Adaptable Holistic Advising

A Quality Enhancement Plan in Advising

Bladen Community College
Dublin, North Carolina 28332
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On-Site Review: September 19-22, 2022

Response to Formal Recommendation Standard 7.2

Bladen
Community
College

Student Centered • Future Focused

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bladen Community College (BCC) is a small community college in rural southeastern North Carolina. Located in Bladen County, the College serves a diverse group of students, over half of whom belong to racial or ethnic minorities, and many of whom are first-generation college students.

Bladen Community College is "Student Centered and Future Focused." As a result of this emphasis, the College has a reputation for fostering an environment where the commitment to student success is a priority. This environment facilitates the College's ability to respond to community needs, student challenges, and student barriers. The College realizes the value of providing individualized educational plans for each student to address their unique situations while obtaining their goals. Further, the College recognizes the need for continual improvement and to systemize effective practices to increase retention and completion rates.

Because the College identifies student success as retention from fall to fall, persisting in educational goals at Bladen Community College or another educational institution, and/or completing their educational goals through certificate, diploma, or associate degree awarded, decreasing the racial and ethnic equity gap, and based on data from the literature review (Appendix M), the College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is designed to focus on Adaptive Holistic Advising in order to in order to increase retention, persistence, completion, and decreasing equity gaps through:

1. Improving student entry and exit procedures
2. Development and implementation of an adaptive holistic advising training module for all advisors
3. Reformulating early alerts and interventions system

Bladen Community College selected this QEP focus after soliciting stakeholder feedback, holding strategic planning sessions, and conducting a needs assessment of the College. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning (Director of IEP) collected information through surveys completed by faculty, staff, students, community stakeholders, and the Board of Trustees in order to determine the areas of greatest need at the College. The topics that emerged then became the subject of discussion during college-wide planning meetings. The final QEP selection aligned with the College's Strategic Plan which centered on student success (Appendix K and Appendix L).

BCC began reorganizing the College by combining curriculum and workforce development under a "one-college" model. The "one-college" model means that all employees on campus are committed to the success of the student by working together to understand the unique needs of each student, address barriers and challenges impeding their progression towards their educational goals. The objective of this organizational model is to provide an easy entry for

potential students and smooth progression for current students by placing the burden of understanding the nuances of higher education on the College professionals. This model shifts the College from dividing advising responsibilities between faculty and student services counselors to a centralized strategy with professional advisors which also laid the foundation for a one-stop center for student services. For this strategy to be effective, the professional advisors must offer students consistent, high-quality advising and robust, coordinated support that identify, anticipate, and meets their varied needs.

COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY PROFILE
Founded in 1967, Bladen Community College is one of fifty-eight community colleges throughout North Carolina. The College employs roughly 100 full-time employees, nearly half of whom are instructional faculty. Though most of BCC's enrolled students come from its home county Bladen, approximately 42% of students reside in neighboring counties. Among continuing education students, the number of out-of-county students is even higher.

Despite being the fourth largest by land area of North Carolina's one hundred counties, Bladen County is less populous than most. Located in the rural southeastern part of the state, Bladen County depends on agriculture—including blueberries, peanuts, and soybeans—food processing, and manufacturing to drive its local economy. The College exists to support these local economies, facilitate students' smooth transfer to university or into the workforce, and promote the enrichment and advancement of its communities.

In Fall 2021, Bladen Community College enrolled 1,217 curriculum students and recorded a duplicated headcount of 1,276 students seeking a continuing education credential (programs that require ninety-six hours or more). BCC is also home to Bladen Early College High School and a robust dual enrollment program, Career and College Promise. In Fall 2021, over half of BCC students identified as a member of an ethnic or racial minority group, two-thirds were women, and over half enrolled part-time (Bladen Community College Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, 2021b). Excluding the dually-enrolled students and the continuing education students, 72% of students received federal, state, or scholarship aid; 61.3% of the total received federal Pell grants (S. Benson, Office of Financial Aid, personal communication, May 4, 2022).

QEP DEVELOPMENT
To align with SACSCOC guidelines and best advance constituents' needs, the administration, staff, and faculty worked to give every potential stakeholder a voice, to center the effort on critical areas of need for the community, and to align the topic with Bladen Community College's mission statement and strategic planning efforts.

QEP Topic

Through strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and focused research, administration, faculty, and staff at BCC, chose to focus on increasing retention, completion, persistence, and decreasing the equity gap through holistic advising as the topic for BCC's Quality Enhancement Plan. To improve advising, the QEP focus areas are: improving student entry and exit procedures; creating a master advisor training program; and using the retention AI software, AVISO, to track student progress and offer timely interventions.

Broad-Based Involvement

From the outset of the Quality Enhancement Plan process, decisions were based on direct input from students, faculty, staff, trustees, and community members. Throughout the topic selection process, College employees could put forth ideas during department and campus-wide meetings and via surveys. The Board of Trustees had opportunities to provide input at the start of the process and during regular updates on the QEP's progress. Community stakeholders could express their needs and ideas during curriculum advisory committee meetings.

To ensure that all employees had a voice in choosing the QEP topic, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning attended department meetings and asked the groups to brainstorm potential topics. Ideas from these meetings then became options for employees in a campus-wide survey. Early responses from BCC employees focused on three key areas: creating a one-stop center for advising and registration; implementing guided pathways; and supporting career and technical education (Table 1 Top Three Choices and Appendix C for full results).

Table 1. Top Three QEP Choices

Title	Popularity	Description
Establishing a One-Stop Center	31.91%	Creating a one stop center that would provide all advising and registration procedures in one location for easier access. The center would simplify the flow of the registration processes while limiting barriers for students and creating an area for unified correspondence. In addition, the center could offer student career assessment and placement.
Developing Guided Pathways	21.28%	Focus on completion of degrees; ensure students take the courses in sequence (e.g., English and math early on); all degree programs have a common first semester so students that want to change majors will not lose credits; focus on keeping students on the pathway and successful. Revamp the

		website to provide students in-depth details about each degree including salary, job availability, job requirements, degree requirements including non-credit courses. Minimizing the credit hours for each degree program. Create degree specific ACA classes. Create a mandatory orientation for students to complete prior to registration that includes a module on how to be successful in online classes, expectations of being a college student, intro to services on campus.
Increasing CTE Success	8.51%	Increase career and technical education enrollment, marketing programs, increase knowledge & potential of programs, educate the community, student advising and recruitment, course sequencing, increase completion rates and job placement after graduation (career and advising center). Making sure we have the availability of the classes to respond to industry needs.

Students also had an opportunity to weigh in on BCC's QEP topic. They chose from among the employees' top three choices: 47.89% favored focusing on completion, the option labeled "guided pathways" for employees; 33.8% chose one-stop center, and 18.31% selected career and technical education (Appendix D). These top three choices also became the focus of BCC's 2020 planning retreat, where employees contemplated how these options could manifest at the College.

The input from employees and students emphasized completion efforts and a one-stop center, system of advising, registration, and student support. The College began some of this work before the QEP Director and committees were named. Plans for a one-stop center resulted in implementation of the Student Success and Engagement Center and plans to move the business office to Building 2, which already housed Admissions, Financial Aid, the Advising Center, and the Registrar's Office. These choices would allow students to visit a central location on campus for all of their administrative and registration needs and thereby satisfied one of the top choices in advance of the QEP.

In the employee survey, the second choice was identified as "Guided Pathways". The description encompassed far more and centered on supporting student completion. Pathways were already under review by department chairs and deans and led by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning. Likewise, The College's Website Committee implemented feedback to include

career opportunities on the website, and the College had previously worked to eliminate unnecessary credit hours under the statewide Completion by Design initiative.

Because this ongoing work touched upon many areas that students and employees had favored in surveys, the QEP Director and college employees worked to combine the most important remaining elements: communicating more effectively during the entry process, implementing career assessment, increasing completion rates, and teaching students how to be successful at the College. Advising emerged from these discussions as the best way to unite these different elements and to ensure that the QEP had a substantial basis in student and employee feedback.

With the topic chosen, the QEP Director solicited additional feedback from students and advisors to best focus the work on the most critical areas of need. To gain this feedback, the QEP Director attended all faculty department meetings and the department meeting of Student Services, which houses the Student Success and Engagement Center, counselors, and others who directly or indirectly advise students. The QEP Director distributed questionnaires to these groups to best capture their current advising practices and opinions (Appendix E). These small group settings also discussed thoughts, successes, and frustrations.

Advisors' feedback centered on three key components: the lack of consistency in advising practice, the absence of structured advisor training, and uncertainty about processes and procedures at the College (e.g., financial aid).

To reach students and capture real-time experiences, the QEP Director distributed start-of-semester advising questionnaires during the College's Scholarship Breakfast. The QEP Director visited the Student Government Association's first meeting of Fall 2021 to solicit input, as well as emailed all students a newsletter that covered the QEP progress to date, research findings, and the process for moving forward. Students expressed similar experiences as the advisors: they valued their advising experiences but sought better communication and more transparent advising processes.

The QEP Director took the feedback to the Implementation Committee of faculty advisors and staff from across the campus. This group determined that advisor training would best address the needs of the College and the feedback of its stakeholders.

Implementation Committee
Business and Office Administration Instructor
Nursing Instructor
English Instructor
Director for College Readiness
Early Childhood Instructor

Assistant Registrar
Advising Center Director

While the Implementation Committee met regularly to determine the details of the QEP, a Marketing Committee was convened to determine the best way to inform the campus community about the Quality Enhancement Plan.

Marketing Committee
Bookstore Assistant/Central Services Technician
North Carolina Information Highway Facilitator
Administrative Specialist for Workforce Training and Business Development
Early Childhood Instructor
Student Resource Center Director
History and Communications Instructor

In addition, the QEP Director solicited additional input on the specific advisor training module at the College. The QEP Director emailed all students and employees to determine the most desirable qualities in an advisor and sought input on best ideas and practices.

Alignment with College and Community Needs
In addition to the feedback from employees, students, and the community that captured individuals' experiences at the College, the QEP Director and Implementation committee also worked to ensure that the QEP addressed needs captured in national trends and state, local, and institutional data. Bladen Community College's needs are identified in student demographics and institutional completion rates. The College serves several disadvantaged populations, and some crucial outcomes, like retention and completion rates, are low compared to peer institutions. By focusing the QEP on advising, the College seeks to provide hands-on support to all students with individualized support; however, it is anticipated that vulnerable populations should increase their ability to remain enrolled and progress successfully equipped with the resources they need. In addition, the QEP Director solicited additional input on the specific advisor training module at the College. The QEP Director emailed all students and employees to determine the most desirable qualities in an advisor and sought input on best ideas and practices.

COLLEGE AND DATA ASSESSMENT
Retention
Across the nation, community colleges already experience lower retention and completion outcomes than their private and four-year counterparts. National Student Clearinghouse (2021) data shows that in community colleges, only 51.6% of students starting college in Fall 2019 returned the following fall ; this rate represents a decrease of only two percentage points from before the COVID-19 pandemic. By comparison, Bladen Community College's fall to fall

retention rate for the same period was 53% (Bladen Community College Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, 2021a).

Fall to fall retention

Fall-to-fall student retention rates (Table 2) can be affected by numerous factors, some of which are academic, economic, social, personal, or otherwise. However, the QEP will help stabilize this rate and increase retention to 60%, the highest rate in the recently measured time.

Table 2. Fall to Fall Retention Rates

	2017 to 2018	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021
Bladen CC	40%	38%	53%	59%

Fall to fall persistence

In addition to fall-to-fall retention rates, the QEP also has the potential to improve students' persistence, the rate at which they return to college from year to year (Table 3). The North Carolina Community College System measures this outcome for first-year students, and it focuses on the rate at which students return to college or university regardless of institution. So, BCC's rate measures the percentage of the College's students who continue their education from one fall to the next regardless of whether they return to Bladen Community College or attend elsewhere.

Excellent advising may necessitate that students transfer to another institution better suited to their needs. An improvement in this rate would signal the success of QEP and advising efforts, even if retention rates did not increase at the same rates. Like others, this rate has fluctuated substantially, but the QEP seeks to stabilize this fluctuating measure and increase the persistence rate to 70%, which is higher than comparable colleges' averages.

Table 3. Fall to Fall Persistence Rates

	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
Bladen CC	47.8%	69.9%	63.9%	68.5%
Neighboring College Average	63.9%	65.5%	68.6%	63.1%
Minority Enrollment Average	64.8%	66.2%	68.4%	65%

Completion

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) collects data on performance measures, which represent key markers of success for colleges throughout the system. On the measure of curriculum completion, a 2016-cohort of Bladen Community College students completed at a rate of 34.8% after four years, and BCC was the only college in the state to score below the NCCCS baseline of 43.1% (NCCCS, n.d.-a). Other measurements of completion data show similarly low rates (Table 4). Using IPEDS data, the United States Department of Education (2020) presents Bladen Community College's graduation rate for first-time, full-time students who finish in 150% of normal program completion time as 13%, compared to sister schools' average rate of 32%.

Low student completion rates reflect low education levels in BCC's home county, Bladen. According to the MyFutureNC (2021a) 2020 Bladen County Attainment Profile, only 27% of Bladen County residents have an associate's degree or higher, compared to 46% of people across the state of North Carolina (MyFutureNC, 2021b). Further, only 41% of students in the county who enroll in college earn a degree or credential within 6 years, compared to 49% of peer counties (MyFutureNC, 2021a). These data, combined with a deep well of research demonstrating the advantage of a college degree, show a critical need to increase higher education completion rates within the county.

The QEP seeks to improve the rate at which students graduate with a credential or transfer successfully. Yearly, the NCCCS (n.d.-a) captures and reports this outcome, measured as "the percentage of first-time fall credential-seeking students who graduate, transfer, or are enrolled during the fourth academic year with 42 successfully completed non-developmental hours."

Table 4. Completion Rates

	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Bladen CC	39.9	50.8	39.4	34.8
Neighboring College Average	41.3	43.5	50.1	53.6
Minority Enrollment Average	42.5	45.6	49.3	50.4
NCCCS Average	44.8	47.5	52.2	54.1

For Bladen Community College, this number has been below the system average in the last three out of four cycles and has been decreasing since Fall 2014. Because this metric follows students for four years, the rate will not fully represent the QEP until the final years of implementation. Nevertheless, because the QEP will impact all students, it predicted to still improve completion rates, even for students who entered the College before full implementation. The QEP process will support a rise in completion rates each year after implementation. This measure has

fluctuated, so the QEP seeks to increase the completion rate one percentage point each year for the five-year life of the QEP.

Equity

Bladen Community College serves a greater percentage of students who belong to ethnic and racial minorities—54%—than the North Carolina Community College System average—40% (North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-b). Among students enrolled in Fall 2020, 23% identified as black, 15% as American Indian/Alaskan, 12% as Hispanic, and 4% as belonging to multiple races (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Enrollment Demographics

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, Fall 2020

- White
- Black
- American Indian/Alaskan
- Hispanic
- Multiple
- Unknown
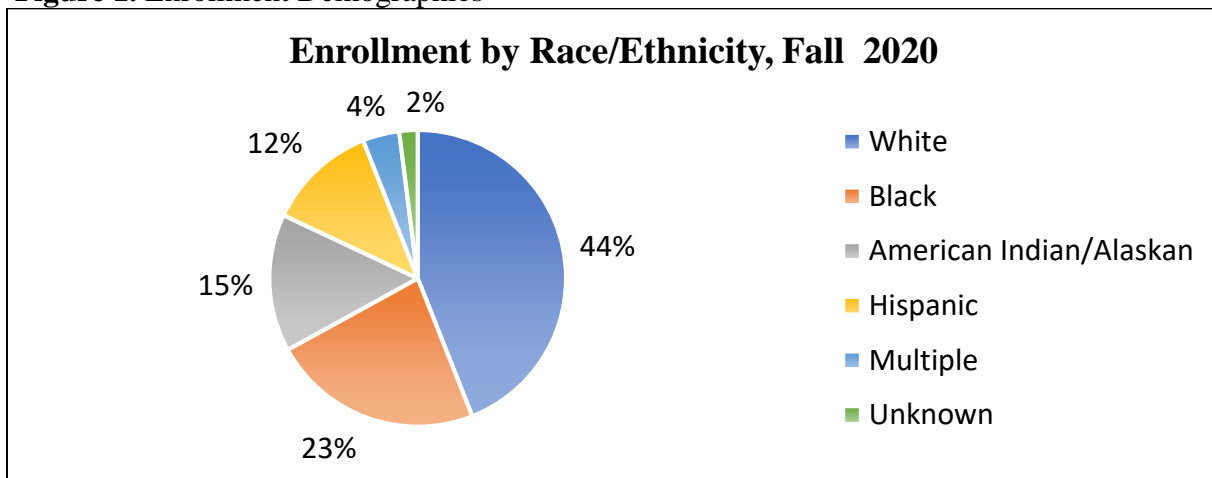
(North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-b)

According to IPEDS data, students who identify as black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, or belonging to two or more races have lower rates of college completion at both two-year and four-year institutions than white or Asian students (Department of Education, 2019). Completion data at BCC also reflect this pattern: among a 2016 cohort of students, 40% of white students had graduated, transferred, or were still enrolled with forty-two or more hours four years later; among black students, this rate was 27%, and among American Indian/Alaskan students, the rate was 33% (North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-b). Hispanic students were not represented due to low numbers, but in the previous two cohorts, their rate was either the lowest (in 2014) or second lowest (in 2015) measured (North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-b).

Family income is another potential factor affecting completion rates among BCC's service population. In Bladen County, 21.2% of the population lives below the poverty line, according to the United States Census Bureau (2019), and MyFutureNC (2021a) presents the child poverty rate at 44%. These numbers are further borne out in the fact that 61.3% of students attending

Bladen Community College receive federal Pell grants (S. Benson, Office of Financial Aid, personal communication, May 4, 2022).

This percentage is significant; among students attending open-door colleges, like BCC, those who received federal Pell grants graduated at rates twelve percentage points lower than nonrecipients (Fain, 2019). For the 2016 cohort of students, Pell recipients' rate of graduation at Bladen Community College was sixteen percentage points lower (27%) than nonrecipients (43%) (North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-a).

The QEP will support success for all students, and reduce completion gaps among racial and ethnic groups. Research shows that advisors can humanize the advising experience, create belonging, direct students, and advocate on their behalf. These functions have shown to increase the rates of belonging and success in college environments, and the QEP seeks to use this system of strong advising to shrink the gaps between racial and ethnic groups.

In recent years, the gap between BCC's highest performing group and lowest performing group has fluctuated from 9 to 38 percentage points (North Carolina Community College System, n.d.-a) (Table 5). The work of the QEP seeks to shrink this gap by five percentage points over the life of the plan. This will put the equity gap at its lowest recorded value, an eight-point difference, and highlight the work still to come.

Table 5. Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Equity Gaps

	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
American Indian/Alaskan	27%	32%	33%	33%
Black	33%	42%	38%	27%
Hispanic	No data	28%	33%	No data
White	46%	66%	42%	40%
Equity Gap	19	38	9	13

**REVIEW OF CURRENT ADVISING MODEL**

The College had long struggled with a registration mentality, in which both students and employees focused their efforts on short, intense registration periods, culminating in two all-day

registration periods each semester. As a result, many advising sessions were transactional, and the volume of students often excluded the potential for more meaningful interaction.

In recent years, the College has worked on extending registration periods and encouraging students to register early, but the culture has been slow to adapt. Bladen Community College has a deep culture of caring, so advisors were providing important touchpoints for students, but the environment was not conducive to deep, ongoing conversations, and many students sought out a different advisor each semester rather than building a relationship with one advisor.

Because advisors had learned advising procedures via observation, prior knowledge, or inquiry, their focus was centered on building course schedules and little on holistic interactions. In a survey of BCC advisors, only 25% of respondents rated BCC's advisor training as above average (a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale; Figure 2).

Figure 2. Advisors' Rating of BCC's Advising Training
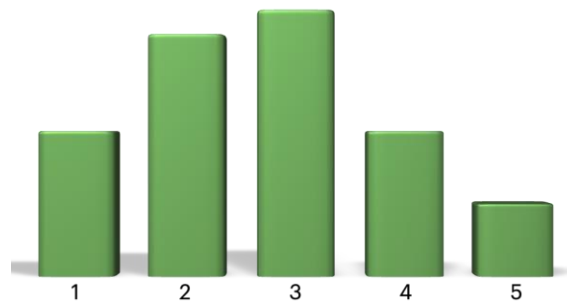
In the same survey, 53% of advisors expressed that they were most comfortable interacting with students, and 55% of advisors were least comfortable with BCC processes and procedures (Figure 3). Advisors' ease with students is the likely reason that advising at the College has been as successful as it has and aligns with students' positive perceptions of advising efforts at the College. However, the fact that advisors did not rate advisor training well and indicated that they were least comfortable with processes and procedures indicates a clear need for improving advising services.

Figure 3. *Advisor Comfort with Advising*
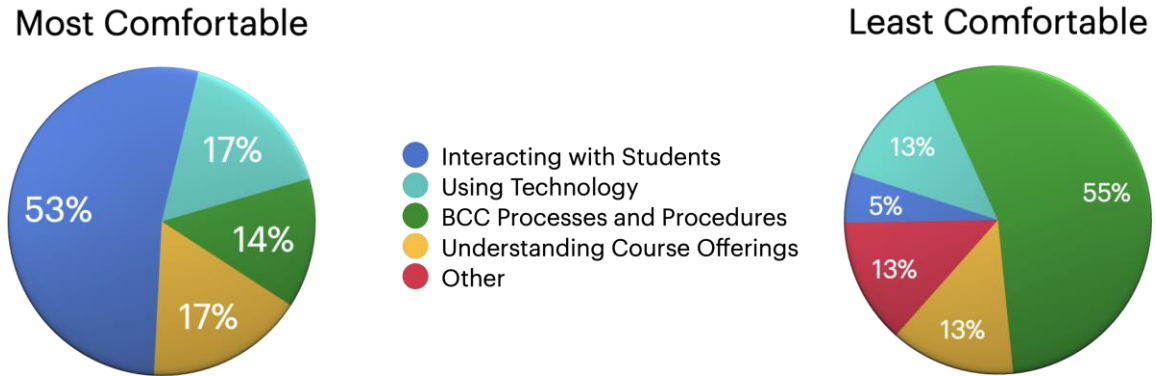
Advising surveys distributed to students showcase this trend as well (Appendix A and Appendix B). When asked who taught them about navigating college, only 41% of student respondents answered "college advisor" (Figure 4). Many students taught themselves or learned from friends and family. While this suggests a level of independence and support, family, friends, and the students themselves may not be well-informed about the intricacies of College policies and procedures.

By improving student onboarding procedures, including new student orientation, and training advisors with appropriate knowledge, the QEP will help ensure that students receive the best possible information as early and often as they need it.

Figure 4. *How Students Learn About College*
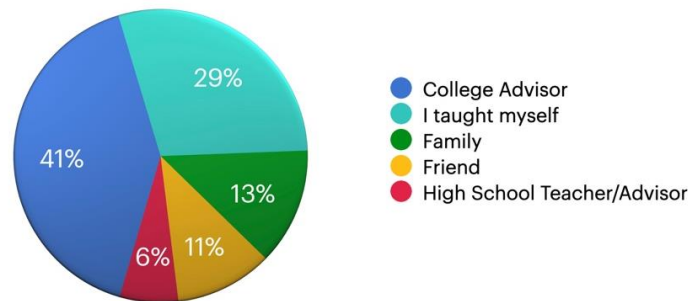
Tracking students' progress was likewise poorly systematized. Previously, AVISO, a student retention AI software, sent grade alerts to advisors and students. Depending on the situation, an advisor, counselor, or instructor would contact the student for intervention, but there was no regulated system to determine who responded. This lack of a well-defined process led to duplication of effort and poor communication with students.

The lack of timely intervention and students' tendency to see different advisors often meant that students only sought out advisors' help when they needed to register, withdraw, or add a course during the semester. In some cases, this lack of a close advisor-advisee relationship meant that students did not have a person on campus to discuss potential problems. Over half of the surveyed students (51%) indicated that they had faced an issue that made continuing college difficult. A third indicated that they had not reached out to anyone on campus when they had trouble in their courses. When students did reach out for support, only 14% reached out to advisors (Figure 5).

Figure 5. *Support Seeking Behavior Among Students*
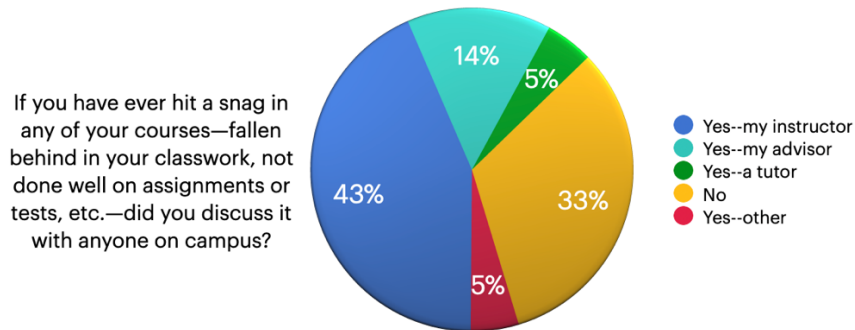
Mission Statement and Strategic Planning

Enhancing advising services not only strengthens the connection to campus feedback but also aligns with the College's mission and vision statements and directly supports institutional goals and continuous strategic planning.

Bladen Community College's current strategic plan focuses on three key elements: recruit, retain, and complete, specifically, Goal 1 Student Success and Goal 2 Student Support (Appendix K). The College's Strategic plan identified a need to create a centralized advising system to support students holistically. This work has already resulted in the creation of the centralized location for advising, addition, and restructuring of positions at the College, the move toward a one-stop center, and plans to integrate continuing education and curriculum under a one-college model. The work of the QEP fits nicely into the model by ensuring that students have meaningful advising experiences, form a focused and efficient plan to reach their goals, and navigate obstacles along the way.

BCCs' adopted one-college model will require advisors to become knowledgeable about all programs at the College, credit and non-credit alike. Whereas previously, credit and non-credit programs had separate advisors. Training advisors is the best way to ensure that students receive consistent experiences irrespective of their advisor, program, or situation. It will help facilitate a smooth transition for the College and its employees. The QEP will also help ensure that the

move to a professional advising model will be grounded in student data, research, and effective practices.

As part of their strategic planning, Bladen's Office of Human Resources is working to ensure that new employees receive effective onboarding that will prepare them for their roles at the College. This work is especially salient considering BCC's personnel report, which indicates that the average age of full-time College employees is 51.3 years and that 30% have twenty or more years in the retirement system (Bladen Community College Office of Human Resources, 2021). These data suggest the likelihood that Bladen Community College will face more retirements in the coming years and will therefore need a robust system of onboarding for replacement hires. Having ready advisor training can streamline this process to ensure continuity of service for Bladen Community College students.

In addition to supporting Bladen Community College's mission statement, advisor training would likewise support the broader efforts of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). The System likewise emphasizes the importance of quality advising and well-trained advisors. Their mission statement, adopted from the North Carolina Community College Advising Association (N3C2A), notes that "quality advising is fostered through institutional support for the onboarding and continuous development of advising personnel and for the access to appropriate advising resources" ("Academic Advising," n.d.).

BLADEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GOALS

The College identified four goals for the QEP that aligned with the College's mission (Appendix F) and strategic plan. Table 6 identifies the goals, the action plans to achieve the goals, and the alignment with the College's Strategic Goals (Appendix K and Appendix L) that the QEP plan will meet. Goals 1-4 focus on students' increase in retention (goal 1), persistence (goal 2), completion (goal 3), and the decrease in racial and ethnic equity gap (goal 4).

Table 6. QEP Goals, Action Plan, and Strategic Alignment

QEP Goals	Action Plan	Alignment
Goal 1: Increase fall to fall student retention from 59% to 60% (Note: Increase fall to fall retention to 60% at fall 2024 and remain at level or higher each year thereafter)	• Create centralized advising center • Create adaptive, holistic advising (AHA!) model • Create adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) training modules	Strategic Goal 1: Student Success – increase fall to fall student retention rates (Appendix K) Strategic Goal 1 Theme: Student Success 1.A, 1.1 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students (Appendix L)

	• Collaborate with Watermark to provide professional development for AVISO • Create and implement data base measuring system	Strategic Goal 1: Student Success and Strategic Goal 3: Employees, increase opportunities for professional development (Appendix K)
Goal 2: Increase fall to fall student persistence from 68.5% to 70% (Note: Increase fall to fall persistence to 70% at fall 2024 and remain at level or higher each year thereafter)	• Create centralized advising center • Create adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) model • Create adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) training modules • Create and implement data base measuring system	Strategic Goal 1: Student Success – increase fall to fall student retention rates (Appendix K) Strategic Goal 1 Theme: Student Success 1.A, 1.1 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students (Appendix L)
Goal 3: Increase student completion from 34.8% to 40% (Note: Increase completion to 40% at fall 2024 and remain at level or higher each year thereafter)	• Create centralized advising center • Create adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) model • Create adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) training modules • Create and implement data base measuring system • Create entry and exit assessment • Create an online, new student orientation	Strategic Goal 1: Student Success – increase student completion of degrees, diplomas, and certificates (Appendix K) Strategic Goal 1 Theme: Student Success 1.A, 1.1 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students (Appendix L) Strategic Goal 2: Student Support – College will provide a satisfactory experience for its students, College will develop an online orientation program for students (Appendix K)
Goal 4: Decrease racial and ethnic equity gap from 13% to 8% (Note: Decrease equity gap to 8% at fall 2024 and	• Measure equity gap on pre-registration and exit assessments	Strategic Goal 1: Student Success – increase student completion of degrees, diplomas, and certificates (Appendix K)

remain a level or lower each year thereafter)		

ACTION PLAN AND TIMELINE

Strong advising will support students' retention, persistence, and completion and decrease the racial and ethnic equity gap at the College. Professional development will focus on the conceptual, relational, and informational dimensions of an advising relationship to support the College's advising team and provide the best opportunity to actively engage with students through the advising process. Tovar (2014) found that the "key to the success of [support] programs will be the proper training of college faculty and staff to ensure they can function in their capacity of mentor" (p. 20). Yoder and Joslin (2015) affirm the value of successful advisor training: "students, advisors, and administrators will enjoy the benefits of an effective training program because well-advised students learn the tools to meet their own academic and personal goals" (p. 314). Thus, a successful action plan will promote the complete and consistent training of Bladen Community College advisors.

New student orientation will provide students with guidance and knowledge of college navigation early in their educational careers. During orientation, students will engage with their advisor and receive vital information such as maps and optional tours of the College, catalogs, advising and registration processes, bookstore processes, and add/drop processes.

Action Plan (Operational Plan)

The holistic advising method is aligned with the College's Strategic Plan, specifically Goal 1: Student Success 1.1 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students (Appendix L).

The Implementation Committee determined that an advisor training course would best be created and administered through the College's learning management system, Moodle. The course will be called AHA! Advisor Training. It will be created in an online format that will allow for more flexibility and allow the College to implement the training for individuals during the onboarding process or at scale across campus. The online course would also ensure that advisors receive consistent messaging on advising and the AHA! Advisor Training course will serve as a storehouse of resources that advisors could consult after completing their initial training (Appendix G). Students receive their online courses through our online platform, Moodle, and by administering AHA! Advisor Training in the same system, advisors will have relevant knowledge of online challenges and therefore be more an effective resource for students.

The Moodle course will teach advisors the foundational advising knowledge necessary to build meaningful student-advisor relationships and support students' success as they work to reach their goals (Appendix H). Specialized training will be provided to identify and address student

at-risk behavior and interactions with special populations (Appendix H: Module 2: Advisor-Student Interaction). Advisors may also elect to complete add-on modules focusing on specific subject specializations (Appendix H). These optional modules will add nuance to the discussions, allow advisors to work with scenarios more relevant to their everyday practice, and learn about new areas of advising when their advising duties change.

During spring 2023, the QEP Director and Implementation Committee, will create AHA! Advisor Training modules based on key components from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) where they define the foundation of expert advising:

- The conceptual component includes the ideas and theories that advisors must understand to effectively practice the art (Appendix H: Advisor Certification Curriculum Outline, Module 1: Introduction)
- The informational component refers to the knowledge that advisors must gain to guide the students at their institution (Appendix H: Advisor Certification Curriculum Outline, Module 4: Registration Processes and Procedures)
- The relational component involves the communicative skills and interpersonal approaches advisors must build including those critical to establishing advising relationships with students (Folsom, 2015, p. 6) (Appendix H: Advisor Certification Curriculum Outline, Module 2: Advisor-Student Interaction)

Conceptual Component

The conceptual content of the holistic advising model will introduce advisors to prominent models including developmental, proactive, and appreciative advising. Kuh (2008) notes that "given the array of academic and social issues that students must manage during the transition from high school to college, a cookie-cutter approach to advising students from increasingly diverse backgrounds will not be sufficient" (p. 77). These concepts were selected specifically to be inclusive and allow the advisor to determine the best format of advising per student needs.

Advisors will work collaboratively with faculty and student services team members to design a new student, pre-registration form specifically for Bladen Community College. This assessment will connect students with resources, minimize barriers, and advocate on their behalf. Examples of the College's special populations are first generation students, veterans, single parents, economically disadvantaged challenged, and English as second language students. Additionally, Perkins V defines special populations as:
1. Individuals with disabilities
2. Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults;
3. Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
4. Single-parents, including single pregnant women;

5. Out-of-workforce individuals;
6. English learners;
7. Homeless individuals
8. Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and
9. Youth with a parent who
   a. Is a member of the armed forces
   b. Is on active duty (NCCCS 2022-2023 Perkins Handbook)

The QEP will champion a holistic advising model where advisors take a hands-on approach to establishing a connection or relationship with advisees.

All students (credit and non-credit alike) will receive advising and support services through the Student Success and Engagement Center. In addition, the conceptual framework aligns with the advising mission statement from the North Carolina Community College System (Appendix I) in order to help unite the campus's efforts under a single philosophy of practice.

Informational Component

The informational content of the course will present the rules, procedures, and guidelines that advisors must follow to successfully advise and register students. This information includes but not limited to:

1. Policies related to the College
   a. Registration and drop/add procedures
2. Statewide requirements
   a. System-wide prerequisites and degree requirements
   b. Federal rules such as FERPA
   c. Financial aid obligations
   d. Agreements between various institutions (articulation agreements, transfer rules, and North Carolina's Comprehensive Articulation Agreement, which governs the relationship between the community college and university systems)

For new advisors, the complexity of rules and the sheer number of guidelines can be overwhelming. When regular changes result from state law or institutional growth, synthesizing and managing that information becomes difficult. Surveyed BCC advisors were least comfortable with College processes and procedures, and this lack of comfort could interfere with their ability to connect advisees with vital information appropriately.

Relational Component

Understanding the importance of relevant advising and student-advisor connections, the relational component of the training module will focus on interpersonal and academic skills that advisors should employ and model in their interactions with students.

The new student, pre-registration form will also evaluate special population needs, career goals, educational barriers such as developmental classwork requirements or financial aid, and resource needs. Respecting students wish to fully participate with the pre-registration assessment, all newly enrolled students for Fall 2023, will elect to participate with the assessment or decline. Students will be presented with a declination form if they choose not to participate. However, each student will receive the same level of expert advising as participating students. This step will identify students who are willing for their retention, persistence, and completion data to be measured as an outcome in the new QEP advising model.

Currently enrolled students (continually enrolled, previously enrolled, students enrolled prior to Fall 2023) will receive the same level of expert advising and resources but will not be included in the cohort for QEP outcome reporting.

It is the goal of the College to assess 100% of newly enrolled students beginning Fall 2023 with the written new student, pre-registration form; therefore, special attention will be taken to clearly communicate the advising model and the limited disclosure of student success information.

By equipping advisors with a consistent framework for advising, knowledge of College rules and procedures, and vital relational skills, advisor training will improve the quality of advisor/advisee relationships and lead to greater success for students.

Five-Year Timeline
This QEP will be initiated in five phases, over four years (Table 7) to ensure the development of a functional and efficient model to increase retention and completion.

Phase I will begin in Spring 2023. The Implementation Committee will be reviewed and updated. Upon the first team meeting, a clear committee purpose statement will be crafted along with specific expectations for assignments and time line for completion of assignments. During Spring 2023, AHA! Advisor Training modules will be developed by the Implementation Committee. AHA! Advisor Training initial launch will occur in Summer 2023 (Phase II). In addition, the team will create new student, pre-registration, exit assessments, and participation forms.

    Phase I. (Spring 2023)

    i)   Implementation Committee Members
        a) Director of QEP - Presides as committee chair
        b) Director of Student Success and Engagement
        c) Associate Vice President for College Assessment and Accreditation
        d) Director for Student Resources and Distance Learning

    e) Others as assigned

  ii) Develop committee's purpose statement to include but not limited to guidance for implementation, support, and data analysis

  iii) Confirm identification of special populations – Committee will consult with the Vice President of Student Services and Disabilities Services Director

  iv) Develop forms - new student, pre-registration, exit assessments, informed consent document, and student declination forms

  v) Review specific measurable goals aligned with College's strategic goals (Appendix H and Appendix L)

    a) increase fall to fall retention

    b) increase fall to fall persistence

    c) increase completion

    d) decrease the racial and ethnic equity gap

In Phase II the QEP Director and Director of Student Success and Engagement center will ensure current and newly hired advisors actively participate and complete the training modules. The QEP Director will work with advisors and distance education to develop an online new student orientation to ensure that students still receive appropriate information for a successful start to their educational goals.

    Phase II. (Summer 2023)

  i) AHA! Advisor Training will occur, advisors will complete a pre- and post-training assessment to measure effectiveness of modules (Appendix J)

  ii) Create new student, online orientation

  iii) Create data base for baseline cohort for utilization Fall 2023

Phase III will launch the new advising model beginning Fall 2023. During the first full year of advising (Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Summer 2024) the focus will be on student and advisor relationships, use of alert mechanisms such as AVISO, interactions with resources such as tutoring, and documentation of launch success or challenges. Advisors will collect data about student success, exit assessment, and identification of appropriate resources to help students complete their goals. The QEP Director will consult with the Vice President of Student Services and the registrar to gather, analyze, and compare student withdrawal data to further inform student success initiatives at the College. New student, online orientation will launch during Fall 2023. During this phase, quick reference and procedure guides will be developed for common advising processes.

    Phase III. (Fall 2023)

  i) Faculty and advisor professional development - AVISO updates, early alert procedures and referrals

  ii) Advisors monitor and document AVISO use, tutoring use, and challenges

    iii) Collect new student pre-registration and exit assessments, input data for baseline cohort, analyze and compare drop outs, stop outs or goal attainment records
    iv) Identify college and local resources utilized, requested and/or unavailable resources
    v) New student, online orientation launch
    vi) Craft advising assessment question for course evaluations
    vii) Create quick reference guides and template emails for common advising processes and scenarios

Phase IV, the QEP Director will work with the Vice President of Student Services and the Director of Student Success and Engagement to evaluate and modify the new student orientation, alert and intervention procedures, and advisor training based on feedback and experiences from the previous terms. Advisors will continue to collect and analyze student exit assessments.

    Phase IV. (Fall 2023 - Fall 2024)
    i) Evaluate and modify
        a) New student orientation
        b) Alert and intervention procedures
        c) Advisor training
        d) Collect and analyze student exit assessments

The fifth and final phase that sustains the plan through 2027 reporting, will analyze retention, persistence, completion, and equity gap data to determine the QEP impact on student success. In collaboration with the QEP Director, the Associate Vice President for College Assessment and Accreditation will compile the fifth-year report for SACSCOC and will make final updates to the trainings and processes in order to transition them to the Director of Student Success and Engagement who will maintain the work going forward.

    Phase V. (Fall 2024 - Fall 2027)
    i) Analyze
        a) Retention data– analyze retention data beginning with the baseline from Fall 2023 forward to Fall 2027
    ii) Modification
        a) Compile list of possible QEP modifications based on retention data
    iii) Transition training modules to the Director of Student Success and Engagement
    iv) Complete and submit QEP fifth year report

Table 7. Implementation Timeline

Year	Spring	Summer	Fall
2022	New organizational chart	Transition to one college model and centralized advising with professional advisors	Submit of Quality Enhancement Plan; on-site visit
2023	Official QEP kickoff; confirm Implementation Committee; craft committee purpose statement; define special populations; develop forms, confirm QEP goals, create advisor training modules	Utilize AHA! Advisor Training for advisor professional development; create new student, online orientation	Full QEP launch; professional development on AVISO, early alerts, referrals, and intervention processes; launch new student, online orientation; collect & analyze pre-registration and exit forms; collect and analyze pre- and post-training advising assessment forms; create quick reference guides and email templates; craft advising assessment question for course evaluations; create data bank for new student fall 2023 cohort
2024	Update advisor training, new student orientation, and advisor intervention processes; distribute quick reference guides; collect 2023 cohort data	Update advisor training, new student orientation, and advisor intervention processes; distribute quick reference guides; collect 2023 cohort data	Update advisor training, new student orientation, and advisor intervention processes; distribute quick reference guides; collect 2023 cohort data; create 2024 data bank
2025	Survey advisors, faculty, and students on early alert processes and procedures; collect 2023 cohort data; collect 2024 cohort data	Train new advisors; update early alert processes and procedures from feedback; implement revised student orientation; collect 2023	Update advisor training, new student orientation, and advisor intervention processes; collect 2023 cohort data; collect 2024

		cohort data; collect 2024 cohort data	cohort data; create 2025 data bank
2026	Survey advisors and students on their experiences; collect 2023 cohort data; collect 2024 cohort data; collect 2025 data	Update training and advising processes based on feedback; collect 2023 cohort data, collect 2024 cohort data; collect 2025 data	Use AHA! Advisor Training modules for new advisor onboarding; implement revised advising processes; collect 2023 cohort data; collect 2024 cohort data; collect 2025 data
2027	Gather student and advisor data; finalize assessment; continue writing five-year report	Transition training modules to the Director of Student Success and Engagement; revise five-year report	Finalize and submit five-year report.

Assessment

Bladen Community College's QEP was designed to improve student success by providing an adaptive, holistic advising model focused on retention, persistence, and completion of students' educational goals. In addition, the QEP was designed to decrease the racial and ethnic equity gap.

Beginning in Fall 2023, new students will be given a pre-registration assessment form and upon their intent to leave the College, they will receive an exit assessment. Both assessments evaluate the students experience with advising. The pre- and exit-assessments will have qualitative and quantitative comparisons conducted by the QEP Director and Implementation Committee. After analysis is conducted, feedback will be compiled and synthesized for advising modification.

Beginning in Summer 2023, all advisors will be given a pre- and post-training assessment. All advisors will complete the pretraining assessment which questions their knowledge of conceptual, relational, and informational topics of advising. After completion of the AHA! Advisor Training, the post-training assessment will be given utilizing the same assessment tool. The QEP Director and Implementation Committee will evaluate the comparison of the pre- and post-training assessment, decide if further feedback is needed, and proceed with modification to the training modules if needed.

Quantitative data will be collected by the College's registrar and Vice President of Student Services. Because students are given a choice to participate or decline participation in monitoring, overall college statistics will continue to be assessed, a specific data bank will be created to follow participating new student cohorts beginning each Fall 2023 through Fall 2027. Enrollment statistics of these target populations will continue to be monitored for fall to fall retention, persistence, completion, and equity until the cohort has completed their educational

goals or for the final QEP report. Percentage comparisons of overall college retention to the fall cohorts will be conducted by the Associate Vice President of College Assessment and Accreditation as an ongoing process. Since all students will receive the same excellent standard of advising, it is expected that the percentage difference in retention, persistence, and completion should not show a substantial difference between the monitored cohorts and the overall college statistics. In addition, it is anticipated to have a low number of students who decline monitoring. Qualitatively, the College expects the fall cohorts to have high levels of success due to their holistic advising and engagement and will assess their satisfaction with registration and student services through surveys conducted each semester by the Associate Vice President of College Assessment and Accreditation.

In addition, assessment of the new advising model will be included on student course evaluations. The Implementation Committee will create additional questions to be included in each course evaluation assessment. This provides a means to collect richer data, bring advising to the forethought of each student, and act as a reminder for faculty to engage with students concerning the use of the Student Success and Engagement Center.

Each assessment will be created in an electronic format which enables the Associate Vice President for College Assessment and Accreditation to easily compile data for analysis. In addition to critical analysis of student retention, persistence, and completion, an analysis will be conducted of the actual assessment tools. The Implementation Committee will evaluate each question to determine if the queries are clear and accurate. The tools will be assessed for validity at completion of Fall 2023 term. The tools will be modified if needed, however, the tools will remain consistent thereafter to ensure controls are in place for data analysis.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES
In addition to the conceptual plan to implement the adaptable and holistic advising model, the Implementation Committee identified the necessary structure and resources that would be needed at the College. As with the development of the plan, the senior staff of the College and Board of Trustees supports the QEP by providing the structure and resources to ensure a successful implementation. The executive level support is important to ensuring the sustainability of each of the phases in regards to staffing, financial resources, and modifications to processes and policies as needed.

<u>Organizational Chart</u>
The QEP Director will report to the Vice President for Instructional Services (Figure 6). The QEP Director is a faculty member who will receive a stipend and course reduction (Appendix N). As the College is restructuring and transitioning the advising duties away from faculty, the committee determined that a faculty member who has a clear and in-depth knowledge of advising practices and who is also equipped to provide objective guidance and direction of the plan would ensure the successful implementation and application of our QEP. This person will communicate with members of the senior administrative team and in this capacity will have

access to the President. Therefore, if a concern or issue develops that needs further attention a mechanism is already in place for quick follow up and, if deemed necessary, adjustments to the plan. The QEP Director will interact regularly with the Vice President for Student Services, and work especially closely with the Director of Student Success and Engagement and advisors (Figure 7). The Director will additionally serve as a resource to the Associate Vice President of Assessment and Accreditation who will be responsible to analyze data, assess results, and prepare reports.

Figure 6. Reporting Structure for QEP Director

Vice President for
Instructional Services
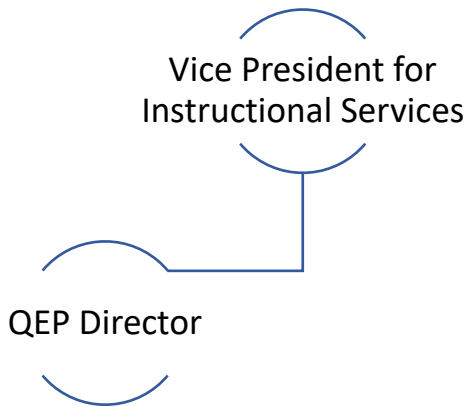
QEP Director

Figure 7. Interpersonal Structure for the QEP Director

Resources and Budget

BCC is committed to ensuring the QEP plan is supported with appropriate resources. Personnel, financial, and technological resources will be integral to the implementation and sustainability of the plan. A budget has been prepared to appropriately allocate the necessary fiscal resources for the planning and implementation of the plan over the next five years (Table 8 and Appendix O). As the College reorganized, existing resources were made available to support the QEP. Even as the QEP touches all facets of the college, this budget captures those with the most responsibility for successful execution of the plan. For example, the Vice President for Student Services has a significant supportive role as the supervisor for the Director of Student Success and Engagement; however, the job duties for the Vice President did not change as a result of the plan and was therefore not included in the budget. Included in the table are the salaries for the Vice President for Instructional Services, the Associate Vice President for Assessment and Accreditation and the QEP Director. The Vice President for Instructional Services salary is prorated with a higher percentage during the planning year when the college was preparing for implementation. In years 1 through 5, this role transitions to supervising the QEP Director and the prorated percentage is decreased. The budget shows the prorated salary of the Associate Vice President of Assessment and Accreditation. As with the Vice President for Instructional Services, their participation in the development of the plan was prorated at a higher percentage than the subsequent years as it is anticipated that the assessment of the plan will not be as time intensive as the development of the plan.

The QEP Director is tasked with the implementation of the plan. They will lead and provide oversight of the Plan among faculty, staff, and students to facilitate the integration of adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) at the College. They also will manage documentation and reporting requirements and ensure alignment with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) standards. The QEP Director will receive a stipend in addition to their instructional contract as well as a course reduction from their faculty workload. The budget reflects the stipend over the course of the next five years. The budget additionally allots for the QEP Director's membership to NACADA and to attend professional development opportunities through conferences and other resources.

The utilization of technology is integral to the QEP. AVISO is the software that will help manage documentation of student interactions with advisors and communication between faculty and advising team members at the College. The expense of the software is reflected in the budget as is the expense for the College's LMS, Moodle, where the training for advisors is to be managed. The College commits to maintaining both programs, as well as supporting any needed professional development. The College had previously committed to using both of these software applications therefore there is no additional cost to the QEP; however, due to the integral role of both to the success of the plan, it has been included in the budget.

The budget accounts for nominal printing and supplies. Assets such as computers and printers have been captured but may not be necessary since the College has expanded on existing positions.

Marketing the plan has been a shared responsibility among the Implementation Committee and the College's Communications and Marketing Director. The budget reflects financial expenditures to promote the plan to the college community as well as ensure that the plan remains a priority among the faculty and staff.

Throughout the phases of the plan over the next five years, the College will invest approximately $390,000 in the execution of the QEP plan. Upon the full implementation of the plan, the budgeted items will be absorbed by the College to ensure the sustainability of the plan.

There are other nuanced expenditures that were not captured in our table but are relevant. These expenses are imbedded already within the College's resources or are subject to budget availability. Already the duties for the Director of Student Success and Engagement have been expanded to include the responsibilities of adaptable and holistic advising and the salary increased to reflect these new duties. In order to accommodate the number of students requiring advising services, the College has already increased the number of full-time advisors from two to four, is hiring two part-time career coaches, and requires the Director of Student Success and Engagement to advise students. The organizational hierarchy of Student Services includes the

capacity for growth. As the College implements the QEP throughout the phases, the Vice President of Student Services will monitor and manage staff workload for quality and quantity of student interactions. Therefore, as new positions or increases in positions are proposed these will be supported in as much as the resources are available as we implement the plan.

Table 8. QEP Budget

QEP Budget 2022-2027	Fiscal Year 2022		Fiscal Year 2023		Fiscal Year 2024		Fiscal Year 2025		Fiscal Year 2026		Fiscal Year 2027	
EXPENSES	Planning Year		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		YEAR 4		YEAR 5	
SALARIES/FRINGE BENEFITS	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW
VP for Instructional Services - 2%	5,118		2,559		2,559		2,559		2,559		2,559	
AVP for Accred & Assessment - 7%	12,414		6,207		6,207		6,207		6,207		6,207	
QEP Director		-		2,400		2,400		2,400		2,400		2,400
Social Security	1,342	-	671	184	671	184	671	184	671	184	671	184
Retirement	4,296	-	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588
Medical Insurance	1,332	-	666	296	666	296	666	296	666	296	666	296
TOTAL SALARIES/FRINGE BENEFITS	**24,503**	**-**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**
SOFTWARE												
AVISO	68,266		-		34,133		34,133		34,133		34,133	
Moodle - LMS	5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000	
TOTAL SOFTWARE	**73,266**		**5,000**		**39,133**		**39,133**		**39,133**		**39,133**	
PRINTING												
Printing/Copying		500		500		500		500		500		500
TOTAL PRINTING		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
SUPPLIES												
Ofice Supplies		500		500		500		500		500		500
SUPPLIES		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
EQUIPMENT												
Computer		3,000		-		-		-		-		-
Printer		500		-		-		-		-		-
TOTAL EQUIPMENT		**3,500**		**-**		**-**		**-**		**-**		**-**
MARKETING & PROMOTION												
PR Materials		1,500		1,000		500		500		500		500
TOTAL MARKETING & PROMOTION		**1,500**		**1,000**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT												
PD Webinars		1,000		2,000		1,000		500		500		500
SACS Meetings		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000
Other Conferences		2,000		2,000		1,000		1,000		500		500
TOTAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		**6,000**		**7,000**		**5,000**		**4,500**		**4,000**		**4,000**
MEMBERSHIPS												
NCADA-QEP Director		300		300		300		300		300		300
TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**
MISCELLANEOUS												
Items Not Listed		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**
SUBTOTALS	97,769	13,300	17,251	13,767	51,384	11,267	51,384	10,767	51,384	10,267	51,384	10,267
ANNUAL TOTALS		**111,069**		**31,018**		**62,651**		**62,151**		**61,651**		**61,651**
QEP TOTAL BUDGET		**390,191**										

CONCLUSION

Through its Quality Enhancement Plan, Bladen Community College seeks to improve retention, persistence, and completion. By implementing the AHA! Advising Model, the College will provide supportive resources for students as they enter the College, progress toward their goals, and transition to the workplace or another institution of higher education.

Through the implementation of this plan, advisors will improve their ability to understand, guide, and support students' success. Advisors will work to prepare students for the rigors of college and help them to navigate BCC's processes and understand the resources available to them. Advisors will cultivate and reinforce relationships and use data from instructors and other

support staff to anticipate and negotiate student barriers. Finally, the advisors will help students to transition to the workforce or into a different program through intentional exit procedures.

This Quality Enhancement Plan will contribute to increased student retention, persistence, and educational goal completion and decrease the racial and ethnic equity gap. Additionally, the QEP will gather valuable data to aid in the improvement of the College's operations and guide its strategic planning efforts in the future.

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IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Electronic Advising Survey

Electronic Advising Survey (Student)

Circle the options that best describe your experience at Bladen Community College.

1. How difficult was the process of getting started at the College (from your decision to attend to first day of class)? 1=low difficulty; 5= high

    1   2   3   4   5

2. Who or what made it easy or difficult?

3. When you first started at the College, did someone at the College ask you about your academic goals?

    □ Yes

    □ No

4. Did someone at BCC talk with you about the benefit of having a goal or earning a certificate or degree?

    □ Yes

    □ No

5. Did someone at BCC discuss with you about how long it will take for you to reach your goals?

    □ Yes

    □ No

6. Did someone at BCC discuss job or career opportunities based on your career interests with you?

    □ Yes

    □ No

7. Before you signed up for classes, did anyone talk to you about your commitments outside of school?

    □ Yes

    □ No

8. Did your advisor suggest that adjust the number of classes you intended to take?

    □ Yes, my advisor suggested that I take more classes

☐ Yes, my advisor suggested that I take fewer classes

☐ No

9. How did you learn about the steps to sign up for classes? *Check any that apply.*

☐ Advising Center

☐ Faculty Advisor

☐ Emails/letters from the College

☐ College website

☐ Other: _____

10. How long was your first meeting with your advisor?

☐ 0-15 minutes ☐ 45-60 minutes

☐ 15-30 minutes ☐ Longer than 60 minutes

☐ 30-45 minutes

11. How do you prefer meeting with your advisor? *Check all that apply.*

☐ In person

☐ On the phone

☐ Via email

☐ Video call

☐ Other: _____

12. How much of your coursework did you plan at once?

☐ One semester

☐ Two semesters

☐ Three semesters

☐ Your full degree

13. How would you rate your satisfaction with the College's advising services? 1=low; 5=high

    1   2   3   4   5

14. How could we improve your advising experience?

_____

15. How long have you been at the College? *Select all that apply.*

☐ This is my first semester

☐ I have completed more than two semesters, but I haven't earned a degree

☐ I have completed a degree

☐ I am returning after a gap of more than two years

16. Did your parents attend college?

    ☐ Yes, but neither completed a degree.

    ☐ Yes, one or more earned an associate's degree.

    ☐ Yes, one or more earned a bachelor's degree.

    ☐ Yes, one or more earned a master's degree.

    ☐ Yes, one or more earned a doctorate or professional degree.

    ☐ No, neither attended college

17. Will you be working while attending school?

    ☐ Yes, part-time

    ☐ Yes, full-time

    ☐ No

18. Select the demographic information that best represents you. *Check all that apply.*

Status at BCC	Age	Goal	Race/Ethnicity	Gender
☐ Part-time	☐ 18-25	☐ Degree	☐ American Indian	☐ Male
☐ Full-time	☐ 25-30	☐ Certificate	☐ Asian	☐ Female
	☐ 30-35	☐ Transfer	☐ Black	☐ Self Identify:
	☐ 30-40	☐ Increase Skills	☐ Hispanic/Latino(a)	
	☐ 40+	☐ Other:	☐ White	
			☐ Multiple	
			☐ Other:	

Appendix B: Printed Advising Survey

Printed Advising Survey (Student)

Circle the options that best describe your experience at Bladen Community College.

1. Before coming to campus, how would you rate your knowledge of college processes? 1=low; 5=high

             1   2   3   4   5

2. Rate your level of knowledge of those processes now. 1=low; 5=high

             1   2   3   4   5

3. Who taught you about navigating college?

    □ Friend

    □ Family member

    □ College Advisor

    □ High school teacher/advisor

    □ I taught myself

    □ Social media

    □ Other: _____

4. How difficult was the process of getting started at the College (from your decision to attend to first day of class)? 1=low difficulty; 5= high

             1   2   3   4   5

5. Who or what made it easy or difficult?

    _____

6. When you first started at the College, did someone at the College ask you about your academic goals?

    □ Yes

    □ No

7. Did anyone talk with you about the benefit of having a goal or earning a certificate or degree?

    □ Yes

    □ No

8. Did someone at BCC discuss with you about how long it will take for you to reach your goals?

□ Yes

□ No

9. Did a staff member at BCC discuss job or career opportunities based on your career interests with you?

    □ Yes

    □ No

10. When you met with an advisor, did you discuss when next advising session should be?

    □ Yes

    □ No

11. Before you signed up for classes, did anyone talk to you about your commitments outside of school?

    □ Yes

    □ No

12. If yes, did this conversation affect how many classes you took?

    □ Yes

    □ No

    □ N/A

13. Has any staff member recommended that you take fewer classes than you intended?

    □ Yes

    □ No

14. For part-time students, did a staff member ever suggest a full-time schedule?

    □ Yes

    □ No

    □ N/A

15. How did you learn about the steps to sign up for classes? *Check any that apply.*

    □ Advising Center/Faculty Advisor

    □ Emails from the College

    □ Letters from the College

    □ College website

    □ Other: _____

16. Did someone talk with you about the process for registering?

☐ Yes

☐ No

17. Did someone talk with you about how to choose classes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

18. How long was your first meeting with your advisor?

☐ 0-15 minutes   ☐ 45-60 minutes

☐ 15-30 minutes   ☐ Longer than 60 minutes

☐ 30-45 minutes

19. How many times per semester have you met with an advisor?

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5+

20. Did you meet with the same person each time during for advising?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

21. Does the advisor/counselor contact you for a meeting, or do you contact the advisor?

☐ Advisor makes first contact

☐ I make first contact

☐ We both make contact

22. How do you prefer meeting with your advisor? *Check any that apply.*

☐ In person

☐ On the phone

☐ Via email

☐ Video call

☐ Other: _____

23. How much of your coursework did you plan at once?

- ☐ One semester
- ☐ Two semesters
- ☐ Three semesters
- ☐ Your full degree

24. Did anyone at BCC talk with you about how you would be paying for college?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

25. How would you rate your satisfaction with the College's advising services? 1=low; 5=high

        1   2   3   4   5

26. Is there anything you wish you had known before you came to campus to get admitted and register?

_____

27. Have you ever had an issue come up in your life outside of college that made it difficult for you to stay on track toward your academic goal?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

28. If you have ever hit a snag in any of your courses—falling behind in your classwork, not done well on assignments or tests, etc.—did you discuss it with anyone on campus? *Check all that apply.*

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes—my instructor
- ☐ Yes—my advisor
- ☐ Yes—a tutor
- ☐ Yes—other:

_____

29. If you could give the leaders at BCC advice about important changes the College could make to improve students' experience with advising and navigating the College, what would that be?

_____

30. If you designed advising at BCC, what would it look like?

_____

31. Right now, what is the single most important factor that is keeping you moving toward success at this college?

   _____

32. How confident are you that you will stay and complete your academic goals? 1=not very; 5 = extremely confident.

             1   2   3   4   5

33. Select the demographic information that best represents you. *Check all that apply.*

Status at BCC	Age	Goal	Race/Ethnicity	Gender
□ Part-time	□ 18-25	□ Degree	□ American Indian	□ Male
□ Full-time	□ 25-30	□ Certificate	□ Asian	□ Female
	□ 30-35	□ Transfer	□ Black	□ Self Identify:
	□ 30-40	□ Increase Skills	□ Hispanic/Latinx	
	□ 40+	□ Other:	□ White	_____
			□ Multiple	
			□ Other:	

Appendix C: Results of Employee Survey on QEP Topic
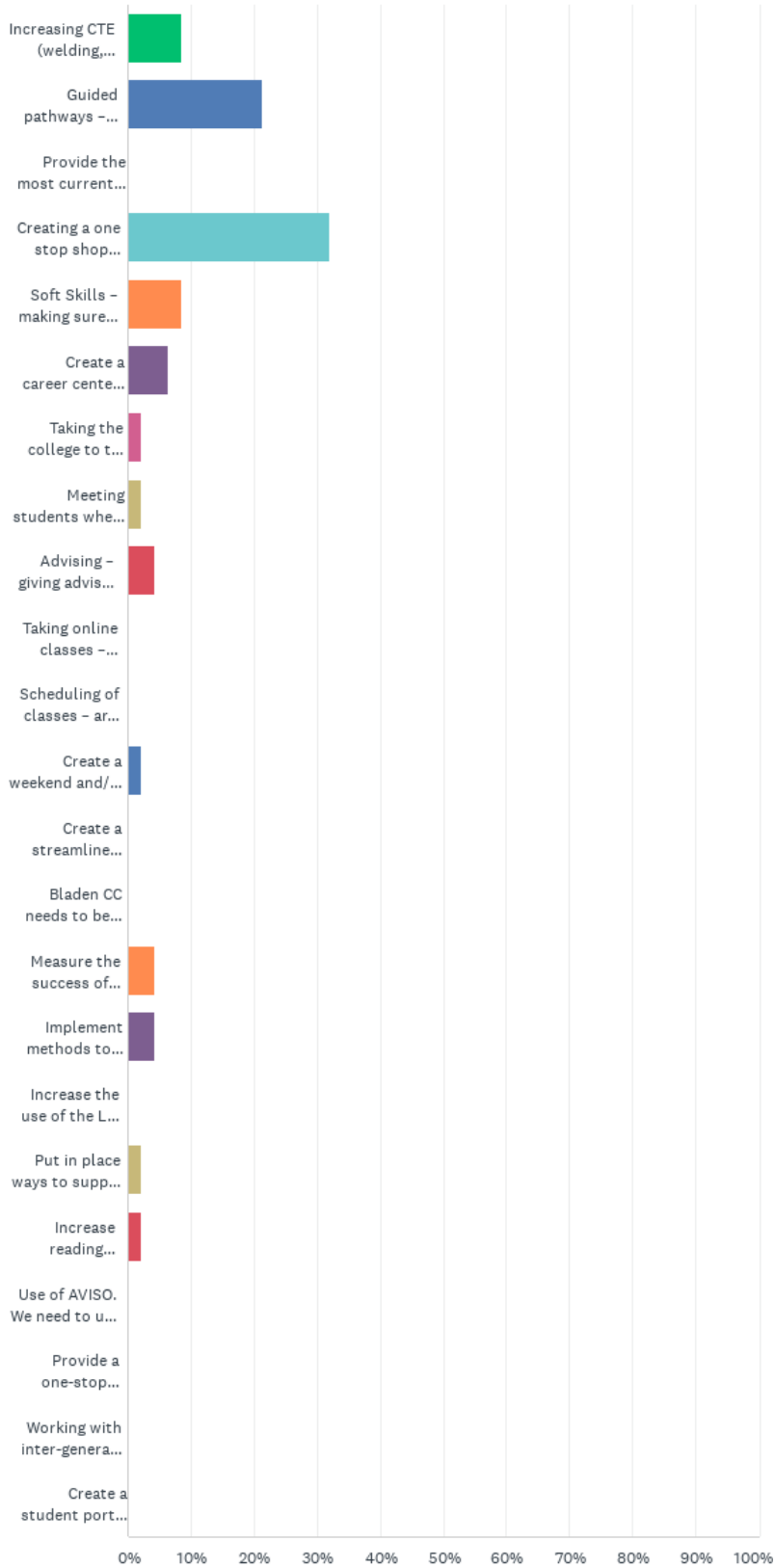
Appendix D: Results of Student Survey on QEP Topic

Q1 Choose your number one choice for our next QEP topic from the following list.

Answered: 71   Skipped: 0
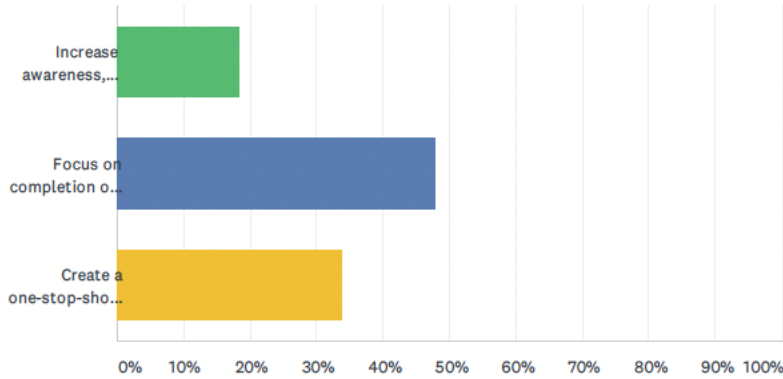
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increase awareness, enrollment, and course offerings of our career and technical education courses (welding, electrical, plumbing, agriculture, carpentry, etc.) Increase marketing of these programs. Respond to the industry needs and ensure students are trained for jobs in these fields. Increase completion rates of students and help with job placement after graduation.	18.31%	13
Focus on completion of degrees; make sure students take the courses in sequence (i.e, English and math early on); all degree programs have a common 1st semester so students that want to change majors will not lose credits; focus on keeping students on the pathway and successful. Revamp the website to provide students in-depth details about each degree including salary, job availability, job requirements, degree requirements including Con. Ed. courses. Minimizing the credit hours for each degree program.	47.89%	34
Create a one-stop-shop instead of sending students all over campus during registration. Simplify the flow, stop creating barriers for students. Students should be able to register, get transcripts, pay, etc. all in one area. Increasing and improving customer service for our students. Effective communication to students during the admissions process. Create an advising center to help students with career assessments and placements.	33.80%	24
TOTAL		71

Appendix E: Advising Questionnaire for Advisors

Advising Questionnaire for Advisors

Circle the options that best describe your experience at Bladen Community College.

1. Before becoming an advisor at BCC, how would you rate your knowledge of advising?

   1=low; 5=high

           1   2   3   4   5

2. Rate your level of knowledge of those processes now. 1=low; 5=high

           1   2   3   4   5

3. Which aspect of advising do you feel ***most*** comfortable with?

   ☐ Interacting with students

   ☐ Using technology

   ☐ Navigating College processes and procedures

   ☐ Understanding course offerings

   ☐ Other: _____

4. Which aspect of advising do you feel ***least*** comfortable with?

   ☐ Interacting with students

   ☐ Using technology

   ☐ Navigating College processes and procedures

   ☐ Understanding course offerings

   ☐ Other: _____

5. How would you rate the advising training you received at BCC? 1=low; 5= high

           1   2   3   4   5

6. How long is a typical first meeting with an advisee?

   ☐ 0-15 minutes   ☐ 45-60 minutes

   ☐ 15-30 minutes   ☐ Longer than 60 minutes

   ☐ 30-45 minutes

7. How long is a typical advising meeting after the first?

   ☐ 0-15 minutes   ☐ 45-60 minutes

   ☐ 15-30 minutes   ☐ Longer than 60 minutes

   ☐ 30-45 minutes

8. How many times per semester do you meet with your advisees (in person, phone, or video)?

    □ 0   □ 3

    □ 1   □ 4

    □ 2   □ 5 or more

9. How many times per semester do you contact advisees without meeting (email, AVISO messages, etc.)?

    □ 0   □ 3

    □ 1   □ 4

    □ 2   □ 5 or more

Select the option that best describes your advising conversations with students.

10. The student and I discuss academic goals:

    □ Every time

    □ Most times

    □ Sometimes

    □ Only during the first meeting

    □ Never

11. The student and I discuss the benefit of completing a certificate or degree:

    □ Every time

    □ Most times

    □ Sometimes

    □ Only during the first meeting

    □ Never

12. The student and I discuss how long it will take to reach their goals:

    □ Every time

    □ Most times

    □ Sometimes

    □ Only during the first meeting

    □ Never

13. The students and I discuss job or career opportunities based on their career interest:

    □ Every time

    □ Most times

    □ Sometimes

☐ Only during the first meeting

☐ Never

14. The students and I discuss their time commitments outside of school.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

15. If yes, does this conversation affect how many classes students typically sign up for?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

☐ N/A

16. How often do you suggest that a student should take fewer classes?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

17. How often do you suggest that a part-time student should consider taking a full-time load?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

18. How often do students come to advising sessions with a clear plan?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

19. How often are students actively involved in their advising sessions?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

20. How often do students make first contact for an advising meeting?

☐ Every time

☐ Most times

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

21. How do you prefer meeting with your advisees? *Check any that apply.*

☐ In person

☐ On the phone

☐ Via email

☐ Video call

☐ Other: _____

22. How much of a student's coursework do you typically plan at once?

☐ One semester

☐ Two semesters

☐ Three semesters

☐ The full degree

23. How would you rate the quality of the College's advising services? 1=low; 5=high

　　　　　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5

24. Is there anything you wish you had known before you became an advisor?

25. If you could give the leaders at BCC advice about important changes the College could make to improve students' experience with advising and navigating the College, what would that be?

26. If you designed advising at BCC, what would it look like?

Appendix F: Bladen Community College Mission and Vision Statements

MISSION STATEMENT

Bladen Community College is dedicated to the educational and cultural enrichment of the local and global communities it serves. The College is committed to quality teaching through both distance and on-site environments for high-order learning, college transfer preparation, work force development training, and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Adopted Spring 2021

VISION STATEMENT

Bladen Community College will provide student-centered, future-focused and sustainable educational opportunities to enhance the quality of life for everyone it serves.

Adopted Spring 2021

Appendix G: Advisor Training Resource List

- AHA! Advisor Training modules

- Advising Handbook—workflow and best practices

- Advising Checklists

- Early Alert Quick Guide

- Advising Email Templates

- Student Withdrawal Checklist and Exit Survey

- Self-Service Quick Guide

- Student Resource Master List

- AVISO Quick Guide

Appendix H: Advisor Certification Curriculum Outline

Module 1: Introduction (conceptual)
- Philosophy of advising
- Student-centered focus

Module 2: Advisor-Student Interaction (relational)
- Listening and Effective communication
- Goal setting
- Needs assessment—personal and academic
- Hard conversations
- Cultural sensitivity
- Identification and intervention of at-risk behavior
- Interactions with special populations

Module 3: Career-Advising
- Career assessment
- Soft skills
- Occupational Outlook Handbook, NCWorks, NC Careers
- Opportunities: internships, job openings, WIOA
- Balancing college and work responsibilities

Module 4: Registration Processes and Procedures (informational)
- Policy
    - FERPA
    - Drop/add
    - New v. returning students
    - Credit for life/work experience
    - Course substitutions
    - Electronic use policy
- Catalogs and degree plans
- Articulation agreements
- Pre-requisites and co-requisites
- Degree, diploma, certificate, non-credit
- Graduation
- Financial aid
    - Program and catalog; taking courses off-plan; repeating classes; lifetime eligibility
    - Half-time, three-quarter-time, full-time financial aid status
    - Satisfactory Academic Progress; Title IV

- o FAFSA
- o PELL, scholarships, work study, grants, private loans
- Campus Resources
  - o Library
  - o Learning Enhancement Center & Writing Center
  - o Eagle's Nest
  - o Emergency fund
  - o Electronic resources (e.g., Upswing, NCLive, library guides)

Module 5: Technology
- Self-Service
- AVISO
- Email
- Moodle

Module 6: Degree Planning
- Developmental education
- Foundational courses
- Constructing schedules

Module 7: Program Specialization Add-on—Business

Module 8: Program Specialization Add-on—Public Service

Module 9: Program Specialization Add on—Industrial Systems

Module 10: Program Specialization Add-on—Healthcare

Module 11: Program Specialization Add-on—College Transfer

Appendix I: North Carolina Community College System Advising Mission Statement

Advising is an essential part of the North Carolina Community College student experience. Quality advising provides a holistic approach that teaches students to identify and achieve their personal, educational, and career goals. Quality advising is an ongoing, collaborative process between students and well-trained advisors whereby students are connected with appropriate resources and equipped to become confident, responsible, and reflective learners. Quality advising is fostered through institutional support for the onboarding and continuous development of advising personnel and for the access to appropriate advising resources.

Appendix J: Advisor Training Assessment

Advisor Training Assessment

This assessment measures advisors' comfort with relevant advising topics and should be taken both before and after completing advisor training.

Rate your level of comfort with the following items. (1=no comfort; 5=very comfortable)

Conceptual

1. Understanding various theories of advising (prescriptive, proactive, developmental, etc.).

    1   2   3   4   5

2. Knowing when to use different advising theories.

    1   2   3   4   5

Relational

3. Listening actively to students.

    1   2   3   4   5

4. Helping students set goals.

    1   2   3   4   5

5. Having difficult conversations with students.

    1   2   3   4   5

6. Relating to students of different backgrounds.

    1   2   3   4   5

7. Building relationships with advisees.

    1   2   3   4   5

8. Communicating effectively with advisees.

    1   2   3   4   5

Informational

9. Understanding my responsibilities under FERPA.

    1   2   3   4   5

10. Understanding developmental education rules.

1   2   3   4   5

11. Understanding degree requirements.

1   2   3   4   5

12. Understanding prerequisites and co-requisites.

1   2   3   4   5

13. Navigating the College catalog.

1   2   3   4   5

14. Understanding how courses transfer to other institutions.

1   2   3   4   5

15. Using degree plans to create a schedule.

1   2   3   4   5

16. Creating efficient degree plans.

1   2   3   4   5

17. Understanding campus resources (LEC, library, Eagle's Nest, etc.).

1   2   3   4   5

18. Using registration technology (Self-Service).

1   2   3   4   5

19. Helping students navigate career decisions.

1   2   3   4   5

Course Assessment

20. How would you rate the quality of the AHA! Advisor Training course?

1   2   3   4   5

21. What were the strengths of the advisor training?

22. How could advisor training be improved?

<u>Appendix K: Bladen Community College Strategic Plan & Goals 2020-2021</u>

Bladen Community College's
2020-2021 Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Student Success
- The College will increase fall to fall student retention rates.
    The College will meet the goal of a 5% increase through Aviso retention services, guided pathways, advising, and student support services. The College will measure the goal by tracking first-time full-time students of Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and Fall 2020 to Fall 2021.

- The College will increase total student enrollment.
    The College will meet the goal of a 5% increase through an extensive marketing and recruiting program, high school visits, and scholarship awareness. The College will measure the goal by comparing the student headcount of Fall 2020 to Fall 2021.

- The College will increase student completion of degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
    The College will meet the goal of a 5% increase through guided pathways, advising, Self-Service, and Finish First initiative. The College will measure the goal by comparing consecutive graduation rates for Spring 2019, Spring 2020, and Spring 2021.

Goal 2: Student Support
- The College will provide a satisfactory experience for its students.
    The graduate and climate surveys will show that at least 80% of our students will be satisfied with their college experience.

- The College will increase scholarship awareness and application completion.
    The number of completed scholarship applications will increase 5% from 2019 to 2020 and from 2020 to 2021

- The College will increase student awareness of social support services, such as Aunt Bertha, Eagle's Nest, and Bladen SOS, that are available to them.
    A survey question relative to student awareness of social support services on the student climate survey will show that at least 75% of students are aware of the services available.

- The College will develop an online orientation program for students.
    The College will create an online orientation for new and returning students by July 2021.

Goal 3: Employees

- The College will increase opportunities for professional and career development for all employees.
    A question relative to professional and career development on the annual services review will show that at least 75% of staff and faculty have had professional development opportunities.

- The College will promote a culture of open communication and collaboration throughout campus.
    The annual services review survey results will show that at least 75% of employees are satisfied with communication on campus

- College employees will be satisfied as an employee of Bladen Community College
    A question relative to employee satisfaction on the annual services review survey will show that at least 75% of employees are satisfied as a BCC employee.

- College employees will feel respected and appreciated as an employee of Bladen Community College.
    The annual services review survey will show that at least 75% of employees feel respected and appreciated.

Goal 4: Community

- The College will increase the external use of campus facilities by community, state, and local organizations for activities, meetings, and events on campus.
    The number of activities external organizations hold on campus in comparison to previous academic years will show an increase in campus facilities' use.

- The College will develop a multi-year extensive marketing plan to include all social media outlets, news outlets, college website, and publications.
    The College will create the marketing plan by July 2021 to show that the College met the goal.

Goal 5: Environment

- The College will increase the number of named facilities with a focus on the Workforce Development and STEM buildings.
    By August 2021, the College will have at least two naming sponsorships.

- The College will provide a safe, secure, and clean environment to all employees.

The annual services review survey results will show that at least 75% of employees are satisfied with the campus environment.

- The College will acquire and install reliable connectivity technology, so all employees and students are able to access Wi-Fi throughout the entire campus.
  Results from the student climate and annual services review surveys will show that at least 75% of students and employees are satisfied with connectivity while on campus.

Bladen Community College's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan

Bladen Community College Mission Statement

Bladen Community College is dedicated to the educational and cultural enrichment of the local and global communities it serves. The college is committed to quality teaching through both distance and on-site environments for high-order learning, college transfer preparation, workforce development training, and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Bladen Community College Vision Statement

Bladen Community College will provide student-centered, future-focused and sustainable educational opportunities to enhance the quality of life for everyone it serves.

Goal 1 Theme: Student Success

1.A The college will increase total student enrollment.
- *1.1 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students*
- *1.2 Develop and implement a recruitment and enrollment strategy that focuses on recruitment for the male student population and underserved populations*
- *1.3 Develop a multi-year extensive marketing plan to include all social media outlets, news outlets, college website, and publications to ensure all parts of the county are reached*
- *1.4 Make data informed decisions using data dashboards created through the IE office*

I.B The college will increase fall to fall student retention rates.
- *1.1 Fully implement and integrate Aviso in to the student support system*
- *1.2 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students*
- *1.3 Increase the knowledge and awareness of endowments, scholarships, and emergency funds offered to students*
- *1.4 Develop and implement early career explorations for students*

1.C The college will increase completion of degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- *1.1 Fully integrate one college model and transitions between non-credit and credit programs*
- *1.2 Create a centralized advising system to holistically support students*
- *1.3 Fully implement Finish First NC*
- *1.4 Fully implement and integrate Aviso in to the student support system*
- *1.5 Increase knowledge and use of Foundation emergency funds, FindHelp.org, and county support systems*

Goal 2 Theme: Community Engagement and Business Partnerships

The college will expand community engagement and will develop partnerships with local businesses and school systems within the community.

2.1 *Work closely with Bladen County Economic Development to identify occurring and new workforce needs.*
2.2 *Develop new curriculum pathways based on industry needs*
2.3 *Develop and implement an apprenticeship program for students*
2.4 *Develop and implement career connection center to foster a relationship between new graduates and employers for job placement*
2.5 *Increase the external use of campus facilities by community, state, and local organizations for activities, meetings, and events on campus*
2.6 *Enhance partnerships with school systems to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students in our service area*

Goal 3 Theme: Employee Satisfaction and Workplace Environment

The college will elevate a culture of intentional collaboration, open communication, and respect for all employees that reflect the institution's commitment to high professional standards and a collegial workplace environment.

3.1 *Increase opportunities for professional and career development*
3.2 *Provide an extensive onboarding experience for employees*
3.3 *Provide an institutional climate that promotes cultural awareness and appreciation for diversity, equity, and inclusion*
3.4 *Develop a process for employee recognition that demonstrates the college's appreciation for the contributions of all employees*
3.5 *Provide a safe, secure, and clean environment to all employees and students*
3.6 *Acquire and install reliable connectivity technology, so all employees and students are able to access Wi-Fi throughout the entire campus.*
3.7 *Maintain and upgrade facilities and equipment to ensure teaching environments are current to industry standards*
3.8 *Create an open line of communication within and around each department using the one-college model*

Goal 4 Theme: Institutional Advancement

The college will place emphasis on increasing the financial resources to support the institution and students

4.1 *Increase the number of endowments, scholarships, and emergency funds offered to students*
4.2 *Seek and gain grant funding to support institutional funding*
4.3 *Increase participation in the college alumni association*

Appendix M: Literature Review

The Value of Advising
Advising services perform important functions at colleges and universities; they help students find belonging on campus, connect to resources, and navigate barriers. These supports are especially important in community college settings where students are welcomed regardless of their backgrounds or previous levels of academic success. Kuh (2008) notes that "almost 50 percent of all first-time community college students are assessed as underprepared for the academic demands of college-level work" (p. 69). For students who are unprepared academically and unfamiliar with college resources, advisors can be a vital means of gaining necessary skills and accessing important campus supports.

Though many people conflate advising with registration, advisors' work goes beyond signing students up for classes; advisors offer holistic supports that allow students the best opportunity to perform well in their classes. According to O'Banion (2020),

> Academic advising is the second most important function in the community college. If it is not conducted with the utmost efficiency and effectiveness, the most important function in the college—instruction—will fail to achieve its purpose of ensuring that students succeed in navigating the curriculum to completion. (p. 1)

If students cannot navigate the many written and unwritten rules and procedures of college, academic ability means little. They need support outside of the classroom, and advisors are ideally positioned to offer or connect students to those supports.

Community College Completion
The value of college completion is well documented. Long (2018) notes that employers recognize the value of credentials and that graduates are more productive and work-ready than those without a degree. Recognition of these attributes translates to extra earnings of $4,300 per year for workers with associate's degrees and nearly $20,000 dollars for those with a bachelor's (Long, 2018). Trends also suggest that the value of a degree is only increasing. According to Turner (2018), "compared to a worker with no more than a high school degree, the advantage in earnings for a college graduate has increased from about 46 percent in 1973 to about 82 percent in 2016" (para. 5).

Despite these well-documented advantages, however, nearly 40% of community colleges in the United States have completion rates below 20% (Turner, 2018). These outcomes lag far behind other institutions of higher education in part because community colleges are less selective than their four-year counterparts and private schools (Long, 2018). Because of open-door policies and cheaper tuition, community colleges often attract students who are less academically prepared or

in more precarious financial situations, and these factors can impede students' ability to complete a credential.

Otto and Atkinson (2020) point out that

> The community college hallmarks of open access and freedom to use services as needed assume a level of self-directedness that twenty-first century students may not possess. They display vulnerability in terms of goals and indecision, often lack financial support, and are increasingly in a call to action to move away from long menus of options and replace them with more focused and integrated student experiences. (p. 75).

Community colleges exist to support the most vulnerable student populations, and as such, will always face more student barriers than their more selective and better-funded four-year counterparts. Therefore, if community colleges are to increase success and completion rates, they must build systems to help students negotiate these potential obstacles.

Role of Academic Advising in Retention and Completion
Martinez and Elue (2020) note that advising is a crucial factor in student persistence; yet, advising efforts are often limited in community colleges, where organizational challenges and student barriers are widespread.

Advisors are among the few agents in a college who can bridge key areas of need for a student and help eliminate barriers that could force a student to drop out. Hunter (2006) argues that students who feel connected to the campus community, who understand how to navigate college environments, and who learn how to develop academic and personal competencies are more likely to persist. Advisors can help support students' social development, mental and physical wellbeing, and academic progress and bolster their confidence and independence. Few others on campus can deliver on-demand, holistic supports as responsively as advisors. Drake (2011) notes that advising can help students connect with the campus and stay engaged with college as a result.

The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) (2014) found that developmental students who created an academic plan with an advisor in their first semester were 33% more likely to successfully complete a developmental math or English course. Because developmental education is so often a terminal barrier for students, this advising work helps prevent students from withdrawing before ever completing these early courses (CCCSE, 2014). Price and Tovar (2014) reinforce these conclusions: "students who attend community colleges that provide a supportive environment through academic advising; nonacademic supports (e.g., counseling); and financial supports are more engaged—and more engagement around the support for learners' benchmark is predictive of higher institutional graduation rates" (p. 14).

Therefore, quality advising can have a meaningful impact on students' experiences, success, and persistence in college and ultimately improve their ability to reach their completion goals.

Measuring College Completion

Despite the connection between advising and student success, finding meaningful data on completion can be difficult. Chen (2021) points out that attempts to measure community college completion often fail to account for students who transfer or leave college for an extended period. If a student begins college and leaves due to illness, family obligations, or finances, that student may never be counted in completion numbers even when returning and graduating after a long absence. These numbers also exclude students who may have reached goals that are unrelated to earning a degree, like advancing job skills or learning more about a special interest. This gap affects community colleges in particular because their students are more likely to enter and exit based upon their changing circumstances.

Though completion data may not tell the full picture alone, they are still necessary measures for students and colleges alike, and institutions often partner with state systems, government agencies, and external organizations to better capture reliable data. Two frequently used sources for completion data are the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

According to their data, college students who complete associate's degrees in 150% of normal time represent as little as 26% of those enrolled, as measured by IPEDS, or as much as 37.5%, as measured by the National Student Clearinghouse (Long, 2018). Because of these lagging outcomes, many colleges and systems have taken a more active role in supporting students' pathways to graduation, and advising has emerged as a key area of focus.

Advisor Intervention as a Retention Strategy

In addition to helping students choose programs and plan courses of study, advisors are also valuable agents of intervention and support. CCCSE (2014) identifies alert and intervention as a high-impact practice likely to improve student success. They found that developmental students who reported being contacted when they were having trouble in their classes were 67% more likely to complete a developmental English course (CCCSE, 2014).

Identifying students who may be at risk of withdrawing from a course or leaving the college altogether can allow advisors and others to offer students advice and guidance and introduce them to timely support services. In many cases, advisors can understand the risks even before students themselves. Ohrablo (2018) notes that "advisors are invaluable in supporting students by anticipating their needs and addressing issues of which the students may not even be aware" (p. 46). Advisors can identify potential pitfalls or emerging problems and help students manage those difficulties before they become too great.

In reviewing evidence on the impact of advising on persistence and completion, Hatch & Garcia (2017) underscore the importance of "establishing students' academic and social support networks" (p. 381). Some students lack robust support networks at home, and in the case of first-generation college students, may not know anyone outside of the college who is familiar with its processes and culture. Advisors can be this point of contact for students and help them to build a meaningful support network. Hatch and Garcia (2017) show that the quality of students' early connections at the college and their impression of the institution determine the extent to which they seek help in future. These findings suggest the need for intentional, effective onboarding practices, such as new student orientation and advisor introductions.

Advising as Equity-Building
Advising is one of the strongest means of reducing achievement gaps that exist across social, economic, and racial demographics. Some students face greater barriers and possess fewer resources, and these factors often contribute to low college completion rates.

First-generation college students, for example, are less engaged with their institutions, have fewer interactions with faculty, experience lower retention rates, and possess less knowledge about the expectations of college work and culture (Soria & Stebleton, 2012). They often have fewer supports than their peers whose parents have graduated with a bachelor's degree, and as a result, these students are half as likely to persist to their second year (Swecker, et al., 2013). Academic advising, however, can make a measurable difference in these outcomes; Swecker, et al. (2013) found that among first-generation college students "for every meeting with an advisor the odds that a student is retained increases by 13%" (p. 49). Advisors can facilitate greater connections to the college, support students' comfort with the institution, and connect them to valuable resources that can teach them to navigate higher education.

Students who identify as ethnic and racial minorities can also benefit from high-quality advising. Tovar (2014) notes that college actors, like advisors, can support minority students' success and integration into the college environment, and Carnaje (2016) argues that advisors can have a positive impact on the success and retention of students of color by helping them to better frame their college experiences. Advisors can support the success of students of color by humanizing the advising experience, showing investment in their success, and employing proactive advising strategies (Museus & Ravello, 2010).

Advisors' potential to affect change among special populations also extends to online students, who could be more likely to feel disconnected from the campus community and the supports it offers. According to Ohrablo (2018), "online students are at significant risk for attrition as they experience isolation and a sense of disconnect from the institution, as well as finding themselves lacking resources and information" (p. 110). Nevertheless, advisors can mitigate some of these

risks. Ohrablo (2018) argues that "advisors can greatly impact students' perceptions of their online experiences by providing ongoing support and information to students" (p. 110). By connecting early and continuing to build relationships and provide timely information, advisors can improve the experiences of online students.

Thus, despite the inherent challenges of advising in a community college—including budgetary and personnel limitations—academic advising can improve the outcomes of disadvantaged populations of students, such as first-generation college students, older students, low-income students, and students in racial and ethnic minorities. This work is a key avenue through which colleges can promote equity and reduce completion gaps across financial, racial, and social demographics.

<u>Advising Definitions from Literature Review</u>

Appreciative advising—advising model based on five phases of appreciative inquiry (disarm, discover, dream, design, deliver, don't settle)

Career and College Promise Program (CCP)—North Carolina's dual enrollment program, which allows high school juniors and seniors to take college courses

Case management model—hands-on advising model in which advisors work with advisees to anticipate and plan for their needs and to connect them with appropriate resources

Completion—earning a college credential (i.e., diploma, certificate, or degree)

Developmental advising—relationship-based advising model based upon collaboration and students' development as whole persons

Guided Pathways—approach to student success that seeks to make students' paths to credentials more efficient through structured pathways and intentional supports

Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS)—data storehouse managed by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics

Holistic advising—an individualized approach that supports students as whole persons and acknowledges that many non-academic factors could influence student success

National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)—global advising association that supports advisor development and the scholarship on advising in higher education

National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)—educational nonprofit focused on college research and reporting

One-College Model—organizational structure that combines curriculum and continuing education programs and supports into an integrated system of operation

Persistence—the rate at which students reenroll in college from fall to fall, regardless of institution

Prescriptive advising—transactional advising model in which advisors are experts focused on delivering information to advisees

Proactive advising—advising model in which advisors reach out to at-risk students instead of waiting for the student to reach out first

Retention—the rate at which students continue enrollment at the same institution from one fall semester to the next

Appendix N: QEP Director Job Description

Bladen Community College
Job Description

Job Title: Director of Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
Department: Instructional Services
Reports To: Vice President for Instructional Services
FLSA Status:
Prepared Date: 6/1/2022
Approved By: Dr. Amanda Lee
Approved Date: 6/6/2022

SUMMARY

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Director leads and provides oversight of the Plan among faculty, staff, and students to facilitate the integration of adaptive holistic advising (AHA!) at Bladen Community College. The Director also manages documentation and reporting requirements and ensures alignment with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) standards.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide general oversight of the implementation of the plan
- Ensure QEP implementation is sustained through continuous input and participation from students, faculty and staff
- Lead and coordinate QEP-related assessments
- Ensure SACSCOC compliance
- Compile data collection and analysis
- Provide regular reports, feedback and recommendations to faculty and staff
- Manage the QEP budget
- Plan, initiate, and execute the delivery of professional development as related to the QEP
- Prepare and present annual QEP status reports to the QEP committee and senior staff
- Assist with the preparation of reports to SACSCOC
- Serve as a liaison between students, faculty, and staff and all QEP activities
- Chair the QEP committee

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES - None

QUALIFICATIONS To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE
• Experience coordinating or managing projects or institutional endeavors
• Strong written and oral communication
• Minimum of three years' supervisory experience
Preferred Skills and Experience:
• Knowledge of SACSCOC requirements
• QEP and assessment experience
• Demonstrated evidence of using qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods
• Demonstrated ability to of working collaboratively toward a common goal
• Possess strong team building skills and demonstrate ability to motivate and empower direct and indirect reports to achieve goals
• Demonstrated success focusing faculty and staff toward student learning
• Experience fostering and sustaining campus-wide partnerships to achieve goals

LANGUAGE SKILLS
Must have excellent oral and written communication skills as demonstrated by the ability to write reports and correspondence, and the ability to present information effectively and respond to questions from students, faculty members, administrators and other staff at the college.   Ability to speak Spanish preferred.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS – None required.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to perform the essential functions of this job successfully. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; and talk and hear. Must be able to lift or move weight up to 25 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Appendix O: QEP Budget

QEP Budget 2022-2027	Fiscal Year 2022		Fiscal Year 2023		Fiscal Year 2024		Fiscal Year 2025		Fiscal Year 2026		Fiscal Year 2027	
EXPENSES	Planning Year		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		YEAR 4		YEAR 5	
SALARIES/FRINGE BENEFITS	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW	EXISTING	NEW
VP for Instructional Services - 2%	5,118		2,559		2,559		2,559		2,559		2,559	
AVP for Accred & Assessment - 7%	12,414		6,207		6,207		6,207		6,207		6,207	
QEP Director		-		2,400		2,400		2,400		2,400		2,400
Social Security	1,342	-	671	184	671	184	671	184	671	184	671	184
Retirement	4,296	-	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588	2,148	588
Medical Insurance	1,332	-	666	296	666	296	666	296	666	296	666	296
TOTAL SALARIES/FRINGE BENEFITS	**24,503**	**-**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**	**12,251**	**3,467**
SOFTWARE												
AVISO	68,266		-		34,133		34,133		34,133		34,133	
Moodle - LMS	5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000	
TOTAL SOFTWARE	**73,266**		**5,000**		**39,133**		**39,133**		**39,133**		**39,133**	
PRINTING												
Printing/Copying		500		500		500		500		500		500
TOTAL PRINTING		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
SUPPLIES												
Ofice Supplies		500		500		500		500		500		500
SUPPLIES		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
EQUIPMENT												
Computer		3,000		-		-		-		-		-
Printer		500		-		-		-		-		-
TOTAL EQUIPMENT		**3,500**		**-**		**-**		**-**		**-**		**-**
MARKETING & PROMOTION												
PR Materials		1,500		1,000		500		500		500		500
TOTAL MARKETING & PROMOTION		**1,500**		**1,000**		**500**		**500**		**500**		**500**
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT												
PD Webinars		1,000		2,000		1,000		500		500		500
SACS Meetings		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000		3,000
Other Conferences		2,000		2,000		1,000		1,000		500		500
TOTAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		**6,000**		**7,000**		**5,000**		**4,500**		**4,000**		**4,000**
MEMBERSHIPS												
NCADA-QEP Director		300		300		300		300		300		300
TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**		**300**
MISCELLANEOUS												
Items Not Listed		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**		**1,000**
SUBTOTALS	97,769	13,300	17,251	13,767	51,384	11,267	51,384	10,767	51,384	10,267	51,384	10,267
ANNUAL TOTALS		111,069		31,018		62,651		62,151		61,651		61,651
QEP TOTAL BUDGET		390,191										