The Del Mar College QEP Team has reviewed the proposed QEP topics and is requesting that you provide further development of the idea by responding to these standardized questions. We thank you for your input and participation in assisting the College in developing a well-defined, meaningful QEP.

What is the specific problem or opportunity that this QEP topic addresses?

Research demonstrates that student success courses and Freshman Seminar programs help students learn to be effective in school and thereby improve student academic performance and persistence. Nationally 80% of higher education institutions require at least some of their students to enroll in the first year programs and more than 1/2 of these institutions require all students to enroll in first year seminars (National Resource Center, 2003). Presently, Freshman Seminar is required of students enrolling in English 0307 for the first time; therefore, the program is serving a limited number of students. Although the linkage of FSEM with English has been most beneficial, extending the service to include all developmental and Arts & Sciences academic students in their first year of college would help improve student learning outcomes, first to second year persistence rates and would result in higher student engagement. In addition, the limited time the courses meet is detrimental to the progress of the program. The goal of this proposal would be to expand the program to include all developmental and first year Arts & Sciences academic students and to improve the time factor. Students who enroll in FSEM courses will show that taking responsibility for academic and personal development early makes college easier to manage. Student outcomes could be measured by the various study skills, college resources introduction, career exploration and advising opportunities, time management exercises, and a significant number of additional strategies that will assist students in maximizing academic success. The expansion of the program would be rewarding to the student, to the program, to the department, and to the institution.

Which students or group of students would be the focus of this topic?

Currently, only students enrolled in English 0307 are required to enroll in Freshman Seminar. However, the instructional content includes skills essential to success across disciplines and in all college courses that lead to certificates, associate’s degrees, and lifelong learning. Therefore, all Arts and Sciences students would be the focus of this topic in which the learning process would extend from the first year of college to the second.

Which departments, offices or programs would be involved?

Initially, the Department of Communications, Languages & Reading and the faculty and staff of the Arts and Sciences Department would be involved. However, it is essential to include counseling, financial aid, institutional research, student services, the library, Title V, and other complementing resources. Eventually, the entire college community will embrace the principles of this student-centered program.

What are the specific results that you expect to achieve from the implementation of the QEP?

Several results are expected, but primarily students will demonstrate a commitment to learning and the college will benefit from the mission-driven goals and objectives of the program. Advising and teaching functions will be better coordinated. Connections will be made. For example, Freshman Seminar is a viable connection to the structure of the proposed Student Success Center. Students will adopt study skills necessary to improve learning outcomes in all discipline areas as well as acknowledge resources that will improve academic success. Student persistence rates will increase as a result of their involvement in career exploration, advising opportunities, and educational plan activities. In general, this program will develop a greater sense of community learning for everyone who participates.

Describe how this QEP affects student learning.

At the end of each semester, students will be able to:

* Locate and identify college resources
* Demonstrate knowledge of time management and make adjustments to meet course needs
* Identify career interests, choose majors, develop an advisor connection
* Recognize parts of a degree and record progress on degree plan
* Demonstrate knowledge of basic study skills
* Understand college readiness and evaluate strengths and weaknesses (V.A.R.K. and other surveys)
* Demonstrate organization and college readiness through a productive, reflective, and cumulative portfolio of their first-year learning experience

These responses are due in the office of the VPI by April 2, 2007. Date Received in office of VPI: 4/2/07