Styron; Soria and Stebleton; Tinto; Wood, Newman, and Harris; Umbach and Wawrzynski; Cruce et al.) indicate that developing a relationship with faculty can have a positive effect on retention and student engagement. In fact, of the ten variables that influence student academic competence as reported in NSSE, three related to faculty (Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo). “Students who reported feeling that the faculty and staff at their institution provided the academic and non-academic support they needed, and who felt they had good relationships with faculty members and administrative staff were more likely . . . to report greater gains in academic competence.” A freshman experience course, especially one taught by full-time faculty can certainly aid students in learning how to most effectively interact with faculty. For example, the instructor can serve as a resource when students have difficulties in other classes. The instructor can also advise students on how to use faculty office hours (Soria and Stebleton 682). This aspect may be especially important for first-generation, working class students who may be intimidated by going to faculty for support (Longwell-Grice 407).

Peer Interactions

In her review of FYE course implementation at community colleges, Teresa Mayo asserts, “A structured and required first year program will provide a common set of goals, thereby contributing to increased retention and successful graduate rates. A first year experience, which includes co-curricular (nonacademic) and curricular (academic) components, develops strong relationships both in and out of class and increases persistence to graduation.” Since research shows that retention depends partly on students developing strong relationships

with faculty and peers, FYE courses at a community college, where there is a high percentage of part-time students, should especially focus on increasing participation in campus activities to enhance students' commitment to the college (Mayo; O'Gara, Karp, and Hughes; Karp). A connection to other students also correlates with student retention (Tinto; Barbatis). Promoting involvement in first year experiences can promote such interaction by allowing students to get to know one another in a non-threatening environment and by providing ways for students to engage in campus activities. As Jalyann Roberts and Robert Styron point out, "One important factor which affects college students' persistence is that of being socially integrated and connected with others, especially other students" (3). At Wheaton College, students said the freshman experience course allowed them to develop meaningful peer relationships and a "sense of unity with students and faculty" (Kuh et al.). In a study of 305 freshmen, Jeff Jacobs and Tim Archie, administering the Sense of Community Index, found that students who felt they belonged to a community on campus were more likely to persist in their studies. How well a student adjusts to the academic environment of college is thus closely tied to their developing sense of belonging with the college. Once students begin college, taking measures to ensure that they become well integrated academically may help guard against a decline in sense of belonging (Hausmann, Schofield, and Woods 804-805).

In addition to the social bonds formed in a FYE course, new student orientation for first-time freshmen can help cultivate social relationships that foster a sense of belonging in students. Orientation "can be viewed as a form of anticipatory socialization" (Pascarella, Terrenzini, & Wolfe). A first year experience course along with new student orientation provides students with the social foundation to be successful college students.

Awareness of Campus Resources

Especially for first-generation students, the ways of college can seem challenging and undecipherable. A well-rounded freshman experience course can help them navigate their way through information on campus policies (Porter and Swing 91). Such a course can ensure that students are aware of counseling, mentoring, and tutoring opportunities as well as workshops and cultural events (Burns). Marcia Laskey and Carole Hetzel, in their study of the Conditional Acceptance Program at a private university, found that students who regularly attended tutoring sessions had higher GPAs and retention rates (33). Also, students at George Mason University reported that a freshman success course taught them about what sort of effort would be required to be successful and also about the resources available to help them (Kuh et al.). If students perceive their campus environment as supportive, they feel academically more competent (Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo). But even simple, straightforward information can help with retention. Oded Gurantz found that early student registration for classes is crucial to their academic success (555). Since late registration is correlated with a lack of retention, simple information about when to register and what options to take when courses are full can help retain students. Academic planning, advising, and mandatory orientation through the first year experience gives students the tools they need for a seamless registration process.

According to a study by Lauren O’Gara and her associates that examined the student perspective at community colleges, the FYE course is most valuable when it not only provides information about campus resources, but also helps students feel comfortable using them: “Information plus comfort leads to the use of services.” To achieve this, they and others recommend giving guided tours of the campus early in the semester, inviting campus

representatives to class, and structuring opportunities for students to explore resources (O’Gara, Karp, Hughes; Bickerstaff, Barragan, and Rucks-Ahidiana). Patricia Karp says it this way: “Make nonacademic supports intrusive so that students are forced to encounter them” (3).

Reflection and the Academic Mindset

Drs. Denley and Knox took a different approach to tracking student success in the state of Tennessee with their system-wide look into the effects of academic mindset in underprepared first-time students. After a survey of several thousand students in the state of Tennessee, a correlation was found between student success and the following mindset principles: confidence in keeping up to date with coursework, sense of community, confidence in talking with faculty, and perceived purpose of coursework. Those students who walked into the classroom thinking that there was a value in the content of the class and that they had the ability to master the work were more successful than those students who did not feel they had the tools to succeed and/or saw no value in coursework.

Similarly, grit may be an indicator of students who possess the aforementioned academic mindset. As defined by Duckworth et al., grit is “perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (1087). In her study of over 3,500 college students across nine different colleges, follow-through was the greatest predictor of significant student accomplishments across a variety of disciplines. Follow through (or grit) was not positively correlated with IQ and proved to be a strong indicator of success in life (Duckworth 1099).

According to Bailey, Jaggars, and Jenkins, “To apply skills and information about careers, course sequences, and study strategies in the long run, students need to develop the metacognitive skills that allow them to recognize change as it occurs, reflect on how change

affects their own situation, and create plans to manage the change. Building such skills requires practice, which could be accomplished through in-class reflection and discussion as well as out-of-class applied assignments” (67). Students need to acquire the higher order thinking skills necessary to reflect on how life changes may affect their academic and career goals.

This emphasis on reflection serves as the real thread that ties together the first year experiences and builds a foundation for student retention. As demonstrated in the literature review, the groundwork for a successful first year requires a multi-pronged approach rather than a singular quick fix.

QEP PHASE TWO: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Phase two of the Nashville State QEP process included fleshing out what the Nashville State first year experience encompasses, developing an assessment plan to test student learning outcomes, budgeting, and marketing the plan to members of the college. The endeavor was led by a 16 person QEP Steering Committee that consisted of faculty, staff and students. The committee began meeting in February 2016 and developed a timeline for project development that would take place over the following eighteen months. At the same time, a group of faculty and staff completed a review of the literature to determine best practices on first year experiences for community college students. The first draft of the literature review was presented to the steering committee in May of 2016.

Work on the new NSCC 1010: First Year Experience course was taking place simultaneously by a committee of faculty and staff who were charged with creating a class that would increase student success and that could be taken to scale in fall 2016. The course was

designed as a five week course that would meet every other week. A comprehensive master shell was created within Desire2Learn (D2L) so that faculty would start the semester with a complete set of resources and activities, including a test to gauge student learning during the class. Five modules that coincide with original course outcomes were created with suggested activities and assignments. The assignments were geared toward items that students would encounter in traditional classes; for example: uploading a document into the D2L dropbox, posting a discussion post, and completing a quiz within D2L. Course activities and conversations were focused on key information about Nashville State and the resources available to students.

In late fall 2016, several members of the QEP steering committee attended a two-day completion academy sponsored by TBR. The goal of the academy was to focus on how institutions could change their approach to student success in light of the work done at the system level that showed that factors such as an architected degree plan, seeing value in coursework, and solid advising models correlated to student success. The team at the completion academy focused on experiences in the first year in light of the established QEP topic. On March 15, 2016 those members involved in the academy brought the information to the QEP Steering Committee and pitched that the Nashville State first year experience encompass the following activities: New Student Orientation, the NSCC 1010: First Year Experience course, academic advising, career planning, and personal reflection on education on the part of the student. In light of literature on best practices from articles from both in and out of Tennessee, the QEP Steering Committee approved those five experiences as appropriate foci for first year efforts at Nashville State.

The QEP Committee spent the next weeks discussing student learning outcomes for the QEP. Student learning outcomes from the NSCC 1010: First Year Experience course were reviewed. However, the committee made a concerted effort to determine student learning outcomes that would encompass the entire first year experience and not simply duplicate those from the first year experience course. Student learning outcomes for the QEP are as follows:

As a result of their first year experience, students at Nashville State will:

1. Create a personalized academic plan that includes college-level math, English composition, and 9 hours in the focus area in the first academic year.
2. Describe connections between degree choice and ultimate career choice after an interest inventory (Kuder).
3. Differentiate resources available to students through Nashville State to support student success.
4. Articulate connections between their courses and their ultimate academic goals.
5. Reflect on their personal growth as a result of their education.

First Year Experiences

Any comprehensive plan on improving student success through the first year experience requires first, a definition of those experiences, and second, a review and systematic improvement over time of all facets of the first year. A review of historical practice for the five experiences of the first year at Nashville State and the intentional improvements in those areas as a result of a college-wide focus on student success follow.

New Student Orientation

One does not have to look deeply into literature on best practices to find that a well-organized new student orientation process is a key to student success. Prior to fall 2016, new student orientation was not a requirement for enrollment into Nashville State. New student orientation meetings were encouraged however, and several options were available throughout the summer. Those orientations were a stand-and-deliver model, wherein

prospective students would congregate into an auditorium and representatives from student affairs and academic affairs would announce various pieces of information and answer any questions of the audience. After the presentation portion was complete, students would go to a make-shift advising lab where they would meet with faculty or staff on a first-come, first-served basis to register for courses for the upcoming term. The advising lab simultaneously took walk-in returning students who wanted help building a schedule. Staff numbers for the lab were increased around new student orientation meetings, but those peak advising times typically led to long wait times. It was common for students to attend a new student orientation, but not actually register due to the inconvenience of the process. This was a particular problem for first-time students, who were required to meet with an academic advisor prior to registering for courses.

After the QEP topic was announced to the college, the Admissions staff began to revise the way in which new student orientation was handled. In the fall of 2016, new student orientation became “mandatory” in that it was listed as a requirement of admission for all first-time students. The word mandatory is written in quotes, because no student has been turned away for failure to attend, as the mission of Nashville State is to serve all students in the community. However, during the application process, first-time students are required to select a time to come to a New Student Orientation event. Those meetings are small (30 students or fewer) and take place in a computer lab, so that students can log in to the college system and navigate their student account in real time. Available student services, such as admissions, records, and library and career services, are reviewed while the student is logged onto either the college website or their MyNSCC account. Students are shown how to check personal

financial aid status, bills, and find contact information for their academic advisor. At the end of the event, students are shown how to use Degree Works and Schedule Planner to build a schedule of classes that will apply to their chosen degree. Admissions staff help students enroll for their first semester of coursework.

Students who do not attend new student orientation and need to register for classes are advised by faculty or Admissions staff. This is particularly true during late registration, which takes place the week before classes and after scheduled new student orientations end. However, full-time faculty are on campus during late registration and so advising incoming students individually is more manageable. All students who do attend a new student orientation are tracked using a notation in Banner. In that way, long term success of those students who attend a new student orientation can be compared to those first-time students who register as a walk-in. Transfer and returning students are registered by their assigned academic advisor.

NSCC 1010: First Year Experience Course

A well designed, mandatory first year experience course that provides students with skills and knowledge to help them succeed correlates with student success. Nashville State implemented a mandatory first year experience course for all degree seeking, first-time students beginning with the 2016-2017 catalog. All faculty assigned to NSCC 1010 courses receive training prior to each term.

In fall 2016, 62 sections of NSCC 1010: First Year Experience were offered with a total enrollment of 1543 students. Ten of the sections were taught by adjunct faculty or staff, with the remaining 52 taught by full-time faculty. The college-wide success rate was 67% with a

course retention average of 95%. The course included a pre-post test to determine if student learning outcomes for the course were met. Data showed a 5% improvement over pre-test scores. Faculty feedback on the test suggested that scores were most likely affected by the simplicity of several questions, thereby increasing the pre-test scores. The pre-post test was revised by the NSCC 1010 Committee in preparation for the spring 2017 term in an attempt to increase the rigor of the measurement.

A faculty survey conducted at the end of the fall 2016 term showed 54% of the faculty felt the original schedule of students attending class on alternating weeks impeded student success. Student confusion on meeting dates and an “out of sight, out of mind” mentality were the highest ranked concerns. A survey of students in the class showed a slight division on the issue; with a slight majority answering that consecutive meetings would improve the course. Due to these responses, the schedule for spring 2017 was built so the class would meet for five consecutive weeks during a 7-week term.

Fall 2016 to spring 2017 retention rates for students who successfully completed NSCC 1010 was 86.9% compared to the college overall retention rate of 70.7% for the same time frame.

In spring 2017, 26 sections of NSCC 1010 were offered with 497 students enrolled. One evening section was labeled for adult students, although enrollment was not limited to adults. Seven out of the 11 enrolled met the definition of “adult learner” in that students were 25 years or older. An end of course survey showed that 71% of the students agreed that the five consecutive week schedule supported student success. Open-ended student comments covered the full range of opinions – from “this class is a waste of time and should not meet at

all” to “this class needs to be longer so that I have a chance to learn everything I can about NSCC.” With the new five-week delivery model in place, the college-wide success rate dropped slightly to 64.2% and the retention rate to the following semester rose to 96.8%.

After two semesters of implementation, the NSCC 1010 committee revised student learning outcomes to determine benchmarking and measure success. NSCC 1010 student learning outcomes are as follows:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify student support resources for achieving academic success.
- Create academic and career goals.
- Explain and apply strategies that support academic success.
- Describe personal barriers to academic success and how they will overcome them.

In addition, the QEP Steering Committee added/revised 22 questions on the test (appendix pg. 60) administered in NSCC 1010 to measure student awareness of resources at Nashville State at the end of the course.

Academic Advising

Academic advising is critical because it provides not only a resource to students regarding academic planning but also a connection with the academic advisor, who is often the point person with whom the student develops the relationship that connects them to the institution. Nashville State has an academic advising system that relies primarily on full-time faculty. Grant funding supports two AAS completion coaches on the Main campus. In addition, satellite campuses, who have fewer full-time faculty in general, have staff members who serve as academic advisors as part of their duties. Until 2015, academic advising was largely considered a semester-by-semester prospect in which advisors functioned more as aides in planning schedules of classes and cross-checking that courses in which a student enrolled

would count towards their declared major. Many faculty advisors saw academic advising responsibilities as clerical in nature and resisted the interaction.

In 2015, Nashville State implemented Degree Works, which provides a degree audit so students can log into a personal account and see which classes they have completed on their degree plan, as well as which courses remain. In addition, Degree Works has a “what-if” function that enables students to run reports to determine their progress towards graduation if they were to change their major. In 2016, the college added Schedule Planner, an interactive tool for use with Degree Works that enables students to select courses they wish to complete in a semester. Schedule Planner provides them with schedule options by creating possibilities from the college schedule of classes. The implementation of these two products largely replaced the semester-by-semester academic advisor need by providing students with technology to make educated decisions regarding courses on their own. These updates provided the basis for a paradigm shift in which academic advising became an academic planning initiative to help students plan their education as well as tie academic planning to career planning.

Mandatory academic advising training was required of all full-time faculty and staff advisors during August of 2015. Training included a review of Degree Works and an overview of a new Nashville State student advising manual. Emphasis was placed on the need to use established advising sheets, which show a best case scenario of multi-semester plans for each program. Advising sheets provide students with a beginning point to create individualized degree plans so that students can see their academic trajectory from beginning to graduation.

In the summer of 2016, the college underwent a national search for a new Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs (AVPAA). The new position was created to oversee several areas, including directing the college's advising initiatives and procedures and implementing strategies supporting student persistence and graduation. Upon his hire in November 2016, the new AVPAA became a member of the QEP Steering Committee and began a college-wide review of academic advising at Nashville State. In January 2017, a faculty inservice was held during which full-time faculty and admissions staff brainstormed what was working and areas of improvement necessary in the Nashville State advising model. As a result of that meeting, a college-wide advising committee was formed that developed a three-phase plan of improvement. The plan involved creating an online "advising tool box" that provided academic advisors with all pertinent information about degree plans, possible careers, frequently asked questions, and critical information for all programs of study. Training on the "advising tool box" took place in August 2017 at all campuses.

In addition to the in-house focus on providing updated and accurate advising information, members of the advising committee received funding to support two professional development days for academic advisors wherein panel speakers would be brought to campus to speak and assist in breakout sessions on advising. The first Nashville State Advising Academy day will be held in January 2018 and will feature panel speakers from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). These first two professional development opportunities will be covered by a grant from the Tennessee Board of Regents. Additional professional development funding of \$15,000 per year is also allocated in the QEP budget (appendix pg. 67) for all five years of the project.

Nashville State is dedicated to improving the Academic Advising system as a result of the Academic Advising Taskforce recommendations from 2015. It is also a part of our focus on improving student success through the first year experience.

Career Planning

The mission of Nashville State is to provide a wide range of educational opportunities to citizens in the service area. To that end, Nashville State offers technical certificates, Associates of Applied Science degrees (A.A.S.), and Associates level degrees (A.A., AFA, A.S., AST). Technical certificates and A.A.S. degrees are designed to prepare graduates for the workforce, while Associates Degrees are primarily intended for transfer. The Office of Career Services offers career counseling, internship opportunities, employment listings, and help with resume reviews and mock interviews in an attempt to help students meet their career goals. The Career Services page on the Nashville State website provides students with access to career assessments and access to the College Central Network – a service that provides information about regional jobs, internship and co-op opportunities, and job placement skills.

Starting in the fall of 2016, the Director of Career Services began attending NSCC 1010: First Year Experiences classes to offer a short presentation to students about the resources available to them through the office. This practice increased the number of one-on-one student appointments that were scheduled with Career Services, which had largely been suggested to individual students during interactions with faculty prior to the course implementation. One of the opportunities presented to students during NSCC 1010 is cooperative education/internship (paid and non-paid) experience that is available to Nashville State students. Historically,

internship opportunities are underutilized because mechanisms to get information to students relied heavily on email and information provided during annual Career Days.

Activities of the Office of Career Services are largely limited by staffing. Prior to the summer of 2017, the Office was staffed by a Director, a secretary, and part-time labor. As a result of the college-wide QEP topic, the decision was made to hire a full-time Career Counselor who began in summer 2017. The Office of Career Services is working on developing a “Career Exploration” workshop series that will run at all campus sites at least two times each semester. The workshops will guide students through career exploration in the first event and then help develop employment skills, like resume writing and interview skills, towards the end of the semester. These workshops will be announced online, in NSCC 1010 classes, and via email and signage. The new career counselor is also working with faculty to develop assignments on career planning, such as a presentation project in Speech classes.

Nashville State is committed to increasing access to career counseling for students and will continue to improve access to career planning counseling by providing students with information and support during their first year experience and beyond.

Personal Growth

Drs. Denley and Knox (2016) data mined student data from tens of thousands of students in the State of Tennessee and developed a project to determine the role of non-cognitive factors in achievement and retention (20). They built on the work of others (Pascarella; Pascarella and Terenzini; Gutman and Schoon) to determine how ideas of academic mindset and a sense of belonging affected student success. Survey results from over 5000 students in Tennessee showed a correlation between improved academic success and students

feeling they were a part of a community, knowing they were provided with resources necessary to succeed, and determining classroom content to be valuable to their lives. Nashville State students were included in the survey, which gave the QEP Steering Committee particularly important insight into first year students.

Taking direction from literature, QEP Steering Committee faculty worked to develop writing assignments that would prompt students to reflect on how their educational experience fits in the context of their lives. The intent is to encourage students to see their academic pursuits as something that affects them at all times and helps them to grow. Likewise, assignments embedded in the NSCC 1010: First Year Experience course will require students to review class descriptions and describe how class content will help them reach their goals. It is the hope of the committee that student reflection on their experiences during their first year will help them stay on course and persist and graduate at a rate higher than if they had not been involved in the QEP.

Assessment

By the end of their first year at Nashville State, students will have had the opportunity to engage in five experiences designed to improve the likelihood of their academic success: new student orientation, a first year experience course, academic advising, career planning, and personal reflection. The QEP Steering Committee developed five student learning outcomes that express expectations of first year students as a result of these experiences (Table 5). The QEP Steering Committee also developed NSCC 1010: First Year Experience activities that promote each student learning outcome. The QEP implementation committee will monitor the effectiveness of these NSCC 1010 activities and first year experiences by analyzing appropriate

student success measures at the end of the first year. A description of the NSCC 1010 activities and student success measures we will use follows.

Table 5. Student learning outcomes with activities and success measures.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will -	Beginning of First Year NSCC 1010 Activities	End of First Year Success Measures
1. Create a personalized academic plan that includes college-level math, English composition, and 9 hours in the focus area in the first academic year.	NSCC 1010 Academic Plan Assignment (appendix pg. 53)	Degree Works percent degree progression at end of first year.
2. Describe connections between degree choice and ultimate career choice after an interest inventory (Kuder).	NSCC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (appendix pg. 57)	CCSSE* results and other benchmark indicators of success**
3. Differentiate resources available to students through Nashville State to support student success.	NSCC 1010 Understanding Resources Test (appendix pg. 60); NSCC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (appendix pg. 57)	CCSSE* results and other benchmark indicators of success**
4. Articulate connections between their courses and their ultimate academic goals.	NSCC 1010 Academic Plan Assignment (appendix pg. 53)	CCSSE* results and other benchmark indicators of success**
5. Reflect on their personal growth as a result of their education.	NSCC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (appendix pg. 57)	Reflection Assignment (appendix pg. 65) at the end of second term indicator course (appendix pg. 66)

* CCSSE is the Community College Survey of Student Engagement

** Benchmark indicators of success are described beginning on page 40.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Academic Plan

Creating an academic plan is the cornerstone outcome of our QEP. Student completion of an accurate, reasonable and efficient academic plan will benefit from new student orientation, a first year experience course, academic advising, career planning, and personal reflection. Since degree seeking, first-time students are required to take the NSCC 1010: First

Year Experience course as a graduation requirement, that class requires students complete the Academic Plan Assignment (appendix pg. 53). Students obtain an advising sheet for their major and degree. Then they compose a personalized plan that shows a semester by semester course schedule until graduation. Students are provided with guidelines and a rubric (appendix pg. 54) by which their plan is scored. Students must incorporate college level math, English composition, and nine hours in their focus area in the first year of the plan to receive a top score. Those students who earn low scores are provided help by NSCC 1010 faculty to build a solid academic plan.

Beginning fall 2018, final academic plans will be built into the student's Degree Works account. This way both students and academic advisors can easily access the plan. Until Nashville State's Degree Works program is updated to include this capability in spring 2018, students will complete the plan in a Word document that they will email to their advisor (appendix pg. 55).

The Academic Plan Assignment and the Career Goals and Reflection Assignment described in Student Learning Outcome 2 make up 50% of the NSCC 1010 grade to emphasize their importance to student success.

The QEP Implementation Committee will determine percent degree progression using Degree Works for first year students at the end of their first year. The committee will compare degree progression data for those students who successfully completed NSCC 1010 to other first year students in the same cohort. The committee expects NSCC 1010 completers will have a higher percent degree progression.

Not all first year students will take NSCC 1010. For example, the course is not required for returning students who already have earned college credit. To help students who are not in NSCC 1010 make academic plans, the Academic Plan Assignment will be used as a model for academic advisors and their advisees. All academic advisors will have access to the assignment and training on the use of the assignment as an advisor will begin in spring 2018 and continue in future inservices.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Career Connections

During NSCC 1010: First Year Experience, students take a Kuder Career Interests Assessment, and then write a reflection on the connections between their career goals and their Nashville State degree choice in the Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (appendix pgs. 57-58; See Reflection Question 1). This assignment is completed prior to the Academic Plan Assignment. Students are provided with guidelines and a rubric (appendix pg. 59) by which the assignment is scored. The QEP implementation committee will monitor multiple student success measures, including CCSSE survey results, to determine the effects of the students' descriptions of career and degree connections on their subsequent success (See Benchmark Indicators of Success beginning pg. 40).

Student Learning Outcome 3: Differentiating Resources

During NSCC 1010: First Year Experience, students are presented with information about resources available to them through Nashville State. A test is administered at the end of the course to determine if students learned to differentiate among available resources (appendix pg. 60). Analysis of these test scores by NSCC 1010 instructors will help these instructors improve the presentation of resource information in their classes. Students in this course also

reflect on the resources they will need to achieve their academic goals in the Career Goals and Reflection Assignment used in Student Learning Outcome 2 (appendix pg. 58; See Reflection Question 2). The QEP implementation committee will monitor multiple student success measures, including CCSSE survey results, to determine the effects of students differentiating resources on their subsequent success (See Benchmark Indicators of Success beginning pg. 40).

Student Learning Outcome 4: Coursework Connections

During NSCC 1010: First Year Experience, students complete the Academic Plan Assignment (See Student Learning Outcome 1), which asks students to reflect upon the value of each course in their plan towards achieving their ultimate academic goals (appendix pg. 53). This assignment has also been shared with academic advisors and career services staff, so that students outside of NSCC 1010 may be advised on the importance of a required course that may not seem directly related to their academic and career goals. Once Degree Works is updated to include the academic plan, students will record course value statements as “notes” attached to each course. Until then, students record the value statements in the Word document that contains their academic plan (appendix pg. 55). The QEP implementation committee will monitor multiple student success measures, including CCSSE survey results, to determine the effects of students articulating connections between courses and academic goals on their subsequent success (See Benchmark Indicators of Success beginning pg. 40).

Student Learning Outcome 5: Personal Reflection

During NSCC 1010: First Year Experience, students complete a Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (See Student Learning Outcomes 2 & 3) that asks students to reflect upon the effect their experiences at Nashville State will have on their personal growth

(appendix pg. 58; See Reflection Question 3). Student answers to this initial reflection question will be collected by the QEP Implementation Committee and assessed on a four point scale (appendix pg. 64) so they may serve as a basis for comparison to a final reflection written at the end of the first year. The final reflection will be completed at the end of a second term course and assessed by the QEP Implementation Committee using the same four point scale (appendix pg. 65). Second term courses frequently taken by our first year students were selected by faculty (appendix pg. 66). These students will be asked to reflect on their academic plans and personal growth at the end of their first year (appendix pg. 65). The committee will monitor and compare the initial and final reflection scores with the expectation final scores will be higher than initial scores

Faculty and Staff Training

The NSCC 1010 activities described above have been piloted and revised since the summer of 2017. NSCC 1010 faculty training has occurred at the beginning of each term since the course began in fall 2016. Training for all full-time faculty and staff on QEP related topics, took place in August 2017. Training will continue as needed in future inservices.

Baseline Data

In order to monitor the success of Nashville State's QEP over time, baseline data were generated for several student success measures, including CCSSE values, student persistence, retention rates, and graduation rates. Baseline data were used to determine benchmark indicators of success over the time of QEP implementation.

Nashville State Community College conducted the CCSSE survey in the spring term of 2017. Baseline CCSSE scores (unweighted) from 2017 for areas that will be affected by the full QEP implementation are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Nashville State baseline unweighted CCSSE results by student breakout group in 2017.

Data Point	Breakout Group	(Baseline) 2017 Score
Active and Collaborative Learning	Part-time	44.0
	Full-time	52.1
Student Effort	Part-time	45.0
	Full-time	58.0
Student-Faculty Interaction	Part-time	46.0
	Full-time	53.8
Support for Learners	Part-time	40.8
	Full-time	52.5

Several additional student success measures were monitored for four years prior to fall 2017 to determine baseline data prior to QEP implementation (Tables 7 – 12). The student success measure data were combined to create the baseline data points indicated in Table 13.

Table 7. Fall to spring retention rate for first-time freshmen for previous four years.

Start Term	Total	Return Spring	Percent of Total
Fall 2013	1508	1167	77.4%
Fall 2014	1643	1308	79.6%
Fall 2015	2101	1580	75.2%
Fall 2016	*	*	*

*Data point is not yet available from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC).

Table 8. Fall to fall retention rate for first-time freshmen for previous four years.

Start Term	Total	Return Fall	Percent of Total
Fall 2013	1508	716	47.5%
Fall 2014	1643	786	47.8%
Fall 2015	2101	866	41.2%
Fall 2016	*	*	*

*Data point is not yet available from the THEC.

Table 9. Average GPA for first-time freshmen for previous four years.

Academic Year	Average GPA after 1 st Year
2013-2014	2.561
2014-2015	2.428
2015-2016	2.254
2016-2017	2.127

Table 10. Persistence markers for first-time freshmen for previous four years during fall and spring terms.

Academic Year	Total	12 or More Credits	Percent 12+	24 or More Credits	Percent 24+	36 or More Credits	Percent 36+
2013-2014	1507*	812	53.9%	240	15.9%	2	0.13%
2014-2015	1639*	949	57.9%	291	17.8%	5	0.31%
2015-2016	2099*	1276	60.8%	555	26.4%	2	0.1%
2016-2017	1851	1063	57.4%	484	26.15%	4	0.22%

*Students who did not complete any credit hours do not appear on this report, which explains the student number difference on this chart and the retention charts above.

Table 11. Earned vs. attempted credits for first-time freshmen for previous four years.

Academic Year	Earned Credits	Attempted Credits	Percent of Credits Earned
2013-2014	18567	27744	66.9%
2014-2015	21168	32159	65.8%
2015-2016	29927	44679	67.0%
2016-2017	26180	39865	65.7%

Table 12. 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshmen for last four cohort years.

Cohort Year	6-Year Cycle Graduation Year	Graduation Rate
2008	2014	16.3%
2009	2015	22.5%
2010	2016	23.2%
2011	2017	*

*Data point is not yet available from the THEC.

Table 13. Student success measure data (Tables 7 – 12) were combined to create the baseline data points indicated below.

Data Point	(Baseline) Average for Previous Years
Fall to Spring Retention	77.2%
Fall to Fall Retention	45.1%
GPA	2.32
Percent Students Earning 12 Credits in First Year	57.8%
Percent Students Earning 24 Credits in First Year	22.1%
Percent Students Earning 36 Credits in First Year	0.18%
Percent Credits Earned vs. Attempted in First Year	66.4%
6-Year Graduation Rate	21.0%

Benchmark Indicators of Success

The mission of Nashville State is to prepare students in the community for the workforce or for transfer to another institution of higher learning. In support of the mission, the first year experience at Nashville State aims to increase student persistence, performance, and rate of graduation.

Baseline indicators in those measurements of student success were calculated using recent data as described above (Tables 6 & 13). Then baseline values were used to generate benchmark indicators of success for the duration of the project (Tables 14 & 15).

CCSSE benchmarks were scaled to hit average cohort college scores (as presented in 2017) by year two and then to supersede those scores in the remaining years of QEP implementation (Table 14). The one exception is in full-time student scores for student effort, for which Nashville State outperformed the cohort score in 2017. That value is simply set to increase by one point each year.

Table 14. Benchmarks for student success for CCSSE data during the five year QEP.

Data Points	Breakout Group	Baseline 2017 Score	After QEP Year 1 2018-19	After QEP Year 2 2019-20	After QEP Year 3 2020-21	After QEP Year 4 2021-22	After QEP Year 5 2022-23
Active and Collaborative Learning	Part-time	44.0	45.3	46.5	47.5	48.5	49.5
	Full-time	52.1	54.0	55.8	56.8	57.8	58.8
Student Effort	Part-time	45.0	45.8	46.6	47.6	48.6	49.6
	Full-time	58.0	59.0	60.0	61.0	62.0	63.0
Student-Faculty Interaction	Part-time	46.0	46.7	47.4	48.4	49.4	50.4
	Full-time	53.8	54.7	55.6	56.6	57.6	58.6
Support for Learners	Part-time	40.8	44.6	48.3	49.3	50.3	51.3
	Full-time	52.5	53.0	53.5	54.5	55.5	56.5

Benchmarks of success for the other student success measures were determined using incremental increases over time to move performance in line with those values representing the 90th percentile institutions in the 2016 National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) report (Table 15). An incremental increase of 1.5% per year was used in those categories for which NCCBP data were unavailable.

Student success measure data will be collected at the end of each academic year for our first year students, beginning in 2018-19. The Nashville State Community believes that the result of our QEP on improving student success through the first year experience will improve these student success measures as we reach the benchmarks each year of our QEP.

Table 15. Benchmarks for student success measures of the five year QEP.

Data Point	Baseline Average for Previous Years	After QEP Year 1 2018-19	After QEP Year 2 2019-20	After QEP Year 3 2020-21	After QEP Year 4 2021-22	After QEP Year 5 2022-23
Fall to Spring Retention	77.2%	77.3%	77.4%	77.5%	77.6%	77.75%*
Fall to Fall Retention	45.1%	47.85%	50.6%	53.4%	56.1%	56.21%*
GPA	2.32	2.54	2.75	2.85	3.02	3.18*
% Students Earning 12 Credits in First Year	57.8%	59.3%	60.8%	62.3%	63.8%	65.3%**
% Students Earning 24 Credits in First Year	22.1%	23.6%	25.1%	26.6%	28.1%	29.6%**
% Students Earning 36 Credits in First Year	0.18%	1.68%	3.18%	4.68%	6.18%	7.68%**
% Credits Earned vs. Attempted in First Year	66.4%	68.8%	71.1%	73%	74.2%	75.82%*
6-Year Graduation Rate	21.0%	N/A	23.4%	26.5%	29.3%	32.0%*

*Values taken from 90th percentile institution from the NCCBP 2016 report. 6-year graduation rate is between the reported 90th percentile vales for full-time and part-time students.

**Values after year five represent an incremental increase of 1.5% per year.

Budget and Marketing

The QEP Steering Committee was responsible for both the creation of a five-year budget and the marketing of the QEP. The budget was approved by Nashville State’s President in March 2017 and includes over \$100,000 of support for the project per year (appendix pg. 67). Marketing, QEP Implementation Faculty Lead Salary, and professional development funds constitute over 50% of annual expenditures of the QEP budget.

Marketing the plan to the college community required more than the QEP Steering Committee. Each satellite campus Director nominated a faculty and staff QEP liaison who would serve as the main contacts for QEP on their campus. Campus liaisons began calling into steering committee meetings in summer 2017 and were involved in satellite campus meetings of faculty and staff that took place to review the QEP in April 2017 as plans developed. College-wide

presentations were made in August 2016, January 2017, and August 2017 to educate college employees on the particulars of the plan using early marketing materials. Faculty training and staff training sessions were held on all campus locations in August 2017 so that all Nashville State employees would be aware of the particulars of the plan and how they could help increase student success through the first year experience. Faculty trainings were attended by 142 full- time faculty, and 125 staff attended one of seven training sessions.

Two QEP logos were developed as marketing material; one by a faculty member and the other through a student logo contest. A flier was developed to explain the plan to incoming students at new student orientations, and copies were distributed to all campuses. All New Student Orientations included a review of the QEP beginning in summer 2017 so that incoming students were aware of the plan from their first time on campus. Particulars of the plan are reinforced to students in classrooms, particularly the NSCC 1010: First Year Experience course, as well as through meetings with academic advisors and student services staff. Posters, bookmarks, and yard signs were placed at all campus locations in preparation for the fall 2017 term.

A dedicated website was created in summer 2017 as a link to the Nashville State home page, and it can be accessed at ww2.nsc.edu/QEP. The website provides information for the entire campus community on the plan, explains how to get involved, and provides testimonials from students who have participated in each of the five first year experiences. Students were all emailed a link to the website in August 2017 to inform them of where to find more information on the plan, and links to the QEP page were posted in all D2L shells beginning fall 2017.

QEP PHASE THREE: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Upon receiving feedback from the On-Site Committee of SACSCOC in November 2017, Nashville State's QEP will shift into the Implementation Phase, although data collection will begin in fall 2017. The third phase of the project will be led by a faculty member (appendix pg. 68) beginning in spring 2018. A request for applications for the position was made in August 2017, and the QEP Steering Committee made a recommendation to the Vice President in September. Dr. Jessica Rabb accepted the position as faculty lead and will lead a committee of faculty, staff, and students through the five year plan.

The QEP Implementation Committee, to be formed by the Faculty QEP Lead during spring 2018, will include representatives of faculty, staff, and students at each campus. One branch of the committee will work to support and connect the five experiences of the QEP: new student orientation, the first year experience course, academic advising, career planning, and personal reflection.

A second branch of the committee will collect and analyze assessment data. This subcommittee will determine percent degree progression in Degree Works for our first year students as described in Student Learning Outcome 1. This subcommittee will assess first year student reflections as described in Student Learning Outcome 5. This subcommittee will also collect and analyze the student success measure data as described in Benchmark Indicators of Success.

Bi-annual meetings of the whole QEP Implementation Committee will involve an intentional review of data to determine if a change to the QEP is warranted. Improvement plans will be created if percent degree progression, reflection scores, or student success

measure data do not meet expectations. This process will be carefully documented and will be reviewed by an ad hoc committee convened by the Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before fundamental improvements to the plan are approved. An annual report will be submitted by the QEP Implementation Committee to the Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and the Associate Vice President for Institutional Research for review beginning in 2018 until the completion of the plan. Updates will be provided to the College as a whole through email. The QEP Implementation Committee will also be responsible for generating the QEP Impact Report that will be submitted to SACSCOC in 2023.

The mission of Nashville State Community College is to provide comprehensive educational programs and partnerships, exemplary services, an accessible, progressive learning environment, and responsible leadership to the community it serves in order to improve the quality of life for all of the stakeholders. The college community worked together to select a topic for our current QEP and there is wide-spread support for plan implementation. Nashville State will improve student success through the first year experience for new students as a result of the implementation of this plan.

LITERATURE CITED

- Bailey, Thomas R., Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins. *Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success*. Cambridge: Harvard, 2015. Print.
- Barbatis, Peter. "Underprepared, Ethnically Diverse Community College Students: Factors Contributing to Persistence." *Journal of Developmental Education* 33.3 (2010): 16+. Print.
- Barry, Mary Nguyen, and Michael Dannenberg. *Out of Pocket: The High Cost of Inadequate High Schools and High School Student Achievement on College Affordability*. Rep. Education Reform Now, 6 Apr. 2016. Web. 7 Apr. 2016.
- Bers, T., & Younger, D. (2014). The First-Year Experience in Community Colleges. *New Directions For Institutional Research*, 2013(160), 77-93.
- Bickerstaff, Susan, Melissa Barragan, and Zawadi Rucks-Ahidiana. (2012). "I Came in Unsure of Everything: Community College Students' Shifts in Confidence." CCRC Working Paper No. 48. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, *Community College Research Center*.
- Braunstein, Andrew W., Mary H. Lesser, and Donn R. Pescatrice. "The Impact of a Program for the Disadvantaged on Student Retention." *College Student Journal* 42.1 (2008): 3640. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 12 Feb. 2016.
- Braxton, John M., Jeffrey F. Milem, and Anna Shaw Sullivan. "The Influence of Active Learning on the College Student Departure Process: Toward a Revision of Tinto's Theory." *The Journal of Higher Education* 71.5 (2000): 569. *JSTOR*. Web. 26 Apr. 2016.
- Burns, Kimberly. "Community College Student Success Variables: A Review of the Literature." *Community College Enterprise* 16.2 (2010): 33-61. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 10 Mar. 2016.
- Cho, Sung-Woo, and Melinda Mechur Karp. "Student Success Courses In The Community College: Early Enrollment And Educational Outcomes." *Community College Review* 41.1 (2013): 86-103. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 14 Mar. 2016.
- Choi, Namok. "Self-efficacy and Self-concept as Predictors of College Students' Academic Performance." *Psychology in the Schools* 42.2 (2005): 197-205. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 12 Feb. 2016.

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2015. Rep. ACT, 20 Aug. 2015. Web. 1 Apr. 2016.

Cornell, R., & Mosley, M. L. (2006). Intertwining College with Real Life: The Community College First-Year Experience. *Peer Review*, 8(3), 23-25.

Cruce, Ty M., Gregory C. Wolniak, Tricia A. Seifert, and Ernest T. Pascarella. "Impacts of Good Practices on Cognitive Development, Learning Orientations, and Graduate Degree Plans During the First Year of College." *Journal of College Student Development* 47.4 (2006): 365-83. *Project MUSE [Johns Hopkins UP]*. Web. 26 Apr. 2016.

Cuseo, Joe. "The Empirical Case for the Positive Impact of the First-Year Seminar Research on Student Outcomes." *Completion Matters*. Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, 24 Sept. 2010. Web. 12 Feb. 2016.
<<http://www.completionmatters.org/resource/cuseo-collection-papers-dr-joseph-cuseo>>.

Daugherty, Timothy K., and Eric J. Lane. "A Longitudinal Study of Academic and Social Predictors of College Attrition." *Social Behavior and Personality* 27.4 (1999): 355-62. Print.

Denley, Tristan, and Pamela Knox. "Building Student Success with a Co-Requisite Remediation Model and Mindset Know-How." *Tennessee Board of Regents Technical Brief*. No. 5. December 2016.

Duckworth, Angela L., et al. "Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 6, June 2007, pp. 1087-1101. EBSCOhost. Web. 9 Aug. 2017.

Farlowe, Art. "FYE Course as an Advising Tool." *FYE Course an Advising Tool*. NACADA, 2006. Web. 09 May 2016.

Fike, D. S., and R. Fike. "Predictors of First-Year Student Retention in the Community College." *Community College Review* 36.2 (2008): 68-88. *Sage Publications*. Sage Publications, 2011. Web. 11 Apr. 2016.

Fralick, Marsha A. "College Success: A Study of Positive and Negative Attrition." *Community College Review* 20 no. 5 (Spring93 1993): 29 *Academic Search Premier*, EBSCOhost Web. 9 Aug. 2017.

- Fusch, Daniel. "Missed Opportunities in First-Year Seminars | Academic Impressions." *Academic Impressions*. Academic Impressions, 6 July 2012. Web. 10 May 2016.
- Gurantz, Oded. "Who Loses Out?: Registration Order, Course Availability, and Student Behaviors in Community College." *The Journal of Higher Education* 86.4 (2015): 524-63. *Academic Search Premier [EBSCO]*. Web. 11 Mar. 2016.
- Gutman, L. M., and Schoon, I. "The Impact of Non-Cognitive Skills on Outcomes for Young People." Literature Review, 21. London, UK: Institute of Education, University of London. November 2013.
- Habley, Wesley R., and Randy McClanahan. "What Works in Student Retention? Four-Year Public Colleges." *ACT, Inc.* (2004).
- Hausmann, Leslie R. M., Janet Ward Schofield, and Rochelle L. Woods. "Sense of Belonging as a Predictor of Intentions to Persist Among African American and White First-Year College Students." *Research in Higher Education Res High Educ* 48.7 (2007): 803-39. Print.
- Jacobs, Jeff, and Tim Archie. "Investigating Sense of Community in First-Year College Students." *Journal of Experiential Education* 30.3 (2008): 282-85. *Academic Search Premier [EBSCO]*. Web. 28 Mar. 2016.
- Jamelske, Eric. "Measuring the Impact of a University First-Year Experience Program on Student GPA and Retention." *Higher Education* 57.3 (2009): 373-91. *JSTOR*. Web. 04 Apr. 2016.
- Karp, M. M. (2011). Toward a new understanding of non-academic student support: Four mechanisms encouraging positive student outcomes in the community college (CCRC Working Paper No. 28). New York, NY: Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. *Community College Research Center*.
- Karp, M. M., Bickerstaff, S., Rucks-Ahidiana, Z., Bork, R. H., Barragan, M., & Edgecombe, N. (2012). College 101 courses for applied learning and student success (CCRC Working Paper No. 49). New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, *Community College Research Center*
- Karp, M. M., & Bork, R. H. (2012). "They never told me what to expect, so I didn't know what to do": Defining and clarifying the role of a community college student. (CCRC Working Paper No. 47). New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, *Community College Research Center*.

- Karp, Melinda Mechur and Georgia West Stacey (2013). Student success courses for sustained impact: Research Overview. *Community College Research Center*, 1-8.
- Kuh, George D., Ty M. Cruce, Rick Shoup, Jillian Kinzie, and Robert M. Gonyea. "Unmasking the Effects of Student Engagement on First-Year College Grades and Persistence." *The Journal of Higher Education* 79.5 (2008): 540-63. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.
- Kuh, George D., Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh, and Elizabeth J. Whitt. *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2005. Print.
- Laskey, Marcia L., and Carole J. Hetzel. "Investigating Factors Related to Retention of At-risk College Students." *The Learning Assistance Review* 16.1 (2011): 31-43. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 7 Apr. 2016.
- Longwell-Grice, Rob, and Hope Longwell-Grice. "Testing Tinto: How Do Retention Theories Work for First-Generation, Working-Class Students?" *J. College Student Retention* 9.4 (2007): 407-20. Print.
- McKinney, Lyle, and Heather Novak. "The Relationship Between FAFSA Filing and Persistence Among First-Year Community College Students." *Community College Review* 41.1 (2012): 63-85. *Academic Search Premier [EBSCO]*. Web. 5 Apr. 2016.
- Mayo, T. (2013). First-Year Course Requirements and Retention for Community Colleges. *Community College Journal Of Research & Practice*, 37(10), 764-768.
- Noel-Levitz. (2014). Changes in freshman attitudes following a semester of classes and interventions. Coralville, Iowa: Author. Retrieved from: www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport.
- Nutt, Charlie. "Advising and Student Retention Article." *Advising and Retention*. NACADA, 2003. Web. 09 May 2016.
- O'Gara, L., Karp, M. M., & Hughes, K. L. (2008). Student success courses in the community college: An exploratory study of student perspectives. *Community College Review*, 36, 195-218.
- O'Keeffe, Patrick. "A Sense of Belonging: Improving Student Retention." *College Student Journal* 47.4 (2013): 605-13. *Academic OneFile [Gale]*. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

- Padgett, Ryan D., Jennifer R. Keup, and Ernest T. Pascarella. "The Impact of First-Year Seminars on College Students' Life-long Learning Orientations." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 50.2 (2013): 133-51. *Wesleyan University*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016. <https://www.wesleyan.edu/reslife/faculty-academic-partners/The_Impact_of_FirstYearSeminars.pdf>.
- Pascarella, Ernest T. "How College Affects students: Ten Directions to Future Research." *Journal of College Student Development*. (2016): 508-520.
- Pascarella, Ernest T., and Patrick T. Terenzini. *How College Affects Students: Volume 2: A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005. Print.
- Pascarella, Ernest T., Patrick T. Terenzini, and Lee M. Wolfle. "Orientation to college and freshman year persistence/withdrawal decisions." *The Journal of Higher Education* 57.2 (1986): 155-175.
- Porter, Stephen R., and Randy L. Swing. "Understanding How First-year Seminars Affect Persistence." *Research in Higher Education* 47.1 (2006): 89-109. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.
- Prentice, M., & Robinson, G. (2010). Improving student learning outcomes with service-learning. *American Association of Community Colleges*.
- Reason, Robert D., Patrick T. Terenzini, and Robert J. Domingo. "First Things First: Developing Academic Competence in the First Year of College." *Research in Higher Education* 47.2 (2006): 149-75. *JSTOR [JSTOR]*. Web. 28 Mar. 2016.
- Roberts, Jalynn, and Robert Styron. "Student Satisfaction and Persistence: Factors Vital to Students." *Research in Higher Education Journal* 6 (2009): 1-18. Academic and Research Institute. Web. 16 Feb. 2016. <<http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/09321.pdf>>.
- Sanchez, Irene M. "Motivating and Maximizing Learning in Minority Classrooms." *New Directions for Community Colleges* 2000.112 (2000): 35-44. Print.
- Soria, Krista M., and Michael J. Stebleton. "First-generation Students' Academic Engagement and Retention." *Teaching in Higher Education* 17.6 (2012): 673-85. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 29 Feb. 2016.
- Tinto, Vincent. "Taking Student Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of College." (n.d.): n. pag. Web. 16 Feb. 2016. <http://nhcuc.org/pdfs/Taking_Student_Retention_Seriously.pdf>.

- Trotter, Eileen, and Carole A. Roberts. "Enhancing the Early Student Experience." *Higher Education Research & Development* 25.4 (2006): 371-86. Print.
- Turner, Patrick, and Elizabeth Thompson. "College Retention Initiatives Meeting the Needs of Millennial Freshman Students." *College Student Journal* 48.1 (2014): 94-104. *Academic Search Premier [EBSCO]*. Web. 16 Feb. 2016.
- Umbach, Paul D., and Matthew R. Wawrzynski. "Faculty Do Matter: The Role of College Faculty in Student Learning and Engagement." *Research in Higher Education Res High Educ* 46.2 (2005): 153-84. Print.
- Upcraft, M. Lee, John N. Gardner, and Betsy O. Barefoot & Associates. "Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student." San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005. Print.
- Wood, Jonathan L., Christopher B. Newman, and Frank Harris, III. "Self-Efficacy as a Determinant of Academic Integration: An Examination of First-Year Black Males in Community College." *The Western Journal of Black Studies* 39.1 (2015): 3-17. *Academic OneFile [Gale]*. Web. 12 Apr. 2016.

APPENDICES TABLE OF CONTENTS

NSSC 1010 Academic Plan Assignment	53
NSSC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment	57
NSSC 1010 Understanding Resources Test	60
NSSC 1010 Initial Reflection	64
Second Term Course Final Reflection	65
Second Term Courses	66
QEP Budget	67
QEP Lead Faculty Job Description.....	68

NSSC 1010 Academic Plan Assignment

This assignment consists of two parts. Both parts should be submitted to the “Academic Plan” assignment dropbox.

Part 1: Standard Advising Sheet

Submit an electronic copy of the standard advising sheet for your current degree at Nashville State or the one that will be your current degree once you complete a “Change of Major Form.” There are two ways you may submit the standard advising sheet.

- Option 1: This option is best for Tennessee Transfer Pathway (TTP) degrees. Go to Degree Works via myNSSC. The worksheet tab shows the classes you need to take. If you plan to change your degree, select the “What if” option and select the appropriate degree. Once the worksheet tab shows the courses for your intended degree, click the “Save as PDF” button near the top of the page. Upload this PDF to the assignment dropbox.
- Option 2: This option is best for University Parallel degrees and AAS degrees because they contain important information you may not see in Degree Works. Go to the “Academics” page on the NSSC website (www.nssc.edu). Then go to “Degrees & Certificates.” Select the appropriate degree. Then select “Advising Sheets.” Select the appropriate advising sheet. Save an electronic copy of the document and upload to the assignment dropbox.
- You may also complete both options. It does not hurt to have as much information as possible, so you can make informed choices.

Part 2: Personalized Advising Sheet

Using the advising sheet(s) from Part 1 as your guide, you will make your own personalized academic plan. Open and complete the attached “Personalized Advising Sheet.” Please carefully read the guidelines below.

- Arrange the courses for your degree at a pace that works for you until you can finish your degree and graduate.
- Include learning support classes, if appropriate.
- Include pre-requisite classes, if appropriate (this is especially likely for Math classes required in your degree).
- Complete required college-level math classes in your first year or take math each semester until you finish.
- Complete required English composition classes in your first year.
- Complete 9 credits (usually 3 courses) in your focus area in your first year.
- **Next to the name of each course in the plan, write a statement that describes how the course will help you achieve your academic goals. Two sample statements for common courses are included in the Personalized Academic Plan.**

Academic Plan Rubric

The plan will be graded according to following rubric. Once the plan has been graded and considered satisfactory by your instructor, you will need to email the plan to your advisor and cc your NSCC 1010 instructor as evidence you did so. This email will count as a separate grade.

Category	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Submission of Standard Advising Sheet	A Standard Advising Sheet submitted that served as a guide for the Personalized Advising Sheet.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Standard Advising Sheet Submitted or the wrong Standard Advising Sheet Submitted.
Personalized Advising Sheet Courses	The courses listed in the Personalized Advising Sheet are a reasonable completion of the Standard Advising Sheet with learning support classes and pre-requisites when appropriate.	75-99% of the appropriate courses are listed.	50-74% of the appropriate courses are listed.	Fewer than 50% of the appropriate courses are listed.	No Personalized Advising Sheet Submitted.
Personalized plan includes college-level math, English composition, and 9 hours in the focus area in the first academic year.	Personalized Advising Sheet includes college-level math, English composition, and 9-hours in the focus area in the first academic year.	Personalized Advising Sheet includes two of the three goals in the first year (math, English and/or 9-hours in focus area).	Personalized Advising Sheet includes one of the three goals in the first year (math, English and/or 9-hours in focus area).	Personalized Advising Sheet has one or two courses in the focus area in the first year, but no college-level math or English composition.	Personalized Advising Sheet reaches none of the goals or no Personal Advising Sheet submitted.
Personalized Advising Sheet articulates connections between courses and academic goals.	All course value comments on the Personalized Advising Sheet articulate connections between the course and academic goals.	75-99% of course value comments on the Personalized Advising Sheet articulate connections between the course and academic goals.	50-74% of course value comments on the Personalized Advising Sheet articulate connections between the course and academic goals.	Fewer than 50% of course value comments on the Personalized Advising Sheet articulate connections between the course and academic goals.	No course value comments or no Personalized Advising Sheet submitted.
Mechanics of Plan	No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.	Few spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.	Many spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.	Way too many spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.	No Personalized Advising Sheet Submitted.

Personalized Advising Sheet

Name:

Major (and Concentration if appropriate) and Degree:

My Advisor:

My Advisor's Contact Information (phone number, email address, office):

Semester I Expect to Graduate:

Semester I Will Need to Apply for Graduation:

Semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) and Year:

Course Number and Name	Value to Goals Statement
NSCC 1010 First Year Experience	This course will help set me up for success by teaching me resources available to me during my education at Nashville State.
ENGL 1010 English Comp 1	This course will help me present ideas clearly in writing which will improve my ability to communicate effectively.

Semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) and Year:

Course Number and Name	Value to Goals Statement

Semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) and Year:

Course Number and Name	Value to Goals Statement

Semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) and Year:

Course Number and Name	Value to Goals Statement

Semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) and Year:

Course Number and Name	Value to Goals Statement

Add or delete semesters as appropriate for your Personalized Advising Sheet.

NSCC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment

This assignment consists of two parts. Both parts should be submitted to the “Career Interests and Reflection” assignment dropbox.

Part 1: Kuder Career Interests Assessment

- Go to Kuder® Journey at <http://www.kuderjourney.com>
- Select ‘New Users’ from the login area to begin the registration process.
- Select ‘Student’ and choose your grade level from the drop down menu. Or, select ‘Adult’ and choose your user type from the drop down menu.
- Click ‘Continue’ to create your account.
- During the process you will need to create a unique user name and password.
- You will also be asked to enter your ‘Activation Code’ that was provided by your school or agency. Our activation code is **J4264327KSJ**
- Be sure to check the box next to "I have read and agree to the terms and conditions of use" after reading this information.
- Click ‘Register’ to complete the process.
- You only need to do and submit the results of the Kuder Career Interests Assessment. It should take about 9 minutes.
- You are welcome to do the other assessments. The results of the Kuder Career Interests Assessment will provide you career pathway ideas given your interests. However, you may want to also know career pathway ideas given your skills and values. Taking the assessments below can show you ways the results overlap.
 - Kuder Skills Confidence Assessment
 - Kuder Work Values Assessment
- Submit the results that show your top five career pathways based on the Kuder Career Interests Assessment to the assignment dropbox. You may submit the results by submitting a screen shot, a photograph, a pdf, or a word document that includes the results.
- The results are meant to provide you with ideas. The results are not meant to determine your career. That is up to you.

Part 2: Reflection

For this reflection, you will write a one paragraph response for **each** of the following questions, for a total of three paragraphs. Each paragraph should be approximately 100 words in length, with the total word count for all three paragraphs between 300-450 words.

1. What are your career goals and how will those goals affect your degree choice at Nashville State?
2. What additional skills and resources do you think you will need to successfully complete your degree at Nashville State?
3. How will your experiences at Nashville State help you grow as a person?

Part 2 Tips

Be sure to start each paragraph with a strong topic sentence based off the question. For example, for paragraph 1, my topic sentence could look something like this:

I want to be a nurse, and so I am currently a health sciences major at Nashville State.

Then, be sure to give specific examples and analyze those examples to support your points. For example, with the above topic sentence, I could write:

I want to be a nurse because helping people is my primary goal. However, my Kuder Career Interests results suggested career pathways in science and computer technology. I have always been interested in science and computers, but I would rather my job involve helping people feel better. I think my interest in science and computers will help me succeed in the classes I need to take as a health sciences major. There are important science and math pre-requisites for nursing school. The health sciences degree will allow me to take the pre-requisites, and then I can apply to nursing school.

Career Goals and Reflection Rubric

Category	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Submission of Kuder Career Interests Assessment Results	Kuder Results Submitted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Kuder Results Submitted.
Reflection Answer to Question 1: What are your career goals and how will those goals affect your degree choice at Nashville State?	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, and does answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, but does still answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, but does not answer question clearly or completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, and does not answer question clearly or completely.	No answer submitted to this question.
Reflection Answer to Question 2: What additional skills and resources do you think you will need to successfully complete your degree at Nashville State?	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, and does answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, but does still answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, but does not answer question clearly or completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, and does not answer question clearly or completely.	No answer submitted to this question.
Reflection Answer to Question 3: How will your experiences at Nashville State help you grow as a person?	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, and does answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, but does still answer question clearly and completely.	Answer is approximately 100 words or more, but does not answer question clearly or completely.	Answer is less than 100 words, and does not answer question clearly or completely.	No answer submitted to this question.
Mechanics of Plan	No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors	Few spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors	Many spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors	Way too many spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors	No written answers submitted.

NSCC 1010 Understanding Resources Test

Answers in bold

1. Students with disabilities must go through the Access Center to receive:
 - a. **Academic accommodations**
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Course assignment waivers
 - d. There is no Access Center at NSCC

2. NSCC Testing Services are available:
 - a. On the Main campus only
 - b. On the Main and Southeast campuses only
 - c. **At all NSCC campuses**
 - d. On Main, Southeast, and Clarksville campuses only

3. The student policy handbook directs students with grievances or concerns to contact:
 - a. The president of the college
 - b. The registrar
 - c. His/her parents
 - d. **The dean of students**

4. Which type of financial aid must be paid back?
 - a. Pell grant
 - b. Work-study salary
 - c. **Student loans**
 - d. Academic scholarships

5. Which of the following is services can I get from Career Services?
 - a. Locating jobs and internships
 - b. Locating work-study jobs on campus
 - c. Resume writing and interviewing tips and techniques
 - d. **a and c**

6. To design your long-term graduation plan you will need to do the following.
 - a. Understand the core curriculum requirements and the requirements for your chosen field of study
 - b. Know all the courses that are offered in your college system
 - c. Visit with your advisor
 - d. **All of the above.**

7. Free tutors are available to NSCC students:
 - a. Online
 - b. In their campus Learning Center
 - c. Free tutors aren't available to NSCC students
 - d. **Both online and in their campus Learning Center**

8. Your advisor is your **best** resource for help with what?
 - a. **Choosing the right classes for registration in order to graduate in a timely manner**
 - b. Sorting out financial aid issues
 - c. Applying for internships
 - d. None of the above

9. You've decided to change your major. What's the best first course of action?
 - a. Download the "Change of Major" form and turn it into Records
 - b. **Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss your academic plans.**
 - c. It is not a good course of action to change your major.
 - d. Go to admissions and ask for a new advisor.

10. You need to pay a fee. Where do you go?
 - a. Records
 - b. Financial Aid
 - c. **The Bursar or myNSCC student account**
 - d. The Bursar or Financial Aid

11. It's Saturday night and you realize you have a small research project due on Monday. The project requires you to use the Mayfield Library. The library is closed until Monday morning. What's the best course of action?
 - a. Ask your instructor for an extension.
 - b. **The library's online resources are available 24/7. Get to work!**
 - c. Show up early Monday and write it before class starts.
 - d. Take a zero on that assignment but check your syllabus carefully to avoid such problems in the future.

12. Where can you find when and which employers and transfer universities are visiting NSCC campuses?
 - a. **On the campus monitors and Career Services webpage**
 - b. On the Career Services webpage and the student handbook
 - c. In the student handbook and the college catalog
 - d. Only in the college catalog

13. Nashville State has the following types of student organizations EXCEPT:
- a. Honor societies
 - b. Career-focused student organizations
 - c. Special internet organizations
 - d. Sports Teams**
14. How do I get a copy of the student policy handbook?
- a. At New Student Orientation
 - b. In NSCC 1010 class
 - c. On the college website**
 - d. The college doesn't have a student policy handbook.
15. What services are available in the Learning Resource Center?
- a. Tutoring and Printing**
 - b. Proofreading
 - c. Financial Aid information
 - d. Records Information
16. What information can I find on myNSCC?
- a. Is there a hold on my account and do I owe money?
 - b. Where do I park?
 - c. How much do I have to pay for books this semester?
 - d. Has my financial aid been processed and who is my advisor?
 - e. a and d only**
17. Where should I check for important information?
- a. myNSCC email
 - b. D2L email
 - c. Campus monitors
 - d. All of the above**
 - e. None of the above – nothing important ever happens in college
18. Advising sheets are available on the college website for every program
- a. True**
 - b. False

19. Where can I find out who my academic advisor is?
- College catalog
 - myNSCC
 - Degree Works
 - Student Handbook
 - b and c**
20. To take a test in the testing center, students need:
- To register online and take a photo ID to the Testing Center.
 - To arrive at least 10 minutes before the center closes and have a photo ID.
 - To know the password.
 - To know the class title and section for which they will test.**
21. Degree Works is designed to:
- Update you on your progress toward degree completion and provide you with a list of courses needed to complete your degree.
 - Register you for your classes.
 - Help you see how changing your major will impact your graduation timeline.
 - a and c**
22. To reset your myNSCC password, contact:
- The library
 - Your advisor
 - The Computer Help Desk**
 - The Office of Admissions

NSCC 1010 Initial Reflection

Initial Reflection Question

This is Question 3 from the NSCC 1010 Career Goals and Reflection Assignment (appendix pg. 58).

3. How will your experiences at Nashville State help you grow as a person?

Answers to the above question will be collected by the QEP Implementation Committee from NSCC 1010 instructors and then assessed with the following rubric.

Initial Reflection Rubric

Category	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Reflection Answer to Question 3: How have your experiences at Nashville State helped you grow as a person?	More than 2 insightful connections or two deep connections are made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	1 or 2 insightful connections are made, or one deep connection is made, between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	Superficial connections are made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	No connections made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	No answer submitted to this question.

Second Term Course Final Reflection

Final Reflection Questions

1. How have your experiences at Nashville State affected your academic plans?
2. How have your experiences at Nashville State helped you grow as a person?

Final Reflection Rubric

Category	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Reflection Answer to Question 1: How have your experiences at Nashville State affected your academic plans?	More than 2 insightful connections or two deep connections are made between Nashville State experiences and academic plans.	1 or 2 insightful connections are made, or one deep connection is made, between Nashville State experiences and academic plans.	Superficial connections are made between Nashville State experiences and academic plans.	No connections made between Nashville State experiences and academic plans.	No answer submitted to this question.
Reflection Answer to Question 2: How have your experiences at Nashville State helped you grow as a person?	More than 2 insightful connections or two deep connections are made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	1 or 2 insightful connections are made, or one deep connection is made, between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	Superficial connections are made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	No connections made between Nashville State experiences and personal growth.	No answer submitted to this question.

Second Term Courses

Courses determined by faculty to be standard second term courses in a student's first year at Nashville State.

Class:	Majors Covered:
ACCT 1020	Accounting
ADMN 1311	Administrative Professional Technology
CAD 1200	Architectural Engineering Technology, Civil and Construction Engineering
CHEM 1120	Chemistry
CISP 1020	Computer Science
CIT 1220	Civil Engineering
CITC 1301	Computer Information Technology
CRMJ 1340	Law Enforcement
CULA 1325	Culinary Arts
ECED 2340	Early Childhood Education
EETH 1400	Electrical Engineering
ENGR 2110	Mechanical Engineering, Pre-Engineering, Pre-Industrial Technology
HCMT 2315	Healthcare Management
HMGT 1250	Hospitality and Tourism Management
INFS 1010	Information Systems
IPCT 1335	Industrial Process Control Technology
LEGL 1320	Paralegal Studies
MUS 1072	Music
PHIL 1111	Philosophy
PHO 1240	Visual Communications
SOCI 2010	Sociology
SPCH 1010	Mathematics
ENGL 1020	Finance, Business, Economics, Management, Marketing, English, Speech Communications, Art, Biology, Physics, Criminal Justice, Child Development, Elementary Education, Middle Grades Education, Secondary Education, Special Education, Exercise Science, Health Science, Pre-Health Professions, Pre-Occupational Therapy, Pre-Physical Therapy, Surgical Technology, Geography, History, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work

QEP Budget

Budget Items	Year 1 2018-19	Year 2 2019-20	Year 3 2020-21	Year 4 2021-22	Year 5 2022-23
QEP Implementation Lead (50% faculty load + benefits)	\$29,250	\$29,250	\$29,250	\$29,250	\$29,250
Website and Marketing	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Operating	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Professional Development	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
College-wide Assessments:					
CCSSE	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
IDEA	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
Degree Works™ Maintenance	\$5,600	\$5,600	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Schedule Planner™ Maintenance	\$12,750	\$16,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total	\$118,100	\$106,350	\$110,750	\$110,750	\$110,750



QEP Lead Faculty Job Description

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Faculty Lead, Quality Enhancement Plan Implementation

REPORTING SENIOR: Dean/Director

JOB OBJECTIVES: To provide leadership, coordination, and data analysis for the implementation of the Nashville State Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- A. Serve as the primary contact for the QEP.
- B. Manage QEP budget.
- C. Serve as chair for the QEP Implementation Committee, which will meet twice a year to review data from each fall and spring term and makes recommendations for plan updates.
- D. Continue to market and train new employees on the QEP.
- E. Manage data collection on student learning outcomes in QEP each term.
- F. Track student data over time.
- G. Manage and communicate any change in QEP as a result of ongoing data analysis to college community.
- H. Write an annual report each year of implementation to provide framework for the QEP impact report to be submitted to SACSCOC in 2023.

MINIMUM JOB STANDARDS:

Full-time term or tenured faculty status at Nashville State Community College with experience in data analysis. A minimum of five years full-time service at Nashville State is required.

JOB LOCATION: Occasional travel throughout the service area is required.

SALARY: Released time of 7.5 TLC per semester. Overloads may not be awarded to a faculty member in this role except in those cases that variable credits mean that a teaching load of 7.5 cannot be reached.

EMPLOYMENT DOCUMENTS: Current Federal law requires identification and eligibility verification prior to employment. Only U.S. citizens and aliens authorized to work in the United States may be employed.

4/25/2018