The “Write to Work” College is Launched!

Dr. Chris Anson, Director of the Campus Writing and Speaking Program at North Carolina State University, provided keynote remarks to inaugurate the first annual “Write to Work” Conference held at Mountain View College on June 22nd.

Seventy-two conferees, representing six different area community colleges, attended the professional development event, dedicated to beginning a conversation about effective teaching in the 21st century.

The conference featured remarks from Dr. Robert Garza, Mountain View College President, Dr. Christine Hubbard, Director of the North Texas Community College Consortium, Ms. Lori Knight, from the Texas Workforce Commission, and Norman Beck, from SCA Corporation in Dallas. The North Texas Community College Consortium co-sponsored the event.

The purpose of the “Write to Work” Conferences is to facilitate an ongoing professional dialogue between North Texas Community College Consortium teaching colleagues and administrators to prepare students to graduate, find meaningful jobs, and begin their chosen careers.

Through these annual conversations we hope to assist community college teachers in exploring how we may better align what and how we teach across disciplines with the present and on-going employment needs of our respective college service areas.

This effort supports plans like the Dallas County Community College District’s “You’re Hired” emphasis, “Guided Pathways” and similar degree planning approaches, and the four goals of the Texas 60x30TX strategic plan.

The first and primary goal of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s 60x30TX strategic plan is for 60% of Texas citizens between 25-34 years old to hold a college degree or certificate in the year 2030.

However, the latest data published in the 2016-17 THECB “60x30TX” report suggests that trends in college degree completion rates between 2005 and 2015 pose serious challenges to meeting this goal. Failure to meet “60x30TX” goals will mean that fewer and fewer people entering the burgeoning Texas population will be able to secure long-term gainful employment, and, according to former Texas state demographer Steve Murdock, the overall quality of life in Texas will decline proportionately.

Lorena Knight, of the Texas Workforce Commission, has identified 20 soft skill failures that restrict or threaten people’s opportunities to find and maintain better-than-entry-level jobs. According to Ms. Knight, the most significant inhibiting factor is inability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

We hope that this first attempt to develop a professional dialogue will grow, but more important, we hope that what comes from it in the creative insight that can flower most fully in a collective setting like this will come to make a difference in the lives of our students for years to come.
Reading for Better Understanding: The QEP Literature Review

Editor’s Note: In each Update, we recommend readings directly related to points of interest for our QEP work. Chief Librarian Jean Baker and her colleagues have created a helpful QEP LibGuide containing links to scholarly articles supporting our Goal 1 student cohort, writing intensive courses, and our continuing efforts to nurture a culture of writing across the campus. To access the QEP shared literature review article, please click the persistent link found below. If you’d like to view other articles about QEP subjects you may visit the QEP Literature Review Libguide. (http://libguides.mountainviewcollege.edu/qlistsupport) Reading an article about a QEP subject counts as QEP professional development. To submit a professional development completion form simply click the “Follow up Report” link below. If you read an article you’d like included as the monthly shared read, please email Jean Baker.

Follow up QEP Report: https://mvcollegesips.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80UtKRoQNY7WYaV7NoBranding=True

QEP-Related Topic: Persistence of College Students
Title: After the Doors Opened: Asking Why at a New Community College
Abstract: This chapter describes some of the major principles, practices, and processes involved in designing and founding a new community college dedicated to improving student outcomes by doing things differently.

The QEP looks to build on past achievements in preparation for the next five years

The QEP Committee is already racing into the next five years with three meetings of the Steering Committee already under its fall wing. This year, we look to expand services to students with a number of initiatives. Major activities include efforts to

- Enhance the use of data to better serve and communicate with our self-declared degree-seeking First-Time-In-College students
- Introduce the QEP to new staff, faculty, and administrators
- Increase student awareness of QEP-supported learning opportunities
- Expand the number of QEP-certified instructors and development of additional Writing-Intensive and Writing-Enhanced courses
- Augment the image of Mountain View College as the District’s ‘Write to Work’ College
- Work with the QEP faculty to improve the quality of student writing samples (and overall writing success in their classes)
- Improve students’ mastery of basic sentence grammar and critical thinking skills
- Increase the number of opportunities for students to write and to network with professional writers in the greater MVC service area

Following the success of the professional development “Write to Work” Conference this past summer, committee members are looking forward this year to expanding activities even more aimed at MVC students. A student-centered conference with workshops dedicated to specific “on-the-job” writing skills is already under discussion and may be implemented later this fall. Such activities serve Goal 3: To nurture a culture of writing across the campus. The General QEP Committee will convene on September 28th to hear committee reports, to approve the 2018-19 budget allocations, and to discuss the direction for “The Pen is Our Power” going forward.

Dr. Camille Raspante, QEP Assessment Committee

The QEP Fall Calendar

Friday, September 7 – QEP Steering Committee, 10:10 – 11:00 a.m./3:30 – 4:30 p.m., W200
Friday, September 14 – QEP Steering Committee, 10:10 – 11:00 a.m./3:30 – 4:30 p.m., W200
Friday, September 28 – General QEP Committee, 1:30 p.m. (Room TBA)
Friday, October 19 – QEP Steering Committee, 10:10 – 11:00 a.m./3:30 – 4:30 p.m., W200
Friday, November 9 – QEP Steering Committee, 10:10 – 11:00 a.m./3:30 – 4:30 p.m., W200
Friday, November 30 – QEP Steering Committee, 10:10 – 11:00 a.m./3:30 – 4:30 p.m., W200