



# QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

## TOPIC SELECTION REPORT

July 2020

*For Internal Review and Discussion Only*

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## QEP Topic Selection Committee

As part of the College of Coastal Georgia decennial review, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires an institution to develop a new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as part of a continuous quality improvement process.

The QEP describes “a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning.” Formulating a QEP will allow the College of Coastal Georgia an opportunity to enhance overall institutional effectiveness by focusing on a well-defined topic area that will improve student achievement.

The College of Coastal Georgia needs to develop an acceptable QEP that:

- has a topic identified through its ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes;
- has broad-based support of institutional constituencies;
- focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success; and
- includes a plan to assess achievement.

To address this requirement, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs appointed a QEP Topic Selection Committee in February 2020.

The Committee was charged with soliciting and evaluating QEP proposals from across the institution to result in a recommendation to the President and SACSCOC leadership team about which QEP topic is most appropriate for the College of Coastal Georgia.

The following members were appointed to the QEP Topic Selection Committee:

- Dr. Robert Bleil (chair), Arts & Sciences
- Dr. Syvillia Averett, Faculty Senate
- Phyllis Broadwell, Business Affairs
- Matt Hanak, Staff Assembly
- Lily Heidger, Student Government Association
- Joseph Lodmell, Camden Center
- Lee McKinley, Business & Public Management
- Dr. Jessica Morris, Education & Teacher Preparation
- Nakiah Parrish, Advancement
- Brenda Taylor, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
- Dr. Lydia Watkins, Nursing & Health Sciences
- Dr. Jim Lynch (ex officio), Accreditation Liaison

## Initial Topic Identification

In early March 2020, the QEP Topic Selection Committee (TSC) embarked on the initial topic identification by reviewing quality enhancement plans from peer institutions; institutional assessment data pertaining to student success; best practices to enhance student learning; and developing a process to solicit broad-based involvement in the selection of the QEP topic.

The first step was conducting an institutional assessment review reflective of institutional needs based on an analysis of academic program assessments, nationally normed surveys, nationally normed exams, in-house surveys, and institutional trend data.

The TSC participated in a brainstorming session after the institutional needs assessment to narrow areas of need that focused on four key questions:

- What could CCGA do to enhance student learning/success?
- What kinds of knowledge/skills do CCGA students need to improve?
- What do students need to know, experience, and value upon graduation from CCGA?
- Are there student population groups the QEP should target?

During this initial topic identification process, TSC members offered their ideas for a QEP based on their experiences, their review of institutional planning documents, understanding of general campus needs, as well as student needs in their departments. This exercise yielded several proposal ideas that promoted topics ranging from resuscitating the first-year experience, expanding experiential learning, creating an academic-career advising model, and improving information literacy.

The TSC then spent some time reviewing and discussing these proposal ideas. Through this process of discussion and synthesis, the collection of ideas was ultimately narrowed to five possible themes. A sixth theme – personal wellness – was added after virtual listening session feedback was synthesized based on student, faculty, and staff input.

<b>Applied/ Experiential Learning</b>	<b>First-Year Experience (FYE)</b>	<b>Advising &amp; Career Development</b>	<b>Information Literacy/ Fluency</b>	<b>Cultural Understanding /Diversity</b>	<b>Personal Wellness</b>
Apply knowledge and skills gained in classroom learning to hands-on settings, creative projects, or independent or directed research.	Assist first-year students in preparing for the transition to higher education and exploring academic, career, and co-curricular opportunities.	Understand how academic and personal interests, abilities, and values might relate to career fields students are considering and how to form their academic and career goals.	Know how to access, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically, as well as engage with, create, and utilize information and technology regardless of format or platform.	Recognize and adapt to cultural differences and similarities to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds.	Combine overall wellness in emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, and physical wellness for making healthy lifestyle decisions.

After this assessment phase, an electronic survey was created and disseminated in late March/early April 2020 that collected 331 responses from students, faculty, and staff. According to the mean of respondents' rating (see Table 1), the top six emergent themes that would improve student learning/success were Applied/Experiential Learning, First-Year Experience (FYE), Advising & Career Development, Information Literacy/Fluency, Cultural Understanding/Diversity, and Personal Wellness. The latter theme was added after virtual listening session feedback was synthesized with student, faculty, and staff survey input.

**Table 1: Overall Theme Results (listed in order of final ranking)<sup>1</sup>**

	Applied/ Experiential Learning	First-Year Experience (FYE)	Advising & Career Development	Information Literacy/ Fluency	Cultural Understanding /Diversity	Personal Wellness
<b>Mean</b> (n=331)	1.62	1.71	1.80	1.78	2.07	2.32

Further examination of the results by demographic group (Table 2) indicated that faculty felt most strongly that information literacy/fluency would enhance student learning/success, while staff and students selected first-year experience (FYE) and applied/experiential learning, respectively, as their top choices in emergent QEP themes.

**Table 2: Overall Theme Results by Demographic Group**

	Applied/ Experiential Learning	First-Year Experience (FYE)	Information Literacy/ Fluency	Advising & Career Development	Cultural Understanding / Diversity	Personal Wellness
<b>Faculty</b> (n=89)	1.54	1.7	1.5	1.73	1.94	2.61
<b>Staff</b> (n=66)	1.55	1.43	1.91	1.52	2.05	2.06
<b>Students</b> (n=176)	1.77	2.01	1.93	2.15	2.21	2.3

Faculty and staff participants were also asked to rank the appropriateness of each (target group) as the focus of a QEP to enhance student learning/success. The Likert-scale responses from each group were ranked according to the relative support for each group from 1 to 5, with 1 corresponding to the group that had the least support to 5 corresponding to the group that had the greatest support. The means and standard deviations of respondents' ratings on each group were calculated. According to the rank of the means, both faculty and staff respondents thought the top three target groups that a QEP should focus on were: all students, incoming freshmen, and at-risk students.

<sup>1</sup> 1 = Very Likely, 5 = Extremely Unlikely; the smaller the mean, the more likely respondents felt that emergent theme would enhance student learning.

"Other Target Group(s)" mentioned by both faculty and staff respondents included dual-enrolled students, ESL students, veterans, minorities (racial, sexual, gender, ability, etc.), returning students that temporarily stopped attending a college/university due to poor grades, higher achievers, students with mental health disorders/disabilities, students with multiple responsibilities besides college, sophomores, international students, older (50+) students, students from underrepresented populations, loan reliant students (not eligible for Pell), non-traditional students, and dual-enrolled high school students.

Based on the literature review, survey data, and listening session feedback, several possible topics for the QEP were revealed, which were narrowed to a list of most significant interest and potential impact to the College community.

## Survey Development & Administration

Beginning in April 2020, several different broad-based activities were conducted to solicit input from students, faculty, and staff from the Brunswick campus and Camden Center, an off-campus instructional site. This campus engagement process included both quantitative and qualitative research formats – online surveys, virtual listening sessions (considering the coronavirus pandemic at the time), and a QEP web page with helpful information resources.

The first step was to design and disseminate an online Qualtrics survey to all faculty (Appendix A) and staff (Appendix B) at the College, and concurrently, distribute a survey to all students (Appendix C). The TSC followed standard survey protocols, including advance notice about survey distribution provided through e-mails sent to (a) faculty from the Provost's office; (b) staff from the chair of the Staff Assembly, and (c) students from the Student Government Association. Notifications were also provided in the *Monday Mariner*.

### ***Monday Mariner*** – April 13, 2020

#### ***Quality Enhancement Plan Topic Selection - Virtual Listening Sessions***

The Quality Enhancement Plan Topic Selection Committee (TSC) disseminated an online survey to collect the opinions of faculty, staff, and students to narrow down the themes for possible QEP topics. The survey research will be followed up this week by virtual listening sessions to provide the campus community an opportunity to discuss further and review the results of the survey. The times and dates for the virtual open forums are as follows:



Reminders to complete the survey were sent via e-mail, and one reminder was included in the *Monday Mariner*. The online surveys were open for faculty and staff participation on March 27 and closed on April 3, 2020. Student survey participants were entered into a drawing for CCGA swag in return for participation in the survey.

## Faculty & Staff Survey Results

Faculty and staff survey participants were presented the five potential QEP themes and asked to measure each potential QEP theme’s ability to improve student learning and meet important campus needs, as well as stating their level of support for each. Also, open-ended questions allowed participants an opportunity to offer additional topic ideas related to the proposed themes.

### Demographics

- Almost half of the faculty respondents (48.8%) have been at CCGA for less than five years, with 19.05% serving the institution for over ten years
- Most staff members (53.9%) have been at CCGA for less than five years, while 18.5% have worked over ten years at the College
- Over half of faculty are either tenured (29.8%) or on a tenure-track (35.7%)
- While most faculty (90.5%) and staff (96.9%) respondents perform their work on the Brunswick campus, 9.5% and 3.1%, respectively, work at the Camden Center

### Theme Ratings – Faculty & Staff

All participants were instructed to rate their level of agreement with each theme as an essential student learning outcome, using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “Very Likely” (1) to “Extremely Unlikely” (5). The means and standard deviations of respondents’ ratings on each theme were calculated. Based on the rank of the means, the top six themes that faculty and staff respondents felt would improve student learning/success at CCGA are shown below separately.

Faculty	Staff
Information Literacy/Fluency	First-Year Experience (FYE)
Applied/Experiential Learning	Advising & Career Development
First-Year Experience (FYE)	Applied/Experiential Learning
Advising & Career Development	Information Literacy/Fluency
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	Cultural Understanding/Diversity

Survey results suggest that both faculty and staff respondents thought focusing on the aforementioned themes would be more likely to improve student learning/success at Coastal Georgia rather than civic engagement, collaborative thinking, quantitative literacy, global perspectives, learning communities, and personal wellness.

## Theme Ratings - Faculty

What follows is a breakdown of the ratings for each of the eleven emergent QEP themes by mean and standard deviation.

Emerging Theme	Mean <sup>2</sup>	Std Deviation
Applied/Experiential Learning	1.55	0.68
First-Year Experience (FYE)	1.57	0.84
Advising & Career Development	1.63	0.84
Information Literacy/Fluency	1.71	0.91
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	2.00	1.04
Collaborative Thinkers	2.07	0.94
Civic Engagement	2.11	0.85
Quantitative Literacy	2.21	1.04
Global Perspectives	2.29	0.97
Learning Communities	2.33	1.03
Personal Wellness	2.34	1.19

## Additional Themes

Participants were instructed to provide additional themes they felt were not included in the survey. The purpose of this section of the survey was to ensure emerging student learning needs were accurately identified, and no themes were left out. The following suggestions were offered for consideration:

- Time management & note-taking skills
- Critical thinking
- Summer first-year experience
- Physical, mental, and spiritual health
- Financial literacy
- Qualitative literacy

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<sup>3</sup> 1 = the least important, 5 = the most important, therefore, the larger the mean is, the more important the group is.

## Theme Ratings – Staff

What follows is a breakdown of the ratings for each of the eleven emergent QEP themes by mean and standard deviation.

Emerging Theme	Mean <sup>2</sup>	Std Deviation
First-Year Experience (FYE)	1.45	0.86
Advising & Career Development	1.5	0.84
Applied/Experiential Learning	1.55	0.69
Information Literacy/Fluency	1.90	0.91
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	2.06	1.05
Personal Wellness	2.06	1.18
Collaborative Thinkers	2.08	0.94
Civic Engagement	2.15	0.86
Learning Communities	2.21	1.03
Quantitative Literacy	2.25	1.05
Global Perspectives	2.34	0.98

## Additional Themes

Participants were instructed to provide additional themes they felt were not included in the survey. The purpose of this section of the survey was to ensure emerging student learning needs were accurately identified, and no themes were left out. The following suggestions were offered for consideration:

- Remediation
- Financial literacy
- Technology skills
- Qualitative literacy

## Target Group Rating

In addition to QEP theme ratings, faculty and staff participants were asked to rank the appropriateness of each (target group) as the focus of a QEP to enhance student learning/success. The Likert-scale responses from each group were ranked according to the relative support for each group from 1 to 5, with 1 corresponding to the group that had the least support to 5 corresponding to the least that had the greatest support.

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<sup>3</sup> 1 = the least important, 5 = the most important, therefore, the larger the mean is, the more important the group is.

The means and standard deviations of respondents’ ratings on each group were calculated. According to the rank of the means, both faculty and staff respondents thought the top three target groups that a QEP should focus on were: all students, incoming freshmen, and at-risk students.

### Faculty

The means and standard deviations of faculty respondents’ rating on each group (means ranked in descending order) were as follows:

Group	Mean <sup>3</sup>	Std Deviation
All Students	4.22	1.01
Incoming Freshmen	4.22	1.19
At-Risk Students	4.02	1.26
Other Target Group(s)	4.00	1.28
First-Generation Students	3.99	1.16
Commuter Students	3.51	1.23
Residential Students	3.31	1.24
Transfer Students	3.04	1.40

The “Other Target Group(s)” includes: minorities (racial, sexual, gender, ability, etc.), returning students that temporarily stopped attending a college/university due to poor grades, higher achievers, students with mental health disorders/disabilities, students with multiple responsibilities besides college, sophomores, international students, and older (50+) students.




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<sup>3</sup> 1 = the least important, 5 = the most important, therefore, the larger the mean is, the more important the group is.

## Staff

The means and standard deviations of staff respondents' rating on each group (means ranked in descending order) were as follows:

Group	Mean <sup>3</sup>	Std Deviation
All Students	4.29	0.96
Incoming Freshmen	4.19	1.27
At-risk Students	4.10	1.28
First-Generation Students	4.02	1.16
Other Target Group(s)	3.48	1.69
Commuter Students	3.41	1.21
Residential Students	3.27	1.33
Transfer Students	3.08	1.30

The "Other Target Group(s)" include Dual enrollment, ESL students, Veterans, Dreamers, Disabled students, students from an under-represented population, loan reliant students (not eligible for Pell), non-traditional students, dual-enrolled high school students, and adult learners.

According to the rank of the means, both faculty and staff respondents thought the top three target groups that a QEP should focus on were: all students, incoming freshmen, and at-risk students.

## Student Survey Results

The student QEP topic selection survey consists of two parts. The survey was disseminated and open for student participation between April 6-10, 2020. The Student Government Association was actively involved in promoting the online survey, encouraging students to participate and voice their thoughts and ideas to enhance student learning/success at Coastal Georgia.

The first part sought to determine to what extent students' learning experiences at Coastal Georgia contributed to their growth. A series of educational variables were provided for student consideration. A Likert scale was used ranging from "A Lot" (1) to "Not at All" (5), with the smaller mean identifying a strong student connection.

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<sup>3</sup> 1 = the least important, 5 = the most important, therefore, the larger the mean is, the more important the group is.

<b>Educational Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Deviation</b>
Learning independently	1.77	0.94
Critically analyzing information	1.93	0.92
Participating in class discussions	2.01	1.05
Defining & solving problems	2.01	0.96
Working collaboratively in a group	2.15	1.08
Writing effectively	2.18	0.95
Understanding & applying scientific principles and methods	2.19	1.07
Giving and receiving peer critique	2.20	1.10
Having a global perspective	2.21	1.12
Understanding & applying math /analytics principles & methods	2.3	1.15
Speaking effectively	2.35	1.12
Giving effective presentations	2.49	1.16

The second part of the survey focused on improving academic performance. Students were offered an opportunity to identify a program(s) at Coastal Georgia that they felt would help students better succeed and learn more. Students were offered a series of student learning experiences to select from a list. Time management, career/professional readiness, and academic advising/program of study were identified as the top three student learning areas that students believed would improve academic performance.

<b>Improve Academic Performance</b>	<b>%</b>
Time management	10.20%
Career/professional readiness	8.80%
Academic advising/program of study	8.00%
Fitting in/making friends/integrating socially	7.20%
Research/scholarship skills	6.50%
Decision-making	5.80%
Physical health/well-being	5.80%
Adjusting to being a college student	5.70%

Improve Academic Performance	%
Creativity	5.50%
Engaging with others	5.30%
Critical thinking	5.00%
Student mentoring / tutoring	4.60%
Leadership skills	4.50%
Problem-solving	4.50%
Community involvement	4.10%
Using technology	3.70%
Global perspective	3.20%
Data and analytics	1.80%

If topics “to help students better succeed and learn more” were matched with proposed QEP themes by frequency of selection, the ranking (in descending order) would be as follows:

- Advising & Career Development
- First-Year Experience (FYE)
- Applied/Experiential Learning
- Personal Wellness
- Cultural Understanding/Diversity
- Information Literacy/Fluency
- Collaborative Thinkers
- Civic Engagement
- Learning Communities
- Global Perspectives
- Quantitative Literacy

Students were also allowed to identify additional areas that would improve student learning/success. Below is a listing of those areas aligned with proposed QEP themes.

QEP Theme	Related Comments
Applied/Experiential Learning	More community service opportunities
First-Year Experience (FYE)	Add a program that deals with students with disabilities to help with their accommodations
Advising & Career Development	Develop a program specifically for student-athletes who are trying to find a job Streamline the process of registration for transient students Offer more wiggle room when picking classes

QEP Theme	Related Comments
Information Literacy/Fluency	Record classroom lectures for online reinforcement
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	Create a cultural diversity program
Global Perspectives	Provide opportunities to increase global perspectives Enhance environmental awareness/global warming
Learning Communities	Tutor hours more flexible Having more secluded study areas around the campus
Personal Wellness	Streamline registration process for transient students Support self-psychology
Other	Offer more upper-level classes Offer more tutor support hours Provide more secluded study areas around the campus

## Virtual Listening Sessions

Three virtual listening sessions were also convened for students, faculty, and staff. Originally scheduled in-person listening sessions were converted to a virtual format due to the coronavirus pandemic. Advance notice on attending a listening session was provided through e-mails sent to (a) faculty from the Provost's office; (b) staff from the chair of the Staff Assembly, and (c) students from the Student Government Association – see sample below. Notifications were also provided in the *Monday Mariner*.

## Students! CCGA Needs Your Voice!

What: Quality Enhancement Plan Topic Selection Town Hall

When: 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 14 April 2020

Where: Online via Blackboard Collaborate

<https://us.bbcollab.com/guest/4c8a3ef5c0b4451d8266dba86cc56e33>

Dial-in Access: +1-571-392-7650 PIN: 337 328 6754

QEP is a five-year project that reflects our commitment to enhancing overall institutional quality and student success.

**Be Involved! Shape the Future!**




During each of the three virtual listening sessions scheduled in mid-April 2020, Dr. Rob Bleil, QEP Topic Selection Committee (TSC) chair, provided (1) an overview about the role of the TSC in selecting a QEP topic; (2) shared QEP topic selection survey results; and (3) offered an overview of the QEP, including its purpose, how it relates to accreditation and its impact on student learning/success.

Comments corresponding to a question were grouped by “topic.” Representative quotes that capture respondents’ “voice” by topic were recorded and appear in Appendices D and E.

Responses provided in a listening session follow up survey, allowing those unable to be in attendance to offer input, were integrated into the appropriate listening session questions and responses summary form.

### Student Listening Session

To better understand students' concerns and opinions about which institution areas may need improvement, a listening session was held on April 14, 2020, that involved 15 students and was facilitated by Lily Heidger, SGA representative on the TSC, and Dr. Rob Bleil, TSC chair. Students were asked to think about their experiences at Coastal Georgia and how those experiences have benefited them or how those experiences have detracted from their overall learning. Students were presented with four questions to discuss – highlights appear under each:

- **What have your learning experiences been like at Coastal Georgia?**
  - Improved social interactions amongst students
  - Making friends through student organizations and campus events
  - Opportunity to build one-on-one relationships with talented faculty
- **What processes do you find difficult and challenging to navigate?**
  - Guidance with financial aid forms and how to navigate the system
  - Limited choice of course offerings, especially during the evening
  - Job search and internship opportunities
- **What support programs could be improved for students to be successful?**
  - Connect academic advising with career development
  - Promote intercultural and diversity awareness
  - Improve students' social skills to build community
- **Can you think of any support programs that you wish were offered at Coastal Georgia?**
  - Offer a Freshman Seminar
  - Provide incoming transfer students with a more supportive orientation
  - Expand first-year experiences to include career preparation and financial literacy

Appendix D provides transcribed responses to each question.

## Faculty & Staff Listening Sessions

To better understand faculty and staff perspectives about which institution areas may need improvement, two separate listening sessions were held on April 15 and 16, 2020, respectively, facilitated by Dr. Rob Bleil, chair, QEP topic selection committee. Faculty and staff were encouraged to engage in meaningful discussions about student learning at Coastal Georgia and how we can enhance the student learning experience and the environment that surrounds it. Faculty and staff were presented with five questions for discussion – highlights appear under each:

- **What processes do our students find difficult and challenging to navigate?**
  - Checking email, using features in the Portal – DegreeWorks, D2L; financial aid and registration processes
  - Difficulty selecting a major/focus area as well as courses
  - Becoming acclimated to the campus and its support resources
- **What parts of our support programs could be improved for students to complete their studies?**
  - Information literacy
  - Extend orientation to identify and address the unique needs of incoming students
  - Expand first-year experiences beyond year one
- **What kinds of knowledge and skills do our students need to improve?**
  - Orientations need to contain more *starting step* information and preferably earlier before the start of the semester
  - More advisors and better training for faculty to be mentors to students
  - Support in foundational areas like basic writing or reading comprehension before the start of classes
  - Learn how skills acquired in college translate into a career
  - Understand the link between core courses and selected major
- **What could the college do to enhance student learning/success?**
  - Multi-modal assignments to help students develop their skills
  - Better links to making a purposeful choice in major and career
  - Professional communication
  - Expanded first-year experiences
- **What do you want students to know/experience/value when they graduate from here?**
  - Critical thinking skills
  - Connection to community
  - Effective communication skills
  - Self-advocacy
  - Work/life management

Appendix E provides transcribed responses to each question.

## Listening Session Synthesis

If all the topics associated with respective responses to the questions posed to students, faculty, and staff during the virtual listening sessions were aligned with proposed QEP themes, the breakdown would be as follows. It is interesting to note that personal wellness – not identified as a top proposed QEP theme by faculty and staff – was noticeably discussed during the listening sessions.

Proposed QEP Themes	Topic Representation (%)
Information Literacy/Fluency	29%
Advising & Career Development	17%
First-Year Experience (FYE)	17%
Personal Wellness	17%
Applied/experiential learning	12%
Collaborative thinkers	3%
Civic engagement	1%
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	1%
Quantitative Literacy	1%
Global Perspectives	0%
Learning Communities	0%

## Call for QEP Topic Proposals

On May 5, 2020, the QEP topic proposal process officially commenced with a campus announcement soliciting preliminary topic proposals – see Appendix F.

The Mariner community was invited to submit brief, two- to three-page, preliminary proposals that, if chosen, would serve as the foundation for a white paper to be submitted by May 22, 2020.

Full instructions and sample documents for submitting a topic proposal were placed on the QEP web page that was created, providing a direct link to the preliminary proposal submission guidelines (Appendix G) and an evaluation rubric (Appendix H).

While the ongoing coronavirus pandemic during this solicitation period almost certainly impacted the number and focus of the preliminary proposals that were submitted, which totaled three, each proposal spoke directly to one or more emergent themes and offered concrete goals and measurable outcomes.

## QEP Preliminary Proposal Summaries

The QEP Topic Selection Committee (TSC) received three preliminary topic proposals.

### **Topic 1: COMPASS: Integrated Career & Academic Planning**

There is little debate on the value of academic advisors and career counselors and their impact on the retention, progression, and graduation rates among Coastal students. Both are in a good position to help students make decisions with long-ranging effects. By integrating career planning into the academic advising model, a COMPASS Center, students can get a more holistic approach to college planning. It is proposed that Coastal Georgia fully surround and support the blending of these two functions – Career Development and Academic Advising, through a campus-wide focus on how these functions affect nearly every aspect of a college student’s experience. The support would come in the form of emphasis on the efforts, funding, staffing, and leadership support.

### **Topic 2: First- & Second-Year Experience: Helping You Find Your Way**

“Who will I become?” should be the primary question every entering student strives to answer during their first two years of college. Coastal Georgia is poised and eager to help first- and second-year students answer this question with a dedicated and deliberate approach anchored in its institutional mission. This QEP topic will help first- and second-year students grapple more successfully with the question, “Who will I become?” through scaffolded programming during a time when social and self-awareness are critical to students’ personal and professional development. The scope of competencies needed by students to graduate is sufficiently broad to be best addressed through an integrated, coordinated, and intentional first-to-second-year experience for students to enhance their overall success, retention, and ultimate graduation.

### **Topic 3: Risley Center Cooperative**

The Risley Center Cooperative (RCC) would be the premier experiential learning program for students at the College of Coastal Georgia. The RCC brings together academic readiness, career readiness, multicultural competency, and community engagement into one, interactive, student-centered, and immersive, interdisciplinary educational opportunity. Through the RCC, students will have a chance to prepare for their academic interest area, build career readiness skills and competencies, develop multicultural awareness, and connect the College to the Brunswick community through service and volunteerism.

## QEP White Papers

Although the “Risley Center Cooperative” topic proposal was selected for further consideration, the author withdrew from submitting a QEP white paper. The TSC proceeded by inviting the authors of the two remaining preliminary proposals to prepare fuller proposals; they were provided QEP white paper guidelines (Appendix I) and a common scoring rubric (Appendix J). Given the scope of these two pre-proposals, the TSC encouraged the possibility of combining the two proposals to leverage the strengths of each, leading to a QEP with a higher likelihood of success.

As the two QEP teams combined their efforts, the complexity and magnitude of the evolving proposal, incorporating a broader array of first-year and second-year experiences, emerged, and with it concerns that the proposal would not be manageable, particularly in terms of feasibility and sustainability. The main concern was that it would require extra care be taken in demonstrating the College's capacity for implementing and sustaining the initiative, especially given reduced resources and uncertain financial support amid severe budget reductions associated with the coronavirus pandemic.

As a result of these actions, the white paper authors crafted a refined joint proposal with an exclusive focus on the creation of a COMPASS Center, integrating career development and academic advising.

## QEP Topic Recommendation

In the final analysis, after extensive research, discussion, and input from campus listening sessions and survey research involving all College stakeholder groups, the QEP Topic Selection Committee formally recommends that the next QEP topic be **COMPASS: Career & Academic Planning**. This topic is intended to motivate students to enhance career and academic planning that ultimately increases student preparation and workforce competitiveness.

With the submission of this recommendation, the charge of the QEP Topic Selection Committee is officially completed.

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### QEP Topic Selection Survey - Faculty

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How long have you been at the College of Coastal Georgia?

- Over 10 Years
  - 5 to 9 Years
  - Less than 5 Years
- 

Are you an alumnus/a of the College?

- Yes
  - No
- 

What is your instructional status?

- Tenured
  - On Tenure Track
  - Non-Tenured
  - Lecturer
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 

On which campus do you spend most of your time?

- Brunswick
  - Camden Center
-

As part of the College of Coastal Georgia's reaffirmation of accreditation, the institution must develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP is a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined issue or issues directly related to improving the educational experience for students.

The QEP Topic Selection Committee (TSC) has reviewed a broad collection of institutional data, academic assessment documents, student success reports, and in-house survey data and identified the following "emergent" themes.

For each theme, please indicate how likely it is that focusing on it would improve student learning/success at the College of Coastal Georgia.

	Very Likely (1)	Somewhat likely (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat unlikely (4)	Extremely unlikely (5)
Advising & Career Development	<input type="radio"/>				
Applied/Experiential Learning	<input type="radio"/>				
Civic Engagement	<input type="radio"/>				
Collaborative Thinkers	<input type="radio"/>				
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	<input type="radio"/>				
First-Year Experience (FYE)	<input type="radio"/>				
Global Perspectives	<input type="radio"/>				
Information Literacy/Fluency	<input type="radio"/>				
Learning Communities	<input type="radio"/>				
Personal Wellness	<input type="radio"/>				
Quantitative Literacy	<input type="radio"/>				

Please identify an additional theme(s) that would improve student learning/success

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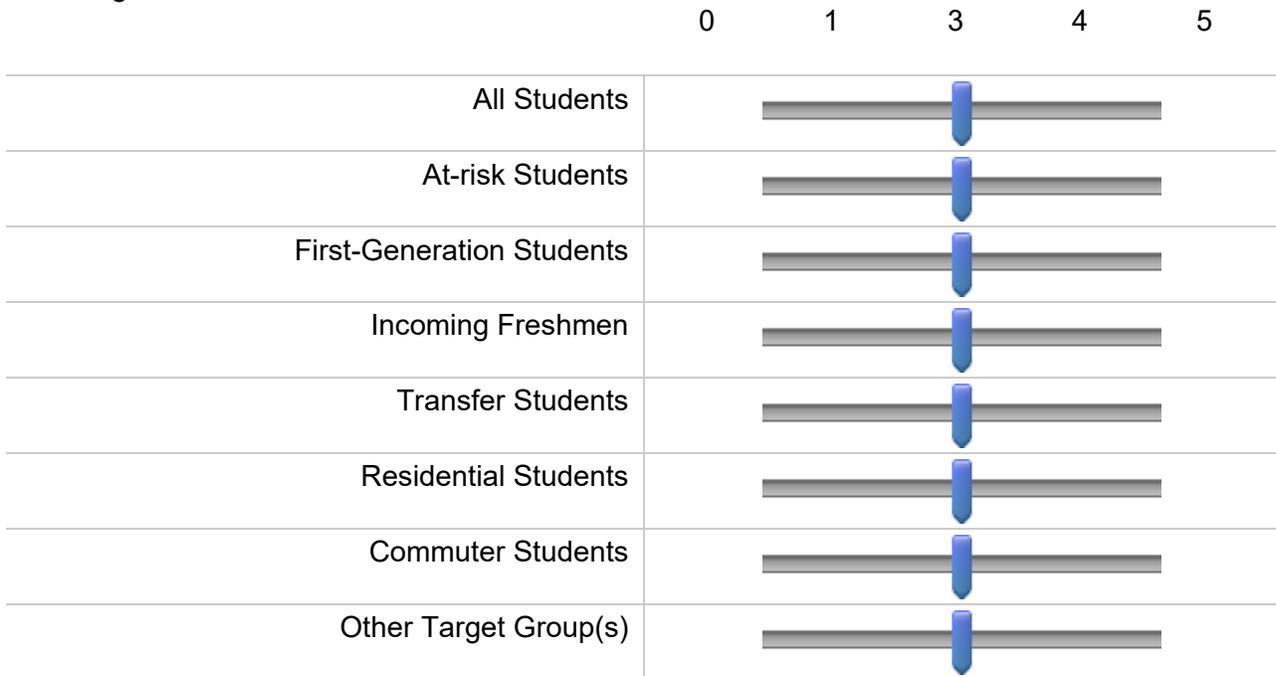


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On a scale from 1 to 5 (with **5 being the most important** and **1 being the least**), rank each target group as the focus of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to enhance student learning/success



## Appendix B

### QEP Topic Selection Survey - Staff

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How long have you been at the College of Coastal Georgia?

- Over 10 Years
  - 5 to 9 Years
  - Less than 5 Years
- 

On which campus do you spend most of your time?

- Brunswick
  - Camden Center
- 

Are you an alumnus/a of the College?

- Yes
  - No
-

As part of the College of Coastal Georgia's reaffirmation of accreditation, the institution must develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP is a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined issue or issues directly related to improving the educational experience for students.

The QEP Topic Selection Committee (TSC) has reviewed a broad collection of institutional data, academic assessment documents, student success reports, and in-house survey data and identified the following "emergent" themes.

For each theme, please indicate how likely it is that focusing on it would improve student learning/success at the College of Coastal Georgia.

	Very Likely (1)	Somewhat likely (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat unlikely (4)	Extremely unlikely (5)
Advising & Career Development	<input type="radio"/>				
Applied/Experiential Learning	<input type="radio"/>				
Civic Engagement	<input type="radio"/>				
Collaborative Thinkers	<input type="radio"/>				
Cultural Understanding/Diversity	<input type="radio"/>				
First-Year Experience (FYE)	<input type="radio"/>				
Global Perspectives	<input type="radio"/>				
Information Literacy/Fluency	<input type="radio"/>				
Learning Communities	<input type="radio"/>				
Personal Wellness	<input type="radio"/>				
Quantitative Literacy	<input type="radio"/>				

Please identify an additional theme(s) that would improve student learning/success

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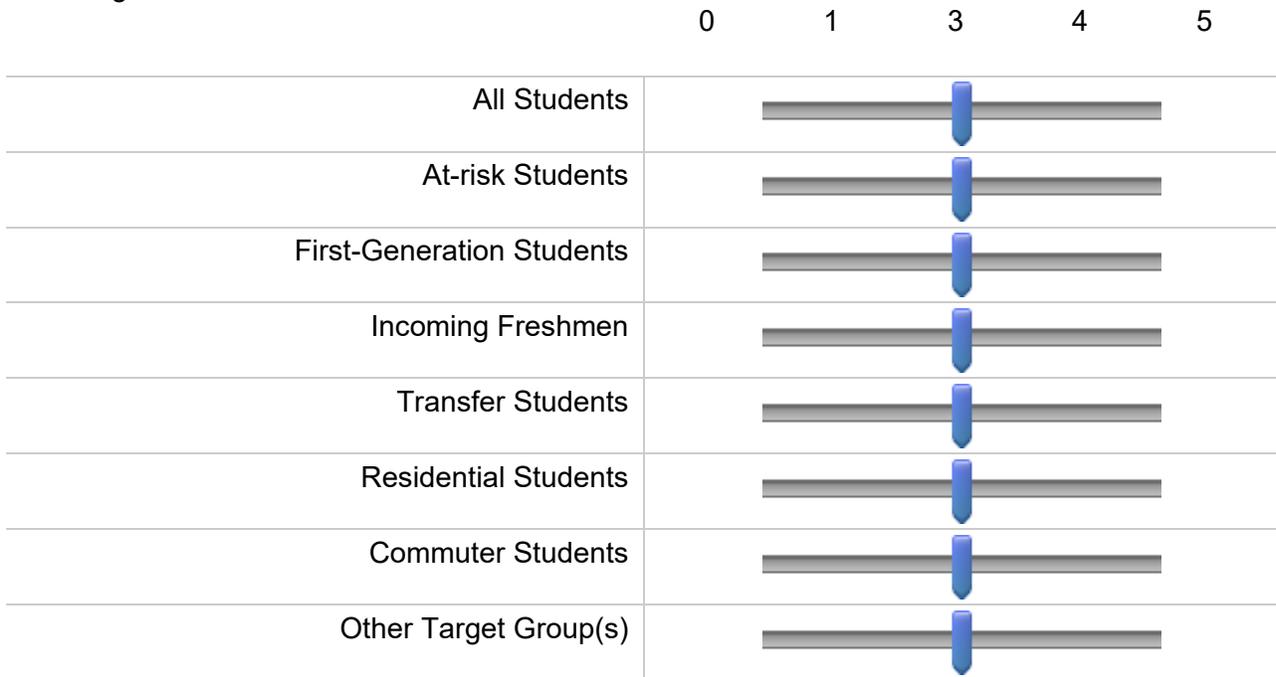


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On a scale from 1 to 5 (with **5 being the most important** and **1 being the least**), rank each target group as the focus of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to enhance student learning/success



## Appendix C

### QEP Topic Selection Survey - Student

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#### Student Demographics

What is your current class standing?

- Dual Enrolled
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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At the time of admission, what was your status?

- Dual Enrolled
  - New Freshman
  - New Transfer Student
  - Post-Baccalaureate
  - Non-Degree
  - Transient
-

What degree are you seeking?

- Associate degree
  - Bachelor's degree
  - Non-degree seeking
- 

What age categories do you fit into?

- Under 18 years
  - 18-25 years
  - 26-30 years
  - 31-35 years
  - Over 35 years
-

## Overall Learning Experience

To what extent have your CCGA learning experiences contributed to your growth in each of the following?

	A Lot (1)	Quite a Bit (2)	Some (3)	Very Little (4)	Not at All (5)
Speaking effectively	<input type="radio"/>				
Writing effectively	<input type="radio"/>				
Giving effective presentations	<input type="radio"/>				
Participating in class discussions	<input type="radio"/>				
Critically analyzing information	<input type="radio"/>				
Defining & solving problems	<input type="radio"/>				
Having a global perspective	<input type="radio"/>				
Learning independently	<input type="radio"/>				
Working collaboratively in a group	<input type="radio"/>				
Giving and receiving peer critique	<input type="radio"/>				
Understanding & applying scientific principles and methods	<input type="radio"/>				
Understanding & applying math and analytics principles and methods	<input type="radio"/>				

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## Improving Academic Performance

If you could create a program at CCGA to help students **better succeed** and **learn more**, the program would help students with ... *(select all that apply)*

- Academic advising/program of study
- Adjusting to being a college student
- Career /professional readiness
- Community involvement
- Creativity
- Critical thinking
- Data and analytics
- Decision-making
- Engaging with others
- Fitting in / making friends / integrating socially
- Global perspective
- Leadership skills
- Physical health/well-being
- Problem-solving
- Research/scholarship skills
- Student mentoring/tutoring

Time management

Using technology

---

Please identify any additional areas in your opinion that would improve student learning/success at CCGA?

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## Appendix D

### Student Listening Session Questions & Responses

#### Question 1: What have been your learning experiences like at Coastal Georgia?

Topic	Representative Comments
Academic support	<p>“The faculty is really knowledgeable and have expertise ... opportunity to build one-on-one relationships with faculty ...”</p> <p>“The majority of professors relate to real life and practical application.”</p> <p>“ATTIC and tutoring do an amazing job helping students.”</p>
Social interaction	<p>“Getting to make friends through student organizations and campus events for students allows you to meet people and make friends ... very welcoming campus.”</p> <p>“Good opportunities to interact with other students in the recreation and entertainment center on campus or playing tennis, pick-up game of basketball or volleyball.”</p>
Personal engagement	<p>“There is no public transportation in Brunswick, and this creates personal problems for students who live on campus but don’t have a car.”</p> <p>“Offer more evening and weekend campus events for students in Brunswick and Camden.”</p> <p>“Being a commuter makes it hard to make personal connections.”</p>
Career development	<p>“Lots of opportunities to build your career skills at the Career Services Office – always get my questions answered.”</p>
Student employment	<p>“I find the student worker position challenging. There should be opportunities for students to earn more hours within the week, without so many restrictions. When evaluating the worker, take into consideration their schedule and maturity of the person to balance the job demands. Some students rely on this income to maintain while in school, for their survival. Because housing uses most of their funding, students are left with little to survive on.”</p>

Collaboration “I feel like there needs to be more collaboration among faculty, student organizations, and others on campus.”

## Question 2. What processes do you find difficult and challenging to navigate?

Topic	Representative Comments
Financial aid	“Need more guidance with financial aid forms and how to navigate the system.”  “More night and fully online classes for working, non-traditional students.”
Course registration	“Some classes offered only one or two choices of days and times, which creates schedule conflicts and forces students to choose between two classes that were offered at the same time.”  “I would like to see more variety in the course offerings, particularly in the art, music, and evening courses.”
Career advising	“Not enough focus on career advising.”  “Job search and internship opportunities and better connections.”  “When students have questions, the staff could be more informative with solutions instead of transferring the student or taking messages which are not returned.”
Customer service	“There is poor communication between staff. I can go to the same office a couple times and get different answers to same question. CCGA needs to work on professionalism because many staff are rude and disrespectful.”
Scholarships	“More access to scholarships for the physically and learning- disabled students with little or no income.”
Tutoring	“We need more tutors in the ATTIC to help students in advanced classes with more one-on-one support in these classes.”
Faculty	“I have found most faculty to be moody or hard to deal with or speak so rudely to students who seek assistance that they can be seen crying in the hallways.”

Library "With students working and commuting to school, I think the library hours should be more flexible, especially in the morning because I sometimes need to get something printed before class."

**Question 3. What support programs could be improved for students to be successful?**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Representative Comments</b>
Second year experience	"Need to engage students coming back as sophomores in learning opportunities to enhance their career readiness skills like self- motivation, leadership, teamwork, time management."
Engaging with others	"Meet new students with the same personal and academic interests – create interest groups for students to meet and share interests."
Career readiness	"Connecting academic advising with career development to learn about potential career paths."
Intercultural awareness/diversity	"Better opportunities or connections with important businesses for students once they graduate and are trying to find a job."
Collaborative thinkers	"There should be more African American studies at this college. Students shouldn't have to wait to be exposed in the month of February to history that affects them and their identity."
	"Program that can improve student social skills to build community and work together in acquiring knowledge and sharing information."

**Question 4. Can you think of any support programs that you wish were offered at Coastal Georgia?**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Representative Comments</b>
Financial literacy	"Financial support classes teaching students about paying back loans."
First-year experience	"A program that would focus on developing your academic and personal interests earlier in your academic career."

“I think a new freshmen seminar would benefit students and help them transition better to CCGA. I have friends at other schools who loved having a seminar and it helped them a lot.”

Transfer orientation

“Create programming to better support incoming transfer students to ensure they have an authentic CCGA experience.”

Personal wellness

“There should be some type of class or seminar on transitioning into adulthood for young adults entering college. Young adults do not have a handle on how to transition into caring for themselves because of the life skills they are taught or not taught at home.”

Specialized accreditation

“A more comprehensive first-year experience to include career preparation and financial literacy.”

“Need to get Health Informatics accredited as it impacts retention and progress in the program.”

Graduate school

“Offer more counseling and guidance to students seeking to go to graduate school after CCGA. Help them prepare better mentally and academically to be successful.”

## Appendix E

### Faculty & Staff Listening Session Questions & Responses

#### Question 1. What processes do our students find difficult and challenging to navigate?

Topic	Representative Comments
Information literacy	“Difficulty finding resources that at the college has for them and it's not just first-year students. It's all years, and they either haven't been told, or the information is not out there.”
Metacognition	“Students seem to struggle with ‘starting steps’ for many processes. They struggle with finding information or points of contact. They struggle to complete processes to obtain aid or excel in courses, register for courses, etc. These seem to be expected of them to know when they first arrive on campus, but they do not seem to be getting the information.”
Selecting major	“Students find it difficult to select a major / focus area and seem to have increased difficulty with selecting courses that will be beneficial to them outside of their required course work.”
First-year experience	“Our students no very little when they arrive, it can be overwhelming. I think we need to do a better job of communication about all support services. 20 mins at orientation is not enough. FYE class would help.”
Academic advising	“How and when to get advised, need for advising before registration ... Knowing to line up Internships BEFORE the semester starts where they are enrolled in an internship course.”
Communication	“They [students] don't know what they need is much as sometimes it's the verbiage that we use or the way it's listed on the web or whatever. Sometimes directors and others use terms that we kind of take for granted, and students do not understand. Don't take that for granted if that makes sense.”
Technology competency	“Online processes: checking email, using features in the portal, using DegreeWorks, D2L, Financial Aid, Registration processes.”

**Question 2. What parts of our support programs could be improved for students to complete their studies?**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Representative Comments</b>
Information literacy	<p>“Information literacy is definitely a topic that spans all disciplines, and it is an opportunity to enhance student learning at all levels.”</p> <p>“Information literacy also aligns with our work in preparing students for their careers ... Information literacy does work across the college years. and grows with their college career. Also, could be incorporated to the other subjects”</p>
First-year experience	<p>“We really need to look at the 40 plus percent of our students who don't make it to their sophomore year and that's just to put it in perspective ... Do research and look for programming to turn this tide .... So, I think that's the big reason focus on first year.”</p> <p>Expand first-year experience into a second-year experience.”</p>
Orientation	<p>“Extend new student orientation with targeted programs to meet unique needs of incoming students”</p>

**Question 3. What kinds of knowledge and skills do our students need to improve?**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Representative Comments</b>
Student orientation	<p>“Orientations need to contain more starting step information and preferably earlier before the start of the semester to allow time for implementation. Or, maybe contacting students after application submission to give them more of a checklist of what to complete or to become acquainted with.”</p>
Advisor training	<p>“More advisors and better training for faculty to be mentors to students.”</p>
Financial literacy	<p>“Teaching W-2s and 1040s real-life finances the third adulting 1010.”</p>
Communication	<p>“Communication needs to be a priority for students to be successful.”</p>

	“Professionalism in communication”
	“Presentation skills writing and research”
Linked classes	“Understanding how English, History, etc. relate to their careers.”
Tutoring	“One-on-one [tutoring] sessions with professors can be offered. Students are intimidated with asking questions during class and for whatever reason will not see a professor during office hours. I think that many find it difficult to have to advocate for themselves academically.”
Integrative learning	“Take a flexible approach and engage in integrative learning”
Personal wellness	“Time Management”
Career & academic advising	“They need to see how the skills they learn in college translate into a career.”
	“More streamlined career & academic advising processes ... Making a purposeful choice ... More robust FYE ... Anchor Days just does not cut it ... Second Year Experience ... More detailed program maps letting them know when to do what; i.e. secure an Internship BEFORE semester starts. Secure employment BEFORE graduation.”
Resilience	“It is important for students to have critical thinking. To be able to think outside of the box; outside of the classroom learning environment.”
	“I think students benefit from learning how to react to situations they will likely run into in their fields after college. Even if they do not know the solution for every problem they encounter, they can have a foundation that helps them investigate and find the answers they will be looking for.”
Written & oral communication	“I would like to see students get some support in foundational areas like basic writing or reading comprehension before they begin the bulk of their academic classes.”
	“Written/Verbal Communication. Professionalism. Importance of Community/Campus Involvement [Leadership Skills] ... Understanding the link between core classes like English, History and Math and how these relate to their major.”

“They [students] need to improve their writing skills and their ability to present themselves professionally [speech, demeanor, and dress].”

Financial literacy

“Real life finance management”

Technology competence

“I’m shocked at how bad students are in using tech -- they’re supposed to be way better at it than I am, but that’s not the case.”

#### Question 4. What could the college do to enhance student learning/success?

##### Topic

##### Representative Comments

Communication

“Professional communication as this is something in use on a regular basis once they’re employed. Students need to understand the ability to adapt as work requirements, expectations, and responsibilities are always changing and not always with much notice.”

Course assignments

“Multi-modal assignments to help students develop the skills.”

First-year experience

“First year experience would provide a good opportunity to introduce some of the “must-have” knowledge that they will need not only in classes but as they enter the work-force. Maybe the skill soft training we have access to can be available in some form to students, if not already available.”

“Implement a first-year experience course. Teaching students the skills they need in the first semester will go a long way in increasing their success rate.”

“Better links to making a purposeful choice in major and career as part of FYE. Better links to importance of core classes and why they should care/how it prepares them for their careers.”

Internships

“We have a coop with local businesses promoting [service-learning] internships.”

**Question 5. What do you want students to know/experience/value when they graduate from here?**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Representative Comments</b>
Community engagement	“We should want our students to value knowledge and the opportunity to always learn more and appreciate the knowledge others possess. Connection to community is important but more so having something to bring value to the community either in your work, your knowledge, or your general contribution as a member.”
Critical thinking	“Critical thinking skills.”
Resilience	“Students should leave with a number of different real-life experiences and an understand that the college classes and experiences have prepared them to a navigate the job market. They also need to understand that the learning doesn't stop and that it has just begun.”  “Feel that their degree was worthwhile and will help them in life; have robust Service-Learning, Employment and Experiential Experiences that will prepare them for the real life; possess soft skills, including showing up on time, turn in assignments on time, create professional work [well written papers, projects]. Professionalism.”  “Connections made in in through the college is very important, especially after graduation students also benefit from learning how to react to situations. It will likely run into in their fields after college, even if they do not know the solution for every problem. They encounter they can have a foundation to help them investigate find the answers before.”
Communication	“I would like them to be able to write and speak in the right verb tense.”  “Our employers are looking for soft skills as well as academics ... They also want our graduates to be good team members.”
Ability to adapt	Self-advocacy, work/life management

## Appendix F

### QEP Call for Proposals

**From:** Melody Moore  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 8:17 AM  
**Subject:** QEP Call for Proposals: Updated Deadline, 22 May

*Sent on behalf of Dr. Robert Bleil, Chair, QEP Topic Selection Committee*

Dear Colleagues,

As you prepare to bring the semester to a close, please consider submitting your ideas for the next QEP. The deadline for preliminary proposals has been extended to **Friday, 22 May 2020**.

Thanks to all those who participated in the faculty and staff listening sessions for the College's next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The Topic Selection Committee (TSC) appreciates your input as we continue this process.

For those of you who were unable to attend the session, and for those who would like more information about the QEP topic selection process, please visit the QEP web site at: <https://www.ccgga.edu/2022qep>.

The TSC is now accepting preliminary proposals for the next QEP. Full instructions and sample documents can be found at <https://www.ccgga.edu/2022qep>. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on Call for Pre-Proposals. The direct link to the pre-proposal information is: [Call for Pre- Proposals](#). At the conclusion of the pre-proposal process, topics that advance to the next stage will be invited to submit more detailed plans.

The Call for Proposals closes at 5:00pm on **Friday, 22 May 2020**.

If you have any questions about the QEP process or suggestions that you would like the TSC to consider, please email them to: [qep@ccgga.edu](mailto:qep@ccgga.edu).

Thanks for your time.

Robert Bleil, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of English and American Studies  
Chair, QEP Topic Selection Committee

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# Appendix G

## Suggested Guidelines for Preliminary QEP Proposal

### Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is part of the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The QEP involves developing and accessing a strategy “to improve an area of student learning or student success in a significant way through a campus-wide, five-year initiative.” The focus of the QEP is determined by faculty, staff, and students, and must provide resources for the development, implementation, assessment, and completion of the plan.

### SACSCOC QEP Expectations

The QEP must be approved by a team of SACSCOC peer reviewers in November 2021 as a condition for our reaffirmation in June 2022. The elements of an approved QEP include the following criteria:

#### Standard 7.2: Quality Enhancement Plan

The institution has a Quality Enhancement Plan that

- has a topic identified through ongoing, comprehensive planning/evaluation processes;
- has broad-based support of institutional constituencies;
- focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success;
- commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP; and
- includes a plan to assess achievement.

Specific guidance on SACSCOC expectations for effective QEPs can be found at <http://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan.pdf>

Executive summaries of QEPs developed by other institutions can be found at the SACSCOC web site located at <http://www.sacscoc.org/QEPSummaries.asp>.

### Principal Themes

One or more of the following principal themes in no particular order must be incorporated into your QEP proposal.

1. Applied/Experiential Learning
2. First-Year Experience (FYE)
3. Advising & Career Development
4. Information Literacy/Fluency
5. Cultural Understanding/Diversity
6. Personal Wellness

## Call for Proposals

As you develop your brief proposal, please keep in mind that you are not required to provide a fully detailed plan at this stage. The proposal will be reviewed by the QEP Topic Selection Committee with the understanding that further development will be necessary to meet expectations outlined by SACSCOC. In a brief, two-to-three-page document (single-spaced, one-inch margins), please address the following prompts.

Proposals are due by **May 8, 2020**. Please submit your proposal by email to [QEP@ccga.edu](mailto:QEP@ccga.edu).

## QEP Proposal Template

### Contact Details

*Identify a primary contact person and provide their email address and phone number.*

### Title and Summary

*Provide a proposal title and a summary describing the basic concept, its relationship to one or more of the themes, and the expected outcomes of the plan.*

### Description

*How is the proposed topic transformative in terms of student learning and/or student success? What student learning outcomes are addressed?*

### Need

*How do you envision your proposed topic will positively impact an issue or need related to student learning and/or student success at the institutional level?*

### Implementation

*How would you go about implementing your plan to improve student learning and/or student success? What steps or actions would you implement?*

### Expected Outcomes

*How does your QEP topic relate to an issue where there is momentum building on campus or an issue that would be significantly improved through added attention and resources toward students?*

### Assessment

*What measurable indicators would be used to measure the success of your QEP proposal?*

### Feasibility

*What kind of resources do you anticipate will be needed? Are there any known costs, such as personnel, capital, equipment, technology, or any associated cost outside current institution resources?*

### Date Submitted

*Record the month, date and year proposal is submitted*

## Criteria for Evaluation

The QEP Topic Selection Committee will use the following questions to evaluate proposals:

- Is there a clear and concise description of a significant issue directly related to student learning?
- What are the goals of the QEP, and how do they relate to student learning?
- What evidence suggests that this focus area is needed at Coastal Georgia?
- How does the proposed QEP topic align with the institution's mission and strategic plan?
- What steps and resources are needed for successful implementation?
- How will the goals and outcomes be measured or assessed?
- Is needs assessment supporting the need for the QEP?

# Appendix H

## Suggested Guidelines for White Paper

As you develop your brief proposal, please note that you do not have to provide a fully detailed plan, particularly at this stage. The expanded topic proposal (white paper) should be between 10-15 pages in length. The proposal will be reviewed by the QEP Topic Selection Committee.

White papers need to be submitted electronically to [QEP@ccga.edu](mailto:QEP@ccga.edu) no later than **Monday, June 22**.

### QEP White Paper Template

#### Title & Summary

- Provide a working title for the proposed QEP topic.
- Briefly describe the issue the QEP proposal is addressing and its significance to student learning/success.

#### Student Learning

- What aspects of student learning/success are to be affected by this topic?
- What are the goals/objectives for improving student learning/success?
- What does the literature say about this aspect of student learning/success?
- What are the College's specific needs?

#### Significance

- Why is it important for student learning/success in this area to be improved?
- Why is it essential that this topic be addressed in the immediate future?
- What evidence is available to indicate that this is a need at the College?

#### Description & Scope

- Describe the activities to be implemented to improve student learning/success.
- Describe the scope of application and the roles of those involved in the proposed plan.
- What group(s) of students would be impacted/affected?
- What kinds of offices and departments would be involved in the implementation?
- What are the best practices associated with the proposed topic?

#### Assessment

- What kinds of student learning outcomes would be addressed?
- What kinds of measures and instruments would be used?
- What kind of assessment schedule should be followed?

#### Schedule

- Develop a draft schedule of the focused activities and initiatives that would take place to prepare and implement the QEP; e.g., Year One, Year Two, Year Three, Year Four, and Year Five.

#### Resources

- Describe the kinds of resources needed to implement the proposed topic.
- Describe the level of financial support required to implement the proposed topic.

**Commitment to Topic**

- What is the likelihood that staff and faculty would provide support to these initiatives?
- What would be potential barriers to obtaining the necessary support from them?
- What kinds of things should be done to remove those barriers?
- What level of support would be expected from the broader campus community?

**Expertise**

- Explain your interest in and experience with the proposed topic.
- Describe any previous research you have conducted on this or related topics.
- Are there individuals at the College well-qualified to work on this topic?

**Bibliography**

- Provide a list of sources used in the full proposal.

# Appendix I

## QEP Topic Selection Preliminary Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Author(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Indicator	Exceptional 5	Acceptable 3	Weak 1	Unacceptable 0	Points
<b>Description</b>	<i>How is the proposed topic transformative in terms of student learning and/or student success? What student learning outcomes are addressed?</i>	Proposal offers a compelling topic description; project goals are feasible given the scope of the topic and are clearly articulated.	Proposal description is clear; goals are described in adequate detail but may seem somewhat over- or under-ambitious for the scope of the topic.	Proposal description is vague or unclear; goals are not clearly articulated and do not appear to be feasible.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	
<b>Level of Need</b>	<i>How do you envision your proposed topic will positively impact an issue or need related to student learning and/or student success at the institutional level?</i>	Proposal convincingly describes a need for the topic; direct and strong relationship between the proposed topic and key student learning and/or student success.	Proposal describes a need for the topic but does not offer a strong relationship between the proposed topic and key student learning and/or student success issue.	Weak or unclear relationship between the proposed topic and key student learning and/or student success issue.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	
<b>Implementation</b>	<i>How would you go about implementing your plan to improve student learning and/or student success? What steps or actions would you implement?</i>	Proposal provides a clear explanation of steps or actions needed to implement a plan to improve student learning and/or student success.	Proposal mentions minimal steps or actions needed to implement a plan to improve student learning and/or student success.	Steps or actions needed to implement a plan to improve student learning and/or student success are unclear or insufficient.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<i>How does your QEP topic relate to an issue where there is momentum building on campus or an issue that would be significantly improved through added attention and resources toward students?</i>	Proposal clearly identifies which program(s), area(s), or set(s) of students impacted and linked to student learning and/or student success.	Proposal identifies the program(s), area(s), or set(s) of students impacted, but not clearly linked to student learning and/or student success.	Proposal identifies some program(s), area(s), or set(s) of students impacted, but it is unclear as to the level of impact.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	

Criteria	Indicator	Exceptional 5	Acceptable 3	Weak 1	Unacceptable 0	Points
<b>Assessment</b>	<i>What measurable indicators would be used to measure the success of your QEP proposal?</i>	Proposal clearly identifies student learning methods, triangulated assessment methods, including direct measures of outcomes.	Proposal identifies student learning methods, assessment methods, and direct measures of outcomes.	Proposal identifies some of the appropriate student learning methods, assessment methods, or direct measures of outcomes.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	
<b>Feasibility &amp; Sustainability</b>	<i>What kind of resources (personnel, training, technology, etc.) do you anticipate will be needed? Are there any known costs, such as personnel, capital, equipment, technology, or any associated cost that may be outside the current institution resources?</i>	Proposal includes a clear, feasible path for sustainability and describes convincingly how results will be preserved and further developed.	Proposal offers some plan for sustainability and sustainability, but the path is unclear or seems unrealistic.	Proposal does not include a clear or easily understood explanation of topic feasibility and sustainability.	Proposal does not meet minimal standards.	
<b>TOTAL</b>						
<b>Reflection &amp; Comments</b>	<b>General Comments</b>					
	<b>Proposal Strengths</b>					
	<b>Proposal Weaknesses</b>					

# Appendix J

## QEP Full White Paper Evaluation Rubric

REVIEWING THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN A SACSCOC EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

White Paper Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Exceptional 5	Acceptable 3	Weak 1	Unacceptable 0	Points
Topic identified through ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes	A clear and well-defined topic is directly related to – and arose out of – institutional planning processes. Topic selection involved a wide range of constituents. Selection of topic determined by a representative process that considered institutional needs and viability of plan.	A clearly defined topic is directly related to prior institutional planning which had involved broad-based effort. Plan then developed by key individuals and/or groups on campus.	A core group of Institutional representatives develop topic and plan. Some attempt is made to connect topic/plan to prior institutional planning.	The topic is ill-defined and unclear –or– the QEP has multiple topics. The QEP appears to have little or no connection to ongoing institutional planning and evaluation and may have been chosen by administrators without much, if any, input from other constituencies.	
Broad-based support of institutional constituencies	QEP identifies important constituent groups engaged in developing and initiating the plan. Stakeholders are well-informed and appropriately engaged in the implementation and assessment of the plan.	Process of identifying the topic and developing the QEP engaged appropriate constituencies. Stakeholders are informed and somewhat engaged in the implementation process.	Some evidence that appropriate constituent groups were consulted in the process of developing the plan. Appropriate stakeholders generally agree that the QEP is worth implementing.	No evidence of how appropriate institutional stakeholders involved in developing the plan or have signaled their support for the plan. QEP may ignore constituent groups important to its successful implementation.	

Criteria	Exceptional 5	Acceptable 3	Weak 1	Unacceptable 0	Points
Focus on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success	QEP is focused on important outcomes related to student learning and/or student success. Outcomes are specific and measurable. Baseline data is present and has been analyzed. Targets for improvement are appropriate.	QEP is focused on important outcomes related to student learning and/or student success. Outcomes are specific and measurable. Baseline data is present and has been analyzed. Targets for improvement are appropriate.	QEP is generally related to student learning and/or student success. Outcomes are stated in very general terms. Strategies may threaten to shift focus away from improving student learning and/or student success during the implementation phase. Baseline data and targets for improvement may be present but not clearly related or demonstrably appropriate.	The topic appears focused on faculty and/or institutional administrative strategies rather than student learning and/or student success. Little or no identification of specific outcomes directly related to student learning and/or success. Goals and outcomes/objectives are generic and difficult to measure. Baseline data and target for improvement is not present.	
Resources needed to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP	Human and financial resources are clearly identified for all stages of implementing and completing the plan. Institutional stakeholders are involved in ongoing planning and evaluation to adjust the resources as the plan proceeds, if necessary.	Human and financial resources are clearly identified for all stages of implementing and completing the plan. Institutional stakeholders are involved in ongoing planning and evaluation to adjust the resources as the plan proceeds, if necessary.	QEP budget provides minimal information about financial resources committed for initiation of the plan. Narrative addresses human resources and re-allocation of resources. Implementing and completing the plan may stretch the institution beyond its demonstrated capacity.	QEP narrative lacks information about institutional resources available and committed to initiate, implement, and complete the plan. Budget lacks sufficient detail to determine "new" vs. "re-purposed" resources. Funding the plan may depend on future state appropriations or grant monies. Implementing the plan will probably stretch the institution beyond its demonstrated capacity.	

Criteria	Exceptional 5	Acceptable 3	Weak 1	Unacceptable 0	Points
Plan to assess achievement	Outcomes are specific, measurable, and clearly related to student learning and/or student success. Assessments are appropriate and directly assess the outcomes. The plan includes both formative and summative assessments. Institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are identified and appropriately supported. A timeline for interim formative analysis and plan adjustments is outlined.	Outcomes are specific, measurable and clearly related to student learning and/or student success. Assessments are appropriate and directly assess the outcomes. The plan includes both formative and summative assessments. Institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are identified and appropriately supported. A timeline for interim formative analysis and plan adjustments is outlined.	Outcomes are related to student learning and/or student success, but too general. Some assessments are direct, but the balance leans toward indirect assessments. Institutional personnel responsible for analyzing and using assessment data are not clearly identified or clearly overworked.	Outcomes related to specific student learning and/or student success are poorly stated or non-existent. Timelines for assessing the QEP's impact are missing. Assessments are indirect. No group is responsible for analyzing assessment data.	
<b>TOTAL</b>					
<b>Comments:</b>					
<b>What are the major strengths of this white paper that could be applied to an eventual QEP topic?</b>					
<b>What are the major weaknesses of this white paper that would have to be corrected before this could be a good QEP topic?</b>					