

LTC Compliance Certification: QEP Executive Summary

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Judgement of Compliance

Executive Summary

The goals of Lanier Technical College's Quality Enhancement Plan were to 1) improve student success in math learning support (developmental) courses and 2) improve students' ability to apply mathematical skills in occupational courses.

Major strategies used to reach these goals were 1) redesign of instructional delivery for learning support courses, 2) enhanced tutoring services, 3) targeted professional development activities.

Progress toward the first goal was measured using scores on student learning outcomes assessments in LTC's math learning support courses. Progress toward the second goal was measured using scores on a math-related student learning outcome assessment in each of the college's occupational program. While course completion is not a direct measure of student learning, the LTC's QEP Team also monitored course success rates (the percentage of students completing the course with a grade of A, B, or C) throughout the five years of the plan.

Prior to launch of the QEP, Lanier Technical College math learning support courses were delivered through an "emporium" model, in which students worked at their own pace to complete learning modules on specific topics that mapped to the course objectives. Rather than lecturing, the teacher circulated through the class and acted as a facilitator. Both diploma- and degree-level students were placed in these courses, with the degree-level students being required to complete additional modules on more advanced topics. This model was not successful: only 17% of the students were able to successfully complete the course in a single term, and only 38% of the

students were able to complete the course regardless of number of attempts. Students who did not complete their required learning support coursework were not able to graduate.

In the redesigned math learning support courses, students were enrolled in both a traditional face-to-face lecture class and a paired course focusing on learning strategies, study skills, time management, and dealing with math anxiety.

Prior to the start of term, LTC provided focused training for all QEP instructors on:

- Sample lessons
- Teaching strategies
- Study skills
- Use of math manipulatives
- Dealing with math anxiety
- Learning styles

The college also established tutoring centers at the main campus and at its largest instructional site. Tutoring centers were added to the remaining two permanent instructional sites in the second year of the QEP. Each semester, the tutors working in these centers were provided with training sessions paralleling those provided for the instructors.

From the beginning, student success in the QEP math learning support courses improved dramatically. The success rate for degree-level students went to 55% in the "baseline" year of the plan (Year 0). For diploma-level students, a pilot course was offered for a small cohort of students. 71% of these students completed the course with a grade of A, B, or C (29% withdrew from the course). These strong results continued in the first full year of delivering QEP courses: 94% of diploma-level and 72% of degree-level students successfully completed the courses.

In the second year of the QEP, several factors combined to lessen the improvements seen in Year 0 and Year 1. 1) New, lower placement test cut scores were adopted. 2) The college stopped enforcing its attendance policy. 3) To accommodate scheduling needs of students in some occupational programs, the contact hours for the diploma-level support course was reduced from three contact hours to one hour. In Year 2, success rates dropped by 20% for the diploma-level students and by 9% for the degree-level students. Success rates continued at comparable levels in Year 3 and

Year 4. In Year 5, LTC returned to the three-hour support courses, and success rates again improved dramatically. The success rate for diploma-level students was 100% in Year 5 and 82% for degree-level students.

At the beginning of the QEP, LTC offered face-to-face math tutoring in the tutoring centers, and had tutors working with students in math learning support classes. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the college began offering online tutoring. The scope of tutoring services was expanded continually through the life of the plan. Tutoring was offered for an extended range of subjects, and the tutors received training on support topics such as study skills, time management, and dealing with math anxiety. By the end of the plan, LTC was offering both face-to-face and online tutoring in a wide range of subjects, delivered by well-trained tutors capable of helping students with success skills as well as academic subject content.

Targeted professional development activities took place throughout the plan. Prior to the start of each term, the QEP Director organized training sessions for full- and part-time QEP instructors as well as the tutors. During these sessions, full-time faculty provided subject matter training for the tutors. Professional, third-party speakers and trainers were brought in to expand the scope of training. All QEP instructors and tutors were invited to share best practices, a number of which were adopted across all QEP classes and tutoring centers. The QEP Director delivered presentations on student learning outcomes, both to ensure all instructors understood the structure and purpose of student learning outcomes assessment, and to solicit their input on how to improve the outcomes and assessment measures being used. There is a widely shared sense among stakeholders that these professional development activities not only improved the quality of instruction and ensured more consistent delivery, but also built a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose across the QEP Team.

Over the life of the plan, student learning outcomes assessment results improved by 14% for students in the diploma-level math learning support courses, and by 5% for the degree level students. Assessment results for math-related student learning outcomes in the occupational programs improved by 10%. The student success rate in diploma-level math learning support was 100% at the end of the plan, and 82% for degree-level students, a 27% improvement over the baseline.