

**1: Title and brief description of the QEP:**

Quality Enhancement Plan Title *Developmental Student Success through I-PASS*

The approved QEP presented a model setting the stage for developmental students to accept personal responsibility for their own education through personalized assistance provided by *I-PASS* faculty and staff. *I-PASS* was the chosen acronym to reflect the student's role and personal commitment to the concept of **I-Persist**, **I-Achieve**, **I-Study**, and **I-Succeed**. As the QEP evolved and data was collected and analyzed, the College made adjustments to the approved QEP. Each QEP adjustment was made to better address the target population and each of the QEP goals: persistence, achievement, studying, and succeeding.

Internal data analysis indicated nearly 70% of all students entering FTCC required some pre-curricula coursework prior to entering their college-level courses. The QEP was designed to help pre-curricula students persist to college-level courses. The College faculty developed the QEP through broad-based interactions consisting of faculty and staff discussions, focus groups, blogs, research, and telephone/email with faculty, staff, and students. The outcome of this collaboration identified a critical need for increased student engagement and retention.

The *I-PASS Center* was created after acceptance of the QEP and included activities designed to encourage students to take personal responsibility for their own educational goals focusing on: intrusive advising, a College Study Skills (ACA 118) course, and tutoring in the *I-PASS Center*. It was anticipated developmental students and the College would benefit from the QEP through:

- Extensive professional development for faculty and staff
- Involvement of Continuing Education faculty and staff through student referrals to Mathematics Refresher and Basic Skills courses to increase placement scores in academic credit programs
- Change in the engagement culture levels throughout the College including ongoing faculty, staff and student engagement from admission to graduation
- Increased student responsibility for their own learning and career path goals
- More financial aid remaining after developmental courses to complete academic courses
- More knowledge about the College through analysis of new data and data trends
- Change in the behavior of students in and outside of class
- Strengthening faculty-student relationships across the College
- More students accessing available support services, increasing the potential of their success
- Smoother transition of developmental students to academic programs
- Greater likelihood of a higher grade point average in academic programs of study

**2. List of the initial goals and intended outcomes of the QEP**

The initial QEP focused on goals that research indicated would result in greater success and retention of developmental studies students. The following goals were associated with defined student learning outcomes, achievement measures, and objectives:

**Goal 1: Interaction with Advisors**

Provide students in developmental studies with the opportunity for meaningful interaction with their advisors.

**Goal 1 Outcome/objective: Intrusive Advising**

As part of intrusive advising, developmental students will work with *I-PASS* Advisors and the Counselor in the *I-PASS Center* to determine educational plans for registration, appropriate course placement, and assistance with academic and life issues affecting their coursework.

**Achievement Measures:** Developmental students who experience intrusive advising with *I-PASS* Advisors and/or Counselors will express overall satisfaction with the advising session. Students will complete a survey for overall level of student satisfaction immediately following the intrusive advising session. The survey will provide quantitative data on quality of service, helpfulness of advisor, and term of enrollment.

**Goal 2: Better Academically Prepared Students**

Provide students in developmental studies an intensive study skills course, ACA 118, aimed to improve students' overall academic success.

**Goal 2 First Outcome/objective: Meet NCCCS Critical Success Factor (CSF) Standards**

Students enrolled in developmental courses at FTCC will meet or exceed the standards relating to developmental studies performance success as established by the annual NCCCS Critical Success Factors Report.

**Goal 2 Second Outcome/objective: I-PASS Center**

Developmental students will utilize software in the *I-PASS Center* for additional course review with tutors available for one-on-one assistance.

**Achievement Measures:** Developmental students will enroll in ACA 118 within the first two semesters of enrollment and will be better prepared for their pre-curriculum and academic coursework. Pre-curriculum students who enroll in ACA 118 their first or second term of enrollment will be measured for effectiveness by:

- Successful completion of ACA 118 with an A, B, or C
- Pre-testing and post-testing successful completers to evaluate learning

**Goal 3: Educational Resources**

Provide developmental students with access to educational resources in the *I-PASS Center*, beyond the classroom, that promotes successful completion of course and program requirements.

**Goal 3 First Outcome/objective: Enrollment in ACA 118**

Developmental students will enroll in ACA 118 within the first two semesters of enrollment and will be better prepared for their developmental and academic coursework.

**Goal 3 Second Outcome/objective: I-PASS Center**

Developmental students will utilize software in the *I-PASS Center* for additional course review with tutors available for one-on-one assistance.

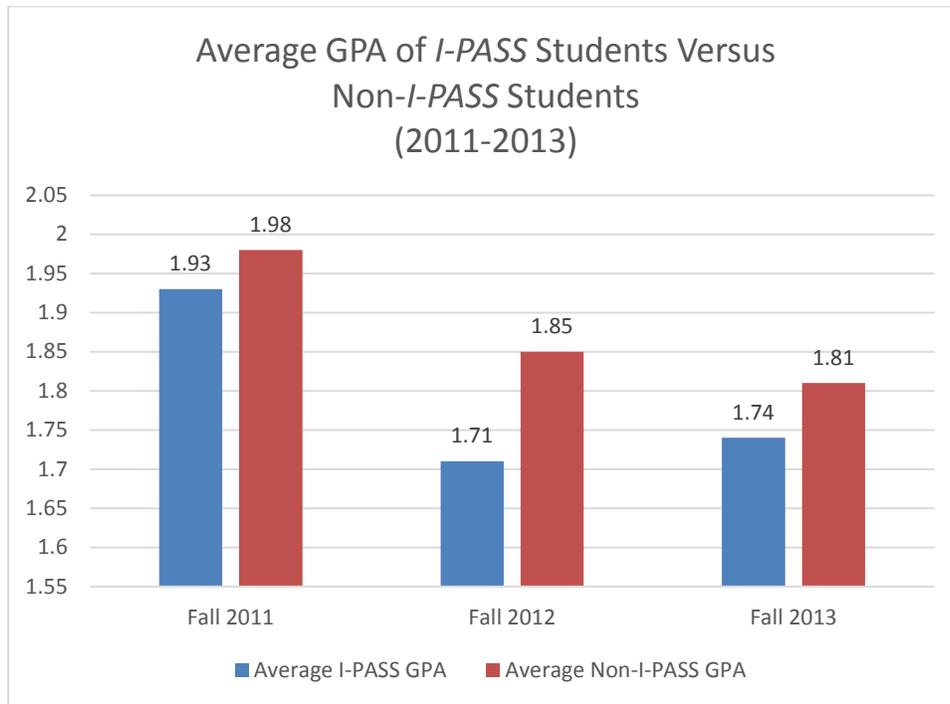
**Achievement Measures:** Developmental students will utilize software in the *I-PASS Center* for additional course review with tutors available for one-on-one assistance. A statistical correlation will be run on the developmental students enrolled in ENG 080, MAT 070 and RED 080 who utilize the *I-PASS Center* for tutoring, either face-to-face or with computer software. For each student enrolled in ENG 080, MAT 070 and/or RED 080 in a given semester, an individual grade point average will be calculated using the student's grades in all developmental classes taken that semester.

The semester grade point averages will be correlated with the amount of time spent in the *I-PASS Center* by the following groups:

- 0-15 hours
- 16-30 hours
- 31-45 hours
- 46-60 hours

**Analysis:** At the end of year one, it was discovered that the data collection instrument (TutorTrack) and the formulae to be used to calculate the *I-PASS* achievement measure were hubristic and did not provide measurable data. It was decided to refocus and use a more parsimonious approach consisting of an analysis of GPAs of developmental students who used the *I-PASS Center* versus students who did not use the Center. The collected data determined that intended outcomes were not being achieved. As reflected in Table 1, the first three years of data indicated that services offered at The *I-PASS Center* did not produce the anticipated improvement in student GPAs when compared to developmental studies students who did not visit the *I-PASS Center* (non *I-PASS* students).

Table 1 *I-PASS* GPA Comparisons

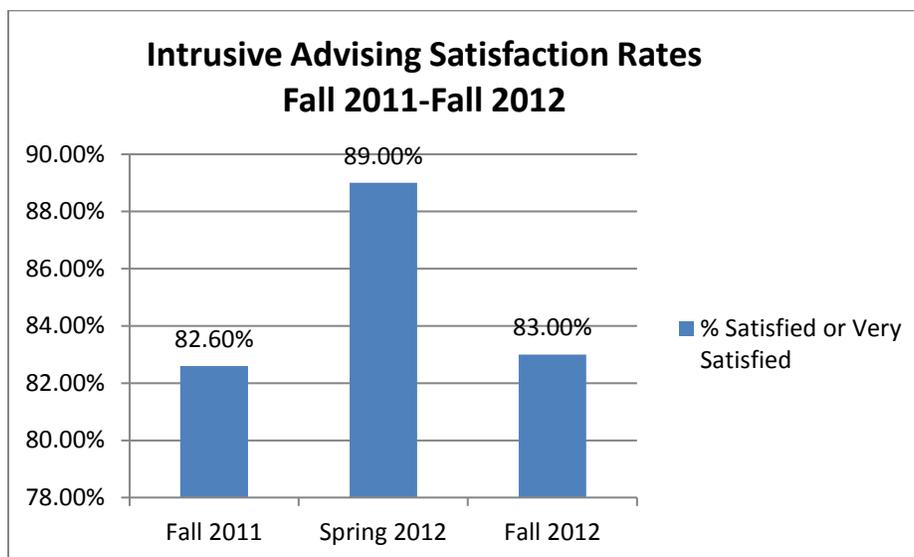


In addition to the issues related to the previously approved methodology, the College also discovered issues related to one of the cohorts of students selected for data collection. The QEP identified two groups of students for this study. The first group was composed of a cohort of students that were first-generation, first-time, full-time, degree-seeking, and enrolled in at least two developmental courses that began fall 2011. For this group of students the parameters were so narrow, that the cohort was not large enough to sustain a longitudinal analysis of their performance. The established parameters only resulted in 146 students meeting the initial criteria. At the end of the first semester, 61 students withdrew from one class and another 48 failed their developmental classes causing them to be removed from the cohort. The remaining 37 students lost their financial aid eligibility and did not re-enroll.

The second group of students that were measured concurrently with the first group, did allow for a cohort large enough for multiple years of measurable results. The parameters for this group were identified as those students enrolled in the newly created College Study Skills (ACA 118) course, and/or sought services from the *I-PASS Center* including intrusive advising and tutoring. The College anticipated this group of students would realize success; however, data gathered from the fall 2011 through 2013 semesters reflected ACA 118 passing rates did not meet the achievement target of 80% as established in the approved QEP. At the end of the first semester, only 51% passed with a grade of “C” or better and during the following semester, 56% of the students either failed or withdrew from the course. Since the intended outcomes of ACA 118 were not realized, the course was discontinued.

The good news was that after analysis of the data, the intrusive advising component of the approved QEP was deemed successful as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Intrusive Advising Survey Results



Samples of positive Intrusive Advising comments included in the student surveys are as follows:

“She was helpful. Went beyond the call of duty. I really appreciate it.”

“...very helpful in fulfilling my in-processing questions.”

“Thanks for your patience”

“Continue this program, \_\_\_\_\_ gives good advice”

“Extremely helpful toward me and the classes that I need”

In support of the approved QEP, additional full-time developmental faculty were hired to teach and advise developmental students in the *I-PASS Center*. Although additional faculty were hired, developmental student improvement was not being realized. The approved QEP was designed to provide exclusive services to developmental students. While it was never intended, this exclusivity fostered an environment of isolation for the developmental students. Based upon this unintended consequence and the aforementioned data, the College realized a need to change some portions of the approved QEP as discussed below.

### **3. Discussion of QEP changes:**

Based on the abovementioned findings, new goals and measures were identified further modifying the QEP without changing our original focus. Again, the initial overarching theme of the approved QEP, was to guide developmental studies students through and toward College level course while helping them become personally invested in their own education. The faculty in the *I-PASS Center* shifted their strategy from individual tutoring of students to conducting classroom-like workshops aligned with the developmental curriculum. Those students requiring or preferring individualized tutoring could continue to receive those services from the College’s long-established Student Learning Center. Allowing developmental students to use the Student Learning Center alongside non-developmental students fostered a more inclusive learning environment. The new strategy resulted in modifications for goals and

measures as identified below:

**Goal 1: Interaction with Advisors/Counselors**

The Intrusive Advising component of the approved QEP was well received by the students as measured through a previously discussed satisfaction survey; therefore, it was retained. Since *I-PASS* no longer supported individualized services, the intrusive advising component was shifted to the Admissions Counselors. Professional counselors provide developmental students with personal, career, educational, and academic support. They maintain close contact with students, visit classrooms, and hold group sessions on topics that the students and faculty request. Topics include, but not limited to, college policies related to attendance and withdrawals, financial aid literacy, career choices, and other College expectations.

**Measure:** Seventy-Five percent of developmental students experiencing intrusive advising/counseling with Admissions Counselors will express overall satisfaction with the counseling session. Students will complete a survey for overall level of student satisfaction immediately following the intrusive advising/counseling session. The survey will provide quantitative data on the students' opinion of the counselor's performance to include quality of service, helpfulness of counselor, and understanding of College policies as explained by the counselor.

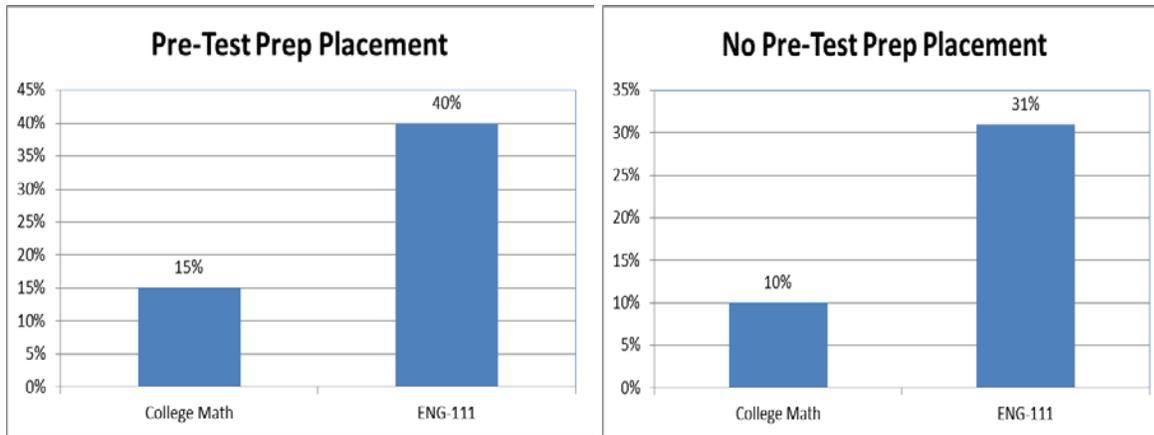
**Findings:** One-Hundred Percent of students surveyed reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with assistance provided and their counselor support.

**Goal 2: Placement Test Preparation:**

More than 60% of incoming FTCC students place into at least one developmental course. These courses cost students' valuable time and money. Anecdotal and empirical data suggests students rarely study for any sort of placement test (Headden, 2011). *The I-PASS Center* staff will work collaboratively with Admissions and Testing staff to encourage students to take practice tests and/or attend *I-PASS* workshops prior to attempting the placement test. Additionally, students who have taken the placement test used at FTCC, the ACCUPLACER®, and scored into developmental courses will be given the opportunity to visit *The I-PASS Center* to receive assistance in order to prepare for retesting. There will be study material and workshops designed to help students prepare themselves to take or to re-take the ACCUPLACER®. Students are not mandated to take ACCUPLACER® preparation classes; however, all are given the opportunity to participate. It is anticipated that those who participate in preparation services will place into fewer developmental courses or completely test out of developmental courses as opposed to those who did not take preparation classes.

**Measure:** Comparisons of test scores will be made between students who chose to take advantage of ACCUPLACER® preparation services against those who tested without any intervention measuring the impact of the preparation services. ACCUPLACER® test scores will be kept in a database.

**Findings:** Participants increased placement in College level math and English versus non-participants.

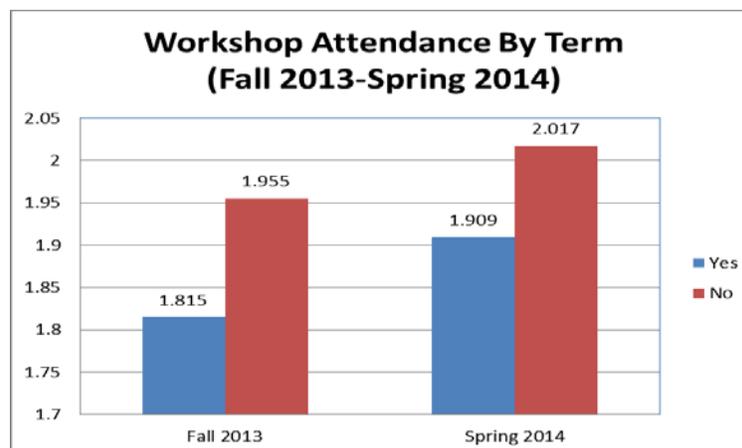


### Goal 3: Supplemental Instruction

After submission of the QEP for approval, the State of North Carolina implemented a state-wide redesign of developmental courses. As this redesign was implemented, the College acquired supplemental instruction adaptive learning software to assist students in Developmental Reading English (DRE) Courses. This software will be paired with the workshops offered in the *I-PASS* Center. Students enrolled in any of the three DRE courses who attend an English/Reading Workshop will complete a brief quiz upon completion of the workshop. This quiz will be submitted via the adaptive learning software that is tied to their class. It is anticipated that students who participate in this supplemental instruction will have a higher GPA at the end of the semester as compared to the end of semester GPAs of students that did not participate in the DRE workshops.

**Measure:** Workshop attendance will be tracked and at the end of each term, the final GPA of Developmental students who attended workshops will be compared to the final GPA of students who did not attend workshops.

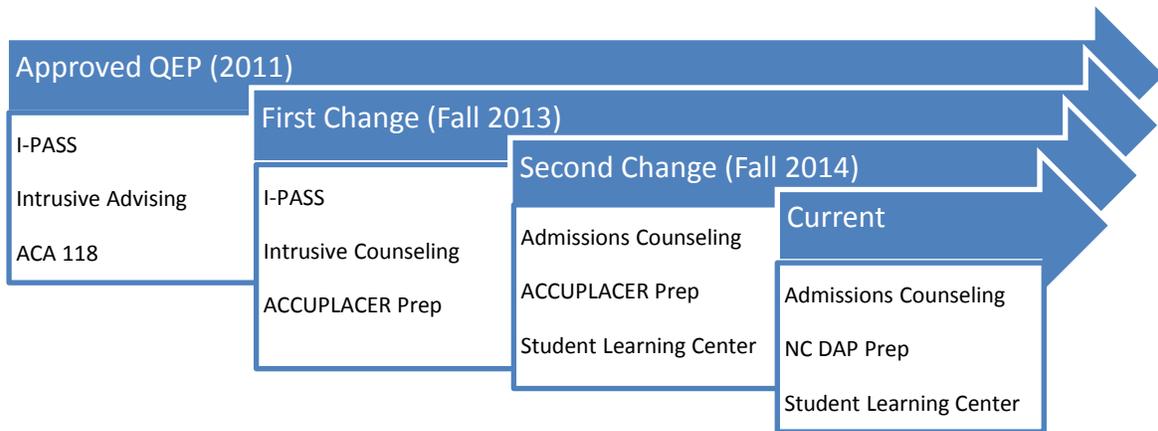
**Findings:** Students who participated in workshops achieved lower GPAs than students who did not participate in workshops.



Since the *I-PASS* workshops did not reflect the anticipated positive impact on student GPA, for three consecutive years and the costs associated with the various workshops, it was decided to close the *I-PASS* Center. The faculty in the *I-PASS* Center were repurposed to the Student Learning Center and

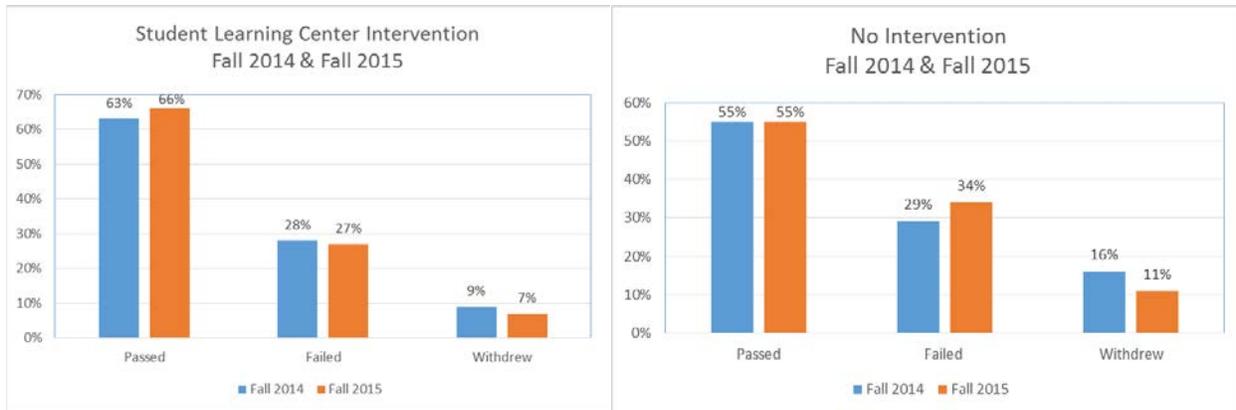
other academic areas.

Over the life of the QEP, the College instituted three modifications to the approved QEP that remain focused on the original QEP goals: Admissions (Intrusive) Counseling, ACCUPLACER (NC DAP) preparation, and Supplemental Instruction provided by the Student Learning Center (SLC) allowing students to move from developmental coursework to programs of study more rapidly and with less consumption of their financial aid benefits before beginning their academic programs. The graphic below illustrates this evolutionary process.



This evolutionary process was necessary to maintain the College's original purpose of helping developmental students succeed. When the QEP originated in 2010, the three primary goals were *I-PASS*, Intrusive Advising, and a newly created ACA 118 course. In fall 2013, after analysis of collected data from 2011 to 2013, the first need for change became evident. The College's President and Chief Academic Officer visited with SACSCOC Representatives for guidance regarding changes to an existing QEP. As a result of this visit, the first change was implemented consisting of The *I-PASS* Center and Intrusive Advising being retained and the ACA 118 course being replaced with the ACCUPLACER Preparation initiative. One year later in 2014, it was determined the *I-PASS* Center was still not producing the results originally forecasted; therefore, the center was closed with services transferred to admissions and the Student Learning Center. The College's most recent change to the QEP occurred in the fall of 2014 retaining admissions counseling and Student Learning Center support for developmental students. In 2014, ACCUPLACER was renamed to North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment Placement (NC DAP) and the preparation services are continuing to be offered and measured.

With the dissolution of the *I-PASS* Center, developmental students were directed to the Student Learning Center (SLC) Master's level staff who do not teach classes are employed at the SLC. Their credentials include English, Math, Chemistry, and Physics. Since this change, outcomes are very promising. As indicated in the charts below, students who used the SLC services had higher passing rates in their developmental classes than similar students who did not use SLC services. Additionally, fewer students withdrew and failure rates declined.



## **Lessons Learned**

### **The First Lesson**

As the College progressed through three modifications of the QEP, support for the students enrolled in developmental courses continued to improve. Each modification facilitated a successful transition from developmental studies to an academic program of study. The original QEP included activities designed to encourage students to take personal responsibility for their own educational goals focusing on: intrusive advising, a newly created ACA 118 Study Skills course, and individualized tutoring in the *I-PASS* Center.

Students who are under-prepared for college frequently come to community colleges accessible to them through the open door philosophy. Community colleges welcome the opportunity to assist those students regardless of their academic ability at the time of enrollment. Throughout the modifications, the main focus of FTCC's QEP remained committed to providing services that enhanced developmental students' success. While the initial QEP's methods did not provide measurable data, it did provide a solid foundation to critical elements which ultimately became two of the most popular services sought out by our students. Those services are placement test preparation and Intrusive Advising/Counseling.

The approved QEP presented challenges during implementation because the cohort was narrowly defined. This caused the cohort at the end of the first year to have none of the original students remaining for further analysis. It was also discovered, via three years of trend data, the *I-PASS* Center was not significantly impacting developmental student success. While it was never intended, the *I-PASS* Center through no particular fault, gave developmental students the appearance of isolation from the College's student body.

Further review of the current literature found most students did not understand the financial and academic ramifications of performing poorly on their placement test. For example, many developmental students were exhausting financial aid available for developmental courses. Heavy use of financial aid while taking developmental courses prevents many students from successfully transitioning to their chosen academic program of study.

As this literature review was being conducted, the College experienced turnover in key administrative positions, including the Chief Academic Officer and the QEP Director.

### **The Second Lesson**

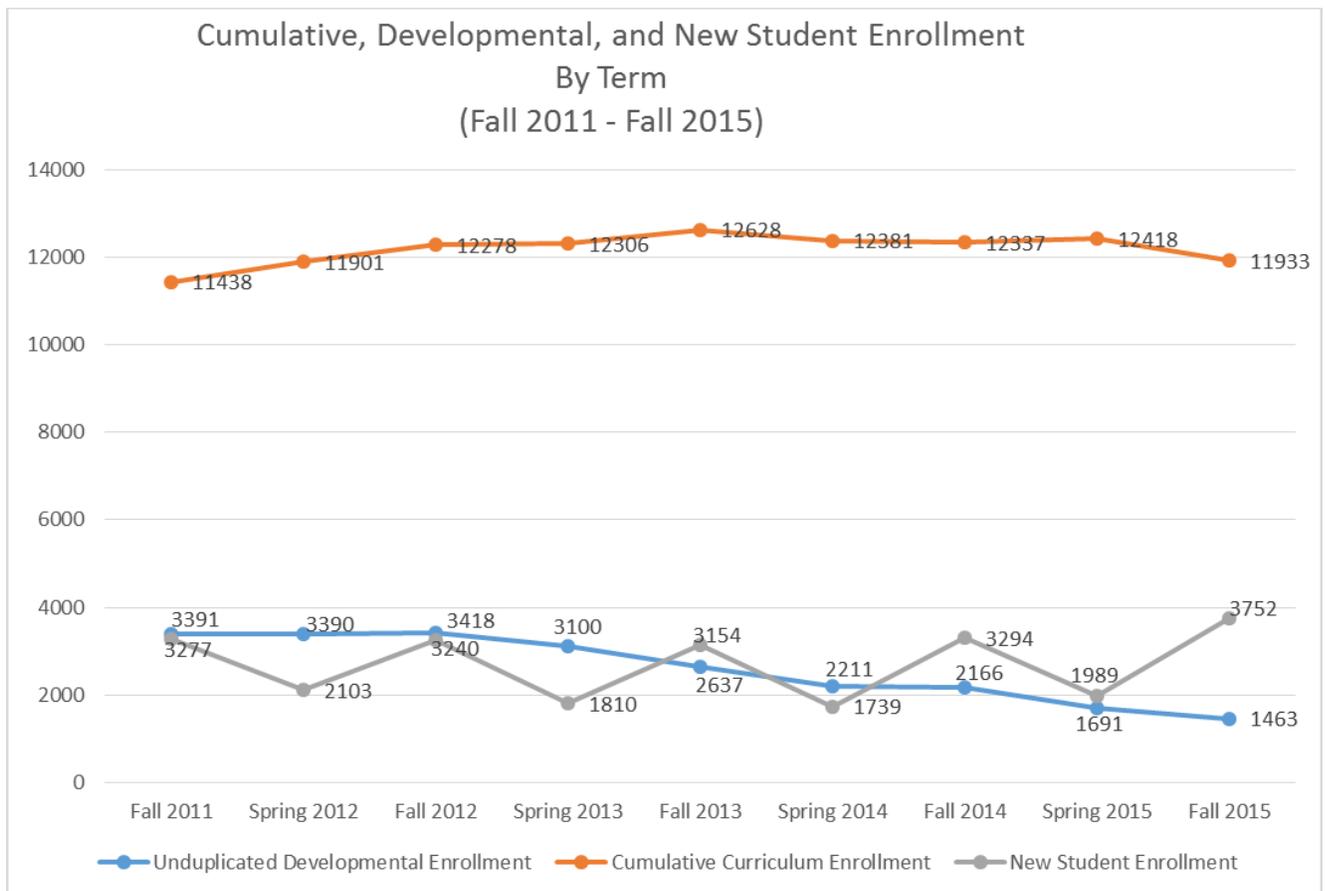
The new leadership recognized the success of intrusive advising and helping students prepare for their initial placement test. Upon completion of the literature review and discussions with faculty, staff, and administration the decision was made to place developmental student services into areas of the College that were providing similar services to non-developmental students.

The *I-PASS* Center services, intrusive advising/counseling and test preparation, were transitioned to the admissions department. Supplemental instruction services for developmental students were transitioned to the Student Learning Center formerly known as the Student Learning Center. These initiatives were successful and identified that the *I-PASS* Center faculty resources would better serve our students in other areas of the College including expanding the staff and instructional support in the Student Learning Center.

**Unintended Outcomes**

The most significant unintended outcome was regardless of how much assistance was offered to developmental students in their first semester of college, personal one-on-one interaction is best received. In the age of high-tech, we offered a high-touch service and the students embraced it.

Additionally, it was discovered through changes in leadership and the additional literature review that the approved version of the QEP allowed too little interaction between curriculum faculty and student services staff. For example, Student Services, the initial contact for all students, had minimal contact with the *I-PASS* faculty and staff. Transitioning *I-PASS* services, intrusive counseling and test preparation, to Admissions in student services enhanced the interaction of curriculum faculty and the student services staff. This open and shared communication proved to be beneficial to the developmental students. With test preparation services provided, fewer students placed into developmental courses after testing and were able to immediately begin their college-level course work as indicated in the following chart.



The approved QEP, incorporating the three modifications described above, has facilitated the success of developmental students and opened communication between students, faculty, and staff. It has fostered positive changes in the culture of the College where everyone recognizes they are a stakeholder in student success. While enrollments have remained steady or grown slightly since the implementation of the QEP and new enrollments have increased approximately 13% placement into Developmental Classes has decreased by nearly 45%. Additionally, for the past two years student success in our first year English and math classes has increased. In summary, the QEP, while modified from the original plan has been successful in significantly decreasing the number of students placed into developmental courses and has increased student success at Fayetteville Technical Community College.

### **References**

Headden, S. (2011). HOW THE OTHER HALF TESTS. *Washington Monthly*, 43(9/10), 32.