FYI Steering Committee  
September 24, 2009 Minutes

Present: Mary Bantell, David Billeaux, Kent Byus, David Grisé, Bridgette Hardin, Mark Hartlaub, Carlos Huerta, Yolanda Keys, Sarah Lumpkins, Robert Nelsen, Chris Shupala, Blair Sterba-Boatwright, Susan Wolff Murphy

Minutes from September 17, 2009 were approved, with the revised statement of:

Discussion from last meeting: How to simplify?
- Consider “curriculum redesign” really a description/requirement of the assessment plan of faculty development & student learning because this is an end result of what the program is trying to do.

Samples of the FYI water bottles were distributed. There are 2,500 in storage that will be used for promoting the FYI program in the late fall/early spring.

Math Overview – B. Sterba-Boatwright

Math faculty met recently to try to decide what aspects of the intervention they are able to commit to.

Focus:
1. Curricular changes in the algebra sequence (MATH 0398-0399-1314). Faculty will look at different course formats (e.g., modularization, online courses). A math faculty member will be attending a conference soon to hear presentations from three other schools that are using modularized algebra courses.
2. Change placement procedures. Ensure more accurate process to place students.
3. Online bridge program. This will target students who have been out of math for awhile and have lost their skills.

*Calculus Lab intervention is currently on hold until math faculty reach consensus on what changes would be desirable.

Limiting factor on other interventions: The faculty member originally envisioned to lead the Math Community of Practice (COP) is currently unable to due to health issues, and no one else is willing to step forward and take charge. The current math faculty does not have ‘math education’ as their primary research focus. Volunteering to become the COP Team Leader would be more of a service opportunity rather than research. There is a lack of motivation due to the Promotion and Tenure (P&T)’s push on research.

Implementing a reward structure could perhaps motivate faculty leaders. S. Wolff Murphy suggested implementing the FYI Math COP Team Leader in a later year when there are resources to support this. Current Math chair, George Tintera, is aware of the QEP math interventions and wants to implement this as soon as there are available resources. Since Math currently does not have a faculty member able to volunteer their time, S. Wolff Murphy suggested having a faculty member from the College of Education act as the Team Leader, provide suggestions to Math faculty, and hold the discussions but the math faculty ultimately makes the final decisions. B. Sterba-Boatwright thought that could be possible.

Reward Structure Discussion

R. Nelsen asked if administration needs to step in motivate faculty members who volunteer as the COP Team Leaders? Faculty are hesitant to commit to service projects rather than research projects due to the procedures of P&T. S. Wolff Murphy commented that this COP position within the discipline will receive a summer course release to research implementing new teaching methods. However, maybe that is not enough. Perhaps this should be two summer course releases, but obligate throughout the year. In the first few years of implementation monies from the initial interventions that have been cut from the program to
reward these individuals is possible, but as the implementation progresses the monies will not be available. C. Huerta commented on the need for academic deans to be aware of the service time. R. Nelsen suggested putting a letter in personnel files from the Provost stating the important work of the QEP members and this service counts towards promotion and tenure. D. Billeaux and R. Nelsen will talk with the Provost regarding rewards to volunteers. Deans, department chairs and P&T Committee also need to know this reward.

Mission Statement Revision
Descriptive vocabulary was discussed. Invigorate will replace refreshing. Y. Keys suggested replacing the word ‘college’ with ‘higher education.’

Mission Statement
Through its First-Year Islanders (FYI) plan, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will transform the academic experience of its first-year students by supporting the underprepared to prepare, encouraging the prepared to advance, and inspiring the advanced to excel.

The First-Year Islanders program will improve the learning experience of all first-year students by:

- Transitioning first-year students to higher education learning through the WAVE bridge experience;
- Providing faculty development focused on first-year students; and
- Invigorate the content and teaching methods of first-year courses.

C. Huerta motioned to approve the mission statement. R. Nelsen second, all in favor.

Matrix (Handout)

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*In addition to the Communities of Practice within the 3 areas (math, reading, barrier courses), campus-wide faculty development events will be implemented to support teaching for all students. For example, have a speaker come and talk about the “millennial student.” Current faculty can share their successful ideas and experiences with other faculty.

FYI Convocation/WAVE BBQ Discussion
Discussions were made on how convocation should be conducted: formal vs. informal. Since we are an “island” university, perhaps an “island” feel should be the target of convocation. However, this is not 13th grade and a more formal convocation can represent the collegiate, professional atmosphere. The WAVE BBQ could have fun events and games with faculty and parents. This could be the informal aspect and the convocation can be more formal. UT-Pan American has a Poker Tournament with new students and faculty. Since Saturday is move-in day, agreement was made on having both events on the same day, the Sunday before school starts. Parents and family members can be invited to the fun WAVE BBQ and later in the evening, just the students (as parents leave campus). To pilot this event, the target audience will be the WAVE Learning Community and their families. The FYI Program Coordinator will set up a FYI Convocation/WAVE BBQ Planning Team to determine the events logistics and activities of this bridge experience.

PAC and Dugan Wellness Center/Rec Fields and Pool: Currently reserved for Sunday, Aug. 22 AND 29 (waiting on academic calendar approval)
President also has these dates blocked on his calendar.

Five-Year Plan
This QEP is not a stand-alone program, it is portable. The home for the FYI Program Coordinator and the bridge events can be placed in Core Curriculum - First-Year Programs. The COP can be placed into a larger faculty development initiative, perhaps the Faculty Renaissance Center, or through Department Chairs. The COP will change as needs arise. Assessment will be held by each discipline, or through the Core Curriculum.

Assessment
WEAVEOnline will be used as a ‘bookkeeping software’ for assessment data.

COP Facilitator – History
Dr. Peter Moore has researched data and found interesting information and will begin meeting with faculty for open discussion.

FYI Office Space
Unconfirmed space in the library has been allocated to the QEP. It is two offices (218A and 218A1). One will be used as a conference room, with faculty development/student worker space with a library. The second office will be shared by the FYI Program Coordinator (full time) and the FYI Director (half time). Confirmation on this space allocation should be made in October.

Implementation Committee Development
SACS outside reviewers will want to know if the Implementation Team is created and working with the Steering Committee. Goals of this team should be determined. This team needs to be able to read the assessment results and make a decision if plans need to change throughout the year. Although our initial implementation does not involve all colleges, each college should be represented on the Implementation Team, because all students will be affected. The Implementation Team will have to have met with the Steering Committee at least 5 – 6 times before the on-site visit in March. The Implementation Team members will need to be selected and start meeting by this December.

December 2009 – send QEP report to SACS

Next meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2 – 3:45 p.m., UC Island Room 316