

WALLACE STATE

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QEP

Revision

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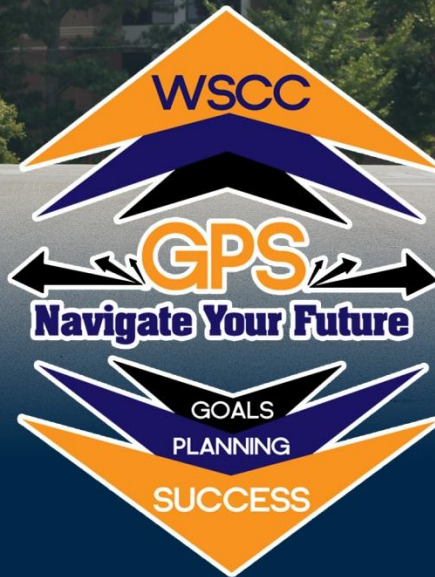
Quality Enhancement Plan

**For the Southern
Association of
Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges**

**On-Site Review
September 30th -
October 2nd, 2014**

**President
Dr. Vicki Karolewics**

**QEP Co-Chairs
Dr. Kathy Buckelew &
Dr. Rebecca Reeves**



WALLACE STATE

H A N C E V I L L E

GPS (Goals-Planning-Success): Navigate Your Future



Wallace State Community College – Hanceville

Dates of On-site Review

September 30 – October 2, 2014

President

Dr. Vicki Karolewics

QEP Chairpersons

Dr. Kathy Buckelew and Dr. Rebecca Reeves

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Chapter 1: Executive Summary

How and why did we select the QEP topic?

More than two years ago, Wallace State began an ongoing discourse about student learning on our campus. Through initial conversations among students, faculty, administration, and staff, as well as community stakeholders, several possible topics for improving student learning emerged. The most significant finding was that students need earlier and stronger preparation to succeed in their college journeys. In particular, the QEP will focus on four identified areas: technology skills, academic pathways, career planning, and personal reflection. Based upon these areas of concentration, the QEP Team envisions full implementation of our QEP initiative: “GPS (Goals -- Planning -- Success): Navigate Your Future!”

What will we do?

Over the next five years, we will transform the freshman experience at Wallace State Community College. The major strategic initiatives of our QEP include a) development of a Freshman Seminar course to provide students with much-needed technology skills and support, along with academic pathways, career field research, and reflection to help students successfully navigate their journeys through WSCC and beyond; and b) capturing these explorations through the creation of GPS Portfolios, electronic portfolios that will be artifacts of students’ learning experiences and personal growth.

The College will support these initiatives by providing faculty, staff, technology resources, and physical space.

Our initiative strongly aligns with WSCC’s Mission Statement: “Wallace State Community College is committed to learning that transforms lives and communities.” The GPS Seminar and the GPS Portfolio have tremendous transformational possibilities for WSCC students.

What are the desired student learning objectives and goals?

We have designed the WSCC QEP to achieve the criteria set forth in Wallace State’s 2012-2017 Strategic Plan: Readiness³ - “Ready for College. Ready for Work. Ready for Life.” We will address the following aspects within “GPS: Goals, Planning, Success”:

Goals: Students will complete GPS Seminar successfully and will develop technology skills as evidenced by their GPS Portfolios. We want students to emerge from GPS Seminar with a clear vision of where they want to go and with the technology skills to guide them down their educational and career paths.

Planning: Students, along with their advisors, will develop plans for programs of study and will map out their educational and career goals. As a part of GPS Seminar, advising will occur more frequently than it does in our current model and will be mandatory throughout the semester in which students are enrolled in the course. Students will be required to establish early contact with their advisors, both their official faculty advisors and their GPS advisors, so that they can work together to develop a strong plan of study. Students in GPS Seminar will learn to use Degree Works, an electronic planning tool found within their MyWallaceState accounts. Through Degree Works, students will be able to plan their future coursework with intentionality and a clearer vision of the paths that lie ahead for them. Students will plan and complete their GPS Portfolios, which will document their experiences along the way to their chosen destinations.

Success: When students reach the end of GPS Seminar, they will have explored potential careers, mapped out a plan to achieve their educational goals, and documented their learning through the GPS Portfolio.

The QEP is based upon the following GPS Learning Goals and Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multi-media principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.
2. Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.
3. Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.

In order to assess these outcomes, Wallace State will use a variety of direct and indirect assessment methodologies. These multifaceted assessments will help us to define the success of our QEP. The WSCC QEP Advisory Council will oversee the progress of the QEP throughout the entire QEP process.

What impact will the QEP have?

Once the QEP implementation begins, the impact upon student learning will be immediate. As the first phase of the QEP begins, we will focus upon improving students' technology skills, offering them more structured and frequent advising experiences, and promoting active learning experiences in which students will have the opportunity to explore career and major options. Students' GPS Portfolios will serve as significant records of their learning experiences. As the implementation progresses, we anticipate that students will be more prepared to navigate both traditional and online courses, as well as to make more informed decisions regarding their course selections and career pathways.

Chapter 2: Process Used to Develop the QEP

The development of the Wallace State Community College QEP is an ongoing process based upon the participation and engagement of a broad-based community of stakeholders. Faculty, students, and members of the community were given opportunities through focus groups, forums, and surveys to voice their concerns and present ideas on how WSCC could better meet the needs of students. Based upon the collaboration of WSCC constituents and supported by institutional data, the need for better student preparedness at the beginning of the college experience was chosen as the focus for the QEP. This section describes the multi-year journey of discussion, planning, refining, and decision-making that led to our QEP initiative “GPS—Navigate Your Future.” The development of the QEP is divided into the following two distinct phases:

- QEP Development Phase 1: Choosing a Destination
- QEP Development Phase 2: Planning the Journey

QEP Development Phase 1: Choosing a Destination

Our journey toward selecting a QEP topic began in the fall of 2010 with a coming together of representatives from across our campus community to form the QEP Topic Team. This team facilitated the initial conversations about student learning.

Figure 2.1 Membership of QEP Topic Selection Team

Name	Role
Cynthia Newman	Wellness Instructor, QEP Topic Team Chairperson
Rebecca Reeves	History Instructor and Chairperson of the Social Sciences Division
Bruce Tenison	Director of eLearning and the Advanced Visualization Center
Kathy Buckelew	English Instructor
Stephanie Turner	Nursing Instructor
Aletta Williamson	Psychology Instructor
Alina Adams	Physical Therapy Assistant Instructor
Lee Walton	Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion Instructor
Jimmy Hodges	Dean of the Technical Division
Tammi Gattis	Action Center Advisor
Lisa Hullett	Director of Library Services
Johnny McMoy	College Dean and Liaison to President’s Cabinet

POSSIBLE DESTINATIONS

After the Topic Team’s first meeting, Dr. Rebecca Reeves and Dr. Kathy Buckelew were charged by the Team with researching the ideas provided by the various team members and developing a list of possible starting topics to be used as conversation starters in further discussions. Below is the list of topics that Dr. Reeves and Dr. Buckelew gleaned from Team discussions:

- Improving students’ college preparedness (possibly through partnerships with K-12 systems in our service area)

- Ensuring online course quality
- Providing real-world learning and honing job skills through partnerships with business and industry
- More meaningful freshman orientation experiences (teaching student success skills to improve retention)
- Instructional design (using innovative teaching techniques to foster student learning)
- Partnerships with other higher education institutions to improve transfer and develop a more seamless move to four-year institutions
- Increasing students' level of community involvement and civic engagement
- Promoting student success through interdisciplinary learning experiences
- Transitional learning program
- First-year experience/Learning communities

Once this list of possible topics had been reviewed by the QEP Topic Team, we sought to broaden our discussions to include our campus community as a whole. As part of this process, we invited campus faculty to join us for QEP Topic Forums, held in January 2011. These round-table, small group discussions were held in the WSCC Banquet Hall. At each table, a QEP Topic Team member was designated to serve as the recorder for the event. This person was responsible for facilitating the discussion and typing up responses of the participants using a laptop that was provided at the table. The transcripts of these discussions (transcript excerpt available as Appendix 1) served as our broad introduction to campus concerns about student learning.

In examining the transcripts of the round table discussions, the QEP Topic Team discovered an overarching recurring theme: the need to support students at their entry points in order to promote student success. Particularly, there were strong concerns regarding students' technology skills and their readiness to succeed in gateway courses. Based upon this information, the QEP Topic Team developed a survey for high school principals and counselors within our service area (Appendix 2) and another survey for WSCC students (Appendix 3) regarding college readiness. Through this survey exercise, the QEP Topic Team involved members of the service-area community and student body.

Our survey data and forum transcripts led us to consider two early areas of focus: a revamping of our orientation program to promote student readiness in the specific areas of technology, advising, and careers and a redesign of our library to become a learning commons area, including technology support and other support that students need in order to be successful. These areas were selected based upon their potential to have a significant impact on student learning at WSCC and their alignment with the overarching theme of the need to support students at their entry points in order to promote success. Once the QEP Topic Team had identified these areas and its task as a team was drawing to a close, Ms. Cynthia Newman, Topic Team Chairperson, recommended for Dr. Karolewics's consideration the names of Dr. Kathy Buckelew and Dr. Rebecca Reeves as potential co-chairpersons of the QEP Team.

In May 2011, Dr. Karolewics invited Drs. Buckelew and Reeves to serve in this capacity, and they accepted. Throughout the summer of 2011, the QEP Topic Team compiled data from its surveys and prepared for the transition to the QEP Team. Some members of the QEP Topic

Team became members of the QEP Team. Below is a list of the QEP Topic Team at the beginning of the fall 2011 semester:

Figure 2.2 QEP Topic Team, Fall 2011

Name	Roles
Kathy Buckelew	English Instructor, QEP Team Co-chairperson
Rebecca Reeves	Social Sciences Department Chair, QEP Team Co-chairperson
Alina Adams	Physical Therapy Assistant Instructor
Tammi Gattis	Action Center Advisor
Brian Hall	Technical Instructor
Lisa Hullett	Director of Library Services
Cynthia Newman	Wellness Instructor
Bruce Tenison	Director of eLearning and the Advanced Visualization Center
Stephanie Turner	Nursing Instructor
Lee Walton	Philosophy and Religion Instructor
Johnny McMoy	College Dean and Liaison to President's Cabinet

Upon accepting the responsibility for the QEP Topic Team's transition and function as the QEP Team, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves recommended possible candidates for the expanded QEP Team. Members were added during the 2011-2012 year. During this transitional year, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves asked new QEP Team members to select an area of the QEP with which they would like to work during the QEP planning process. The QEP Team defined four specific areas of interest within the two-pronged approach. New QEP Team members were asked to join one of these QEP "Pods."

Figure 2.3 QEP Pods Spring 2012

Pod	Name	Responsibilities
Pod 1	The Learning Commons Experience	Propose activities and experiences that will enhance the college learning experience for students.
Pod 2	Elements of the Learning Commons	Develop a plan for the physical environment and features for the WSCC Learning Commons
Pod 3	College 101 Curriculum and Mentoring	Develop possible schedules, course offerings, and topics to be included in College 101.
Pod 4	College 101 Activities	Structure activities and opportunities that will enrich the learning experiences of students outside the classroom (e.g., field trips and career mentors).

DETOURS

There was a great deal of support for the College 101 initiative. A representative group (Dr. Mary Barnes, Dr. Kathy Buckelew, Dr. Glynice Crow, Dr. Rebecca Reeves, and Mr. Bruce Tenison) from our QEP Team attended the American Association of Colleges & Universities' Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success in Portland, Oregon, in June 2012. Our goal was to refine our ideas for College 101 and to infuse the course with high-impact practices. As a part of the institute, we were assigned a consultant from AAC&U. Our consultant was Dr. Tia McNair. Through in-depth conversations and project work with Dr. McNair, we realized that our direction for the QEP was a bit out of focus. In our attempt to prepare students for college, we were planning to take our QEP **off** our campus in the form of a pre-college preparation program. What we really wanted to do was significantly and positively impact student learning for **our** students on **our** campus.

Dr. McNair suggested that we shift our approach and locate College 101 on our own campus, perhaps using it as both a summer bridge program and a full-semester, on-campus program. During our week in Portland, we crafted a plan to bring College 101 to the WSCC campus (Appendix 4). At this time, we had not yet fully realized the economic impact of the April 2011 tornado damage, nor were we aware that the length of time that would be required to reach our goals for the learning commons would fall far beyond the time available for this QEP, so the learning commons initiative remained in our Portland plan. The plan was ambitious as far as time schedule, and, upon our return to campus, we revised the time schedule over a period of months in order to be more realistic and to have appropriate timing for the implementation of the plan.

One of the most significant experiences for our group during our time in Portland was participation in discussions about ePortfolios as a high-impact practice. Since one of our main areas of concern was student technology skills, we were very interested in how our students could use ePortfolios as tangible evidence of their learning and as a showcase for their best work, along with a repository for deep and meaningful reflection about their goals, plans, and learning experiences. Upon our return to campus, we began to investigate the literature and search for best practices regarding student readiness and technology. Particularly, we sought examples of the best freshman experiences. A common thread in the literature was the freshman seminar. Our exploration of the freshman seminar concept and its success at both two-year and four-year institutions led us to re-envision our College 101 as a freshman seminar. Our research on best practices and high-impact practices (HIPs) led us to incorporate an ePortfolio as a key piece in our freshman seminar.

By 2012, several things occurred that caused our QEP Team to shift our focus regarding the Learning Commons prong of the QEP. Due to a tornado that devastated our campus near the end of the spring 2011 semester, a number of unanticipated facility and funding issues occurred in 2011 and 2012 that made it impossible for us to pursue the WSCC Learning Commons design at this time. Therefore, we tabled the learning commons prong of our QEP initiative for future use because we did not have the resources to support and sustain it at this time, nor would we have access to those resources in the foreseeable future.

QEP Development Phase II: Planning the Journey

THE DESTINATION

By fall of 2012, our destination had become obvious: a freshman seminar with an ePortfolio. The literature our team was examining kept bringing ePortfolios to the forefront as a way to integrate technology, engage students, and support meaningful learning. After attending the 2012 AAC&U Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success in Portland, members of our QEP Team were recognized as the best team at the Institute and were urged by AAC&U leaders to apply for the Roadmap Phase II Project. During the fall 2012 semester, AAC&U conducted a site visit on our campus, and we were selected to become part of the Phase II Roadmap group. Discussions with our AAC&U site visitor regarding possible Roadmap initiatives helped us to visualize even more clearly how a freshman seminar including ePortfolios could serve as an innovative vehicle for our journey toward student success.

With our destination in mind, the WSCC QEP Team began the 2012 academic year ready to research best practices in freshman experiences and ePortfolios. After our Roadmap site visit, WSCC, as a newly selected Roadmap institution, was invited to participate in the AAC&U Annual Meeting: The Quality of U.S. Degrees, held in Atlanta in January 2013; and in Student Success and the Quality Agenda, held in Miami in April 2013. Drs. Buckelew and Reeves represented both WSCC's Roadmap Team and QEP Team at these conferences. Many sessions in both conferences focused upon ePortfolios and how other universities were using them to enhance and document student learning.

Meanwhile, our QEP Topic Team had fully transitioned to become the QEP Team. Dr. Karolewics appointed a 23-member team to work on the QEP during the 2012-2013 year. Drs. Buckelew and Reeves remained co-chairpersons of the team, with Dean McMoy serving as our liaison to the President's Cabinet. The Team consisted of a diverse group of faculty and staff with the expertise needed to support the research and writing of the QEP.

Figure 2.4 2012-2013 QEP Team

Name	Role
Kathy Buckelew	English Instructor and QEP Team Co-chairperson
Rebecca Reeves	Social Sciences Division Chairperson and QEP Team Co-chairperson
Alina Adams	Physical Therapy Assistant Instructor
Sharon Alley	Dental Program Instructor
Mary Barnes	English Department Chairperson
Glynice Crow	Business Instructor
Tammi Gattis	Action Center Advisor
Jimmy Hodges	Technical Dean
Mattie Hudson	Administrative Assistant to Dean McMoy
Lisa Hullett	Director of Library Services
Kim Kahler	Business Office
Diana Majerik	English Department Administrative Assistant
Cindy Mallard	Director of Transitional Learning
Johnny McMoy	College Dean and Liaison to President's Cabinet
Shea Mobley	Nursing Instructor
Cynthia Newman	Wellness Instructor
Whit Rice	Academic Advisor
Stacey Sivley	Mathematics Instructor and Phi Theta Kappa Advisor
Bruce Tenison	Director of eLearning and the Advanced Visualization Center
Courtney Walker	Bookstore
Lee Walton	Philosophy and Religion Instructor
Linda Wesley	Administrative Assistant to the President
Aletta Williamson	Psychology Instructor

1. **Organizing our tour guides.** In 2012, after our campus had selected its QEP destination, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves asked the QEP Team to choose one of two Pods with which to work during the remaining QEP planning process: the Freshman Seminar Pod or the ePortfolio Pod. The QEP co-chairpersons challenged these Pods to become experts on their respective areas of the QEP initiative and to find a way to dovetail the ePortfolio smoothly into the Freshman Seminar. These Pods were responsible for research, planning, and reporting on their areas. For the 2013-2014 year, Dr. Karolewics made a few changes in the QEP Team: Beth Williams was added as a representative from the biology faculty, Todd Hardman was added as a representative from the technical faculty, and Schenaye Mauldin was added as a representative from the Transitional Learning Department.

Figure 2.5 2013-2014 QEP Team Membership by Pod

Pod 1: GPS Portfolio

Bruce Tenison
Sharon Alley
Suhana Chikatla
Lisa Hullett
Glynice Crow*
Alina Adams
Shea Mobley
Mary Barnes ^
Beth Williams
Todd Hardman
Christine Wiggins

Pod 2: Freshman Seminar

Stacey Sivley^
Whit Rice*
Tammi Gattis
Mattie Hudson^
Cindy Mallard^
Kim Kahler
Aletta Williamson*
Lee Walton
Cheril Grimmatt
Linda Wesley
Sharon Horton
Schenaye Mauldin
Courtney Walker

*Pod Leader

^Advisory Team Member

QEP Co-chairpersons

Kathy Buckelew
Rebecca Reeves

Administrator-Members

Dean Johnny McMoy, Cabinet Liaison
Dean Jimmy Hodges

Student Members

Phi Theta Kappa President or Designee
Sigma Kappa Delta President or Designee

2. **Involving the governing board.** In 2013, Dr. Karolewics presented the WSCC Strategic Plan to the State Board of Education. “GPS: Navigate Your Future” is grounded in the Strategic Plan. Upon completion, the QEP will be submitted to the Chancellor of the Alabama Postsecondary system and the Board for review.
3. **Researching the route.** During the spring semester 2013, the two QEP Pods undertook in-depth research focusing on best practices in freshman experiences and ePortfolios. Both groups made an exhaustive analysis of the available literature. During this stage of the writing process, we began developing possible student learning objectives and ensuring that our QEP goals aligned closely with WSCC’s Readiness³ Strategic Plan for 2012-2017.

4. **Mapping the course.** As we began mapping the course to achieve our goals, leaders of the Freshman Seminar Pod (Dr. Aletta Williamson and Whit Rice) guided their Pod through designing a proposed curriculum for Freshman Seminar, while the leader of the ePortfolio Pod (Dr. Glynice Crow) worked with her group to identify possible ePortfolio delivery platforms. Drs. Buckelew and Reeves charged both groups with outlining goals and assessment measures for their pods' initiatives, along with developing budget and resource recommendations.
5. **Engaging our traveling companions – campus and community support.** In February 2013, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves presented a brief synopsis of the QEP Team's work and responded to questions from faculty, staff, and administrators during the All Committee Chair Meeting. The QEP Team presented its updated work to the President's Cabinet in July 2013. At the conclusion of the presentation, the President and Cabinet expressed unanimous support for our QEP. During the fall semester 2013, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves conducted department-level forums across campus to discuss the QEP initiatives and garner support and feedback from the campus community. These forums were designed to be informal and relaxed so that participants would feel comfortable asking questions and making suggestions. Each forum began with a brief overview of the QEP. The rest of the forum consisted of an open discussion among the group. Similar forums were held with student groups such as Sigma Kappa Delta English Honor Society and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Our goal in these forums was to promote engagement and exchange of ideas across our campus community and to embrace diverse perspectives relating to the QEP. Throughout fall 2013 and early spring 2014, the QEP Team synthesized the feedback from these forums and sought to address and incorporate the concerns and suggestions of the college community into the writing process.

As a part of our desire to engage our campus community, the QEP Team wanted a memorable QEP title that would be easily identifiable for our students. During a writing session, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves were brainstorming possible titles and came up with "GPS (Goals – Planning – Success): Navigate Your Future!" In December 2013, they proposed this to the QEP Team for approval. Upon unanimous approval of the title, the QEP Team submitted the title to both Dean McMoy (the Team's Cabinet liaison) and Dr. Karolewics for feedback. Both Dr. Karolewics and Dean McMoy gave approval for the title. Upon receiving their approval, members of the QEP Team met with Kristen Holmes, WSCC Director of Marketing, to discuss marketing strategies for the QEP.

In preparation for the implementation phase of the QEP, Team GPS will ask several community members to serve on the GPS Community Advisory Committee. This committee serves as a connection between the campus community and the larger community within our service area. Members of the committee will offer input toward the refinement and implementation of the QEP and serve as liaisons between the on-campus Team GPS and the greater community.

6. **Submitting our travel request to the President.** Early in the spring 2014 semester, Dean McMoy presented the QEP Executive Summary and a basic timeline to the President's Cabinet (the President, executive vice president, deans, associate deans, and other administrators) for discussion and feedback. Shortly thereafter, the QEP Team met to review the first major draft and prepare it for submission to the President. In early February, Drs. Buckelew and Reeves submitted the first major draft of the QEP to Dr. Karolewics and Dean McMoy for comments and feedback.

7. **Using our GPS.** After incorporating feedback from Dr. Karolewics and Dean McMoy, the QEP Team continued to refine the QEP document. The QEP Team, in conjunction with the Roadmap Team, sponsored campus-wide professional development on ePortfolios in February 2014 and sponsored a student “lunch and learn” to support student engagement in the ePortfolio process during the spring 2014 semester. Throughout the spring and summer 2014 semesters, with continued involvement and feedback from the campus community, the QEP Team honed the QEP document until it came to exist in its final iteration.

Chapter 3: Identification of the Topic

The QEP planning and topic selection process identified specific gaps in the academic experiences of our students and intensive discussion, research, and analysis of data provided a direction to address these gaps. This section will present the rationale for the QEP topic and how the topic supports and sustains the mission of the college as well as the Five-Year Strategic Plan. This chapter will also discuss in more detail the critical issues mentioned in the previous chapter (technology training, intensive advising, and career planning) and the institutional data that supports the direction of the QEP.

WSSC College Mission

Wallace State Community College is committed to learning that transforms lives and communities. In support of the mission, Wallace State Community College is committed to:

- student success through a student-centered, innovative, engaging, and supportive learning environment
- teaching excellence
- respect for uniqueness and diversity
- strategic partnerships that advance community, workforce, and economic development
- cultural enrichment of our communities
- accountability and integrity

5-Year Strategic Plan

Wallace State Community College is embarking on its third five-year plan as a leader institution that understands its various roles in establishing broad and deep learning partnerships that transcend conventional institutional definitions. Through the establishment of its success agenda—**Start Early, Start Right, Finish, Succeed**—the college has positioned itself for strategic dynamism as much as strategic planning. To improve access at the first point of entry, for example, Wallace State has developed a flexible and responsive one-stop student services model based on extensive research and development and examination of best practices across the region and nation and has upgraded its support infrastructure and platforms to better serve the needs of students.

Charting the Direction of the QEP

Wallace State Community College has been an innovator in developing initiatives for student success. In recent years, we have transformed our curriculum to address the needs of a diverse and growing student population. For example, we developed the Fast Track Academy early college initiative, which has been in place for seven years. This program allows students to complete their first two years of college while finishing high school – all on our campus. Our curriculum includes two orientation courses designed to address the needs of students with varying levels of academic performance as measured by admissions testing. We have a Curriculum Committee that shapes, promotes, and upholds a rigorous curriculum. Additionally, we have an Assessment committee that works with faculty and administration to promote standards for student success and to define and measure (through rubrics, assessments, and other means) those learning outcomes. As a rural community college, we seek to expose our students to a variety of cultural experiences. One example of our arts-related initiatives is our month-long Arts in April celebration, which includes guest lecturers, well-known authors,

concerts, theatre performances, films, and a juried art festival. Expanded technology has also been a focus of our planning in recent years. All courses offered on campus now have supplementary online sites so that students have the opportunity to interact with their classmates and instructors outside class and have access to lectures, videos, notes, and other materials at their convenience.

In 2012 WSCC was selected to join the Lumina Foundation's Achieving the Dream network, a prestigious organization that is dedicated to supporting student success and completion. The Achieving the Dream model is focused on helping students realize their educational goals. With the assistance and expertise provided by the Achieving the Dream coaches, Wallace State has developed a data driven, research-based student success initiative that seeks to identify and address student needs and assess institutional effectiveness. In working with Achieving the Dream, Wallace State has established the following goals:

- Promote innovative learning environments through faculty and staff development
- Increase partnerships with business and industry to enhance resources available to the college.
- Effectively allocate and utilize resources through strategic and operational planning that is outcome based and results oriented.

As part of the Achieving the Dream initiative, WSCC will have the opportunity to partner with other Achieving the Dream institutions, receive advice and guidance from experts in the field of education, and build a culture of evidence campus-wide to identify barriers to student success, set institutional priorities, and measure progress toward increasing student success.

The emphasis of the QEP is to help students effectively navigate their academic challenges and goals at WSCC----and to reach their destination (program completion, graduation, or transfer to a university) with essential skills and knowledge that will help them achieve success. The initiative reflects the mission of WSCC and promotes the college's commitment "to learning that transforms lives and communities" and resonates with our 2012-2017 Strategic Plan to help our students to become "Ready for College. Ready for Work. Ready for Life." Supporting students through technology training, intensive advising, and career planning will be instrumental in achieving this institutional mission and the goals of our strategic plan.

SUPPORTING DATA

In choosing a topic for the QEP, the results of the following forums, round-table discussions and survey instruments were evaluated by the QEP team:

- Faculty forum and round-table discussions (2011)
- Student survey on their learning experiences at Wallace State (2011)
- Survey of service area high school counselors on the perceived needs and challenges of freshman college students (2011)
- CCSSE survey results (2012)
- Student Evaluations of Current Orientation (2013)
- Institutional data (retention and graduation rates)

The QEP Team examined the data for recurring themes that focused on student success, retention, and completion. The quantitative and qualitative evidence indicated the need for a quality freshman experience that targeted specific, identified barriers to student success.

Faculty Forum (2011)

In January, 2011 WSCC faculty and staff participated in round-table discussions focused on how our college could improve the educational experience for our students. Transcripts from these discussions were analyzed by the QEP topic team and an overarching theme emerged: the need for better preparation of students as they embark on their college experiences. The discussions also identified the following specific areas of concern:

- Need for restructured orientation
- Need for enhanced advising
- Need for more technology training
- Need for more career counseling and career components in the freshman experience

Based on the analysis results, the QEP team recommended a QEP topic based on improving the freshman experience for students by providing a course that stressed technology training and support, intensive advising, and career counseling and exploration.

Student Survey (2011)

The faculty forum and round table discussion conducted in January, 2011 indicated that student preparedness was a major concern for a majority of instructors. Based on the results of the faculty forum, a student survey was developed and administered in April, 2011. The analysis of results revealed that students were also concerned about their level of preparedness for college-level work as well as their ability to achieve their educational and career goals.

Significant findings included the following:

- Did you prepare academically to attend college by taking necessary high school classes that would prepare you to enter college level courses?
70% of respondents = no/not sure
- When you were choosing your major (area of study) for college, did your high school adequately inform you of your career options?
66% = no/not sure/not applicable
- In high school, were you exposed to real-world job skills/opportunities in academics, health and technical programs that helped you choose a major?
63% = no/not sure/not applicable
- Upon graduation from high school, I had adequate technology skills needed for college-level courses.
70% = no/not sure/not applicable
- Upon graduation, I understood my role, responsibilities, and expectations required for college success.
53% = no/not sure/not applicable
- Upon graduation, I had a clear understanding of my role, responsibilities and expectations required for personal growth, social growth, and college success.
54% = no/not sure/not applicable

The results of the data indicate that a majority of the surveyed students believed their high school experiences in career counseling, advising, and technology did not prepare them to navigate college.

Survey of Service Area High School Counselors

In May, 2011 counselors from twelve high schools located in WSCC’s service area participated in a survey that focused on the perceived challenges of first-year college students. Additionally, counselors were asked to respond to questions on how WSCC and area high schools could collaborate to improve the transition for students from high school to college. The analysis of survey results indicated that counselors rated the following issues as important in building a bridge between high school and college:

- Providing assistance to students in preparing for the rigors of college requirements, including advising, career planning, and tutoring opportunities
- Providing assistance to students to strengthen technology skills
- Collaborating with high schools to provide career exploration

The results of this survey correlate strongly with the evidence extrapolated from the faculty and staff round-table discussions as well as the student survey on college preparedness. Data suggest that WSCC first-year students would benefit from the opportunity to gain technology skills, appropriate advising, and career exploration early in their college experience.

CCSSE Data

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), developed by the Center for Community College Student Engagement, is a survey instrument that provides a snapshot of effective college practices as well as areas in which the institution can improve the educational experience for students. The CCSSE is administered at most participating college campuses during spring semesters to returning students and asks questions based on the institutional practices and the student behaviors and attitudes that are strongly associated with student learning and retention. The QEP Team evaluated the results from the CCSSE survey administered to WSCC students in 2012 and identified several issues related to the first year experiences of students. Responses focused on areas identified by students as needs and barriers to success were analyzed by the QEP team. The findings of this analysis are presented in Figure 3. 1.

Figure 3.1 CCSSE Results Analysis

How likely is it that the following issues would cause you to withdraw from class or from this college?	Not Likely	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
Academically unprepared	54.6%	23.8%	13.3%	8.3%

How often do you use the following services at this college?	Don't Know/ NA	Rarely/ Never	Sometimes	Often
Academic advising/planning	4.2%	28.2%	49.4%	18.1%
Career counseling	13.3%	48.9%	30.0%	7.7%
Peer or other tutoring	27.4%	49.1%	17.1%	6.4%

How important are the following services to you at this college?	Not at All	Somewhat	Very
Academic advising/planning	4.9%	21.4%	73.8%
Career counseling	14.8%	26.0%	59.1%

About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?	None	1-5 Hours	6-10 Hours	11-20 Hours	21-30 Hours	More than 30 hours
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)	2.0%	41.6%	32.0%	13.5%	8.0%	2.9%

In evaluating student responses to the CCSSE survey, the following findings were surmised from the results:

- 78% of respondents reported that their grades were B's or higher. Team GPS expects that the response from students with lower grades would be even more significant.
- Over 60% of students reported that they had earned 15 or more credit hours. Team GPS noted that many students drop out before accumulating 15 credit hours.
- Almost half of our students report that being academically unprepared could cause them to withdraw from class or from WSCC
- Students report that they do not always use current advising and career services that are available to them – even though they feel that advising and career services are important.
- Students are concerned about career counseling, advising, being unprepared, and lack of technology skills.
- Students do not allocate sufficient time in their personal schedule to prepare and study for their courses.

Student Evaluations of Current Orientation

Currently, first-year students participate in a one- or two-day orientation before classes begin in the fall, spring and summer semesters. This one- or two-semester hour course provides students with the opportunity to receive their student ID, set up their e-mail and Blackboard accounts, take a campus tour, and attend several 45-minute sessions on topics such as time management, learning styles, and financial aid. WSCC faculty, the advising department, and Financial Aid staff provide instruction for students in the one-day experience. To evaluate the effectiveness of this format, a student evaluation of their orientation experience (currently adapted as the Freshman Experience Survey, Appendix 5) was developed and administered during the fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters. Students were asked to assess the most and least valuable elements of orientation, evaluate the importance and effectiveness of their learning experience, and offer suggestions for improving orientation.

Figure 3.2 Results of Student Evaluations of Orientation 101

<i>My orientation experience covered/provided.</i>	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Valuable advice about planning my program of study and choosing a major.	64%	23%	13%
An opportunity to reflect on my major or future career plans.	62%	25%	13%
One-on-one time with my advisor.	36%	55%	10%
Specific technology skills required for college (e. g., attaching documents to e-mails, saving files, etc.)	62%	28%	9%

<i>How important to you are the following orientation topics?</i>	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Technology training	41%	49%	10%
Advising	68%	30%	2%
Skills I can use in my class	81%	17%	2%

<i>Do you feel that your orientation course helped improve your performance/grades in your other courses</i>	Definitely	Somewhat	Not Sure	Definitely Not
	15%	48%	20%	17%

Analysis of Results

The Orientation 101 student evaluation provided interesting data on how students viewed their one- or two-day orientation experience, as well as what they valued about the course—and what they perceived as lacking or needing improvement in the content and structure of the class. A majority of students responded positively to questions focused on planning programs of study and technology training. However, although 98% of surveyed students rated advising as very important or important, 65% indicated that this element was lacking in Orientation 101 in its current format. In evaluating the impact of Orientation 101 on their performance and grades in other courses, only 15% of the survey participants responded that the course had definitely helped them improve their college level skills.

The quantitative data gleaned from Orientation 101 student evaluations spotlighted several areas that students found valuable in the course experience, including receiving their WSCC IDs, parking hangtags, information about financial aid, meeting together, and touring the campus. However, a qualitative analysis of student comments and suggestions revealed that many students perceived the current one- or two-day orientation course as “boring and not really useful” and that “too much stuff was packed into one day.” Comments such as “The class was boring & did not really show me anything new or useful to me” and “Honestly, I feel it was a wasted class” were reiterated by a number of students in the comments section of the evaluation. Other concerns included a lack of time with advisors to map college and career plans, time limits on technology instruction, and a course format that required moving constantly from area to area.

The quantitative and qualitative data indicate that students would benefit from a freshman experience that included more time with their advisors, in-depth and hands-on instruction on technology, and additional guidance in mapping their college and career plans. The areas students valued most---receiving their IDs, parking hangtags, touring campus, setting up e-mail and Blackboard accounts, and receiving information on financial aid could possibly be moved to Lion’s Pride, an orientation experience for new students or incorporated into the first sessions of GPS Seminar.

Institutional Data and Achieving the Dream

One of the most significant elements of Achieving the Dream is its emphasis on the use of an evidence-based approach to improving and sustaining a strong culture of student success. As an ATD college, Wallace State Community College, with the assistance of ATD coaches and other mentor ATD institutions, has developed a descriptive and data-driven record of our students and their learning experiences. Evidence garnered by an extensive evaluation of student demographics and performance strongly supports the direction of the QEP. Based upon current data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Figure 3.3 presents WSCC’s current retention, graduation, and transfer rates (2014).

Figure 3.3 IPEDS Institutional Data on Retention, Graduation, and Transfer

Persistence Data	Percentage
Overall Student Retention Rate (Fall 2012-Spring 2013)	64%
Student Success Data	Percentage
Graduation Rate (2010 Student Cohort)	20%
Transfer Rate (2010 Student Cohort)	22%
Overall Student Success Rate (2010 Student Cohort)	42%

It is the goal of “GPS: Navigate Your Future” to impact positively our graduation and retention rates through early engagement and support of students as they embark on their educational journeys.

Summary

While our college has been innovative and responsive to the diverse needs of students, three specific areas of concern were identified by faculty, students, administrators, and community stakeholders as barriers to academic success for many WSCC students. First, students required additional training and support in using available technology to achieve success in both traditional and online courses; secondly, students needed more intensive and focused advising as they mapped their academic journey through WSCC; thirdly, students were often uncertain or uninformed concerning their career choices and how to attain their post-college goals. Delivering early, intensive, and targeted guidance in each of these areas of concern was chosen as the focus of the QEP and provides the framework for Freshman Seminar, the major component of “GPS—Navigate Your Future. ”

Chapter 4: Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, our QEP Team based WSCC's QEP topic on both qualitative and quantitative data. In order to implement our plan successfully, it was imperative that we align it with our institutional mission and strategic plan. At WSCC, we expect students to achieve the following student learning outcomes:

- LO1. Learns actively
- LO2. Thinks critically
- LO3. Communicates clearly – written
- LO4. Communicates clearly – oral
- LO5. Uses technology
- LO6. Cultural awareness

These broad, institution-level learning outcomes provide the basis for our narrower GPS student learning outcomes.

In approaching our QEP, we began with the destination in mind. In order to develop a pathway to help our students succeed, we first needed to know where we wanted them to go. Our team chose four goals and learning outcomes for the QEP. These outcomes reflect traits that WSCC values in its students and graduates. Furthermore, students who demonstrate these characteristics are more likely to be “Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life,” as described in our Readiness³ strategic plan. Figure 4.1 shows the four learning outcomes for “GPS: Navigate Your Future.”

Figure 4.1 GPS Learning Goals and Outcomes

GPS Learning Outcome 1

- Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multi-media principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.

GPS Learning Outcome 2

- Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.

GPS Learning Outcome 3

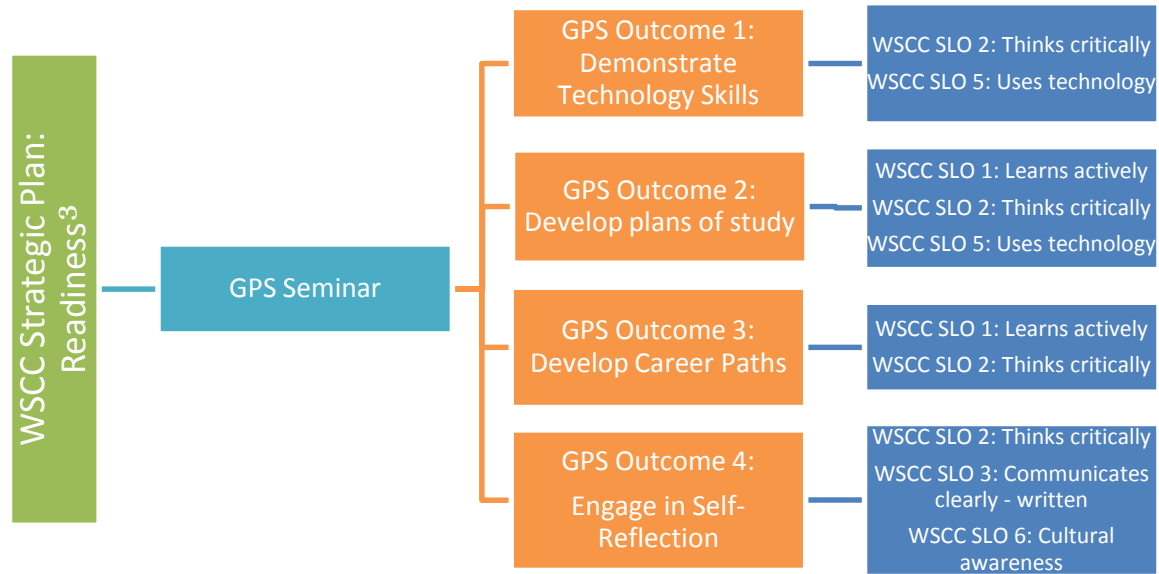
- Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.

GPS Learning Outcome 4

- Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.

Early in the process, it was also important for our team to visualize the relationships among our WSCC Strategic Plan, our GPS Seminar, our institutional student learning outcomes, and our GPS Learning Outcomes. Figure 4.2 demonstrates the connections that integrate these aspects of our institutional and QEP plans.

Figure 4.2 Alignment of GPS Learning Outcomes with Readiness³ Strategic Plan and WSCC SLO's



By establishing these connections, our QEP Team was able to plot our course with a specific destination in mind: student success.

Figure 4.3 Alignment of WSCC QEP with SACSCOC Requirements

Accreditation Requirement	Evidence of Compliance
SACS Core Requirement 2.12 Focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution	The GPS Seminar is structured to provide first-year students with the technology, advising, and career exploration experiences they need in order to achieve their personal learning goals. Our mission states that "Wallace State Community College is committed to learning that transforms lives and communities." GPS will offer our students meaningful learning experiences and the underlying tools they need to begin transforming their lives and - by extension - their communities.
SACS Core Requirement 3.3.2 Includes the broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP	In an ongoing collaboration, WSCC constituents - including students, faculty, staff, and members of the community - participated in the QEP development process through focus groups, forums, large- and small-group meetings, professional development, and surveys.
SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2 Identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement	"GPS: Navigate Your Future" includes clearly stated student learning outcomes that align with the College's mission, institutional student learning outcomes, and Readiness ³ strategic plan. Direct and indirect assessment measures are included in the plan so that we can measure to what extent the goals are achieved as the plan is implemented.

At WSCC, we want our students to communicate effectively, think critically, use technology effectively, and interact in a diverse environment. In order to achieve these institutional goals, we have chosen GPS learning outcomes that support these broader outcomes. Furthermore, the GPS learning outcomes mesh seamlessly with our College's mission and Readiness³ strategic plan for 2012-2017.

Chapter 5: Literature Review: High-impact Practices, Freshman Seminars, and ePortfolios

High-impact Practices and Freshman Seminars

Community colleges play an essential role in preparing students for college, work, and life. They are different from other institutions of higher education because they are first and foremost teaching institutions. These colleges are dedicated to developing and serving their communities, while improving the nation's workforce. A major goal of community colleges is to take students from where and how they are to where they want to go in life. In particular, community colleges have a reputation of responding to societal needs. According to George R. Boggs, they prepare the large majority of health care workers and a growing percentage of the nation's technological workforce (National Commission on Community Colleges, 2008). In fact, community colleges have become first-choice institutions when workers are displaced or need to upgrade their skills. Community colleges, therefore, must take a serious look at their curricula and pedagogies to respond to the needs of local economies, while never losing sight of developing the student as a whole. When examining these curricula and instructional designs, colleges must bear in mind the importance of improving student retention, completion, and future job marketability. Literature suggests that high impact practices (HIPs) are needed in the classroom to move students successfully from transition programs, through gateway courses, through completion of programs or transfers, and to employment (AAC&U, 2013). Therefore, it is critical that Wallace State Community College (WSSC) find ways to integrate and offer HIPs within its curricula to meet the goals of the College's Readiness³ Strategic Plan: "Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life" (WSSC, 2012, p. 3).

This section examines the current literature and best practices that will guide our QEP. After more than a year of research and discussion, Team GPS identified High Impact Practices (HIPs) as an excellent model for achieving the goals of the QEP. HIPs, as described in Kuh's *High Impact Educational Practices* (2008) and supported by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), are learning and teaching practices that engage students, support deep reflection, and encourage real-world applications of knowledge and skills learned in the classroom.

High-impact practices (HIPs) are teaching and learning methodologies that have been extensively tested and have the potential to help college students overcome barriers to success (Kuh, 2008). Across the United States, colleges and universities are embracing HIPs as a way of improving and enhancing student learning and supporting retention and completion (Padgett, Keup, & Pascarella, 2013; Pascarella, Blaich, Martin, & Hanson, 2011; Kuh, 2008; National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), 2014; Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), 2014). All HIPs encourage students to be engaged in their own learning, to tackle challenging questions, and synthesize and apply their knowledge in solving complex problems—all important skills that promote success in the classroom and beyond. Based on extensive research over the last two decades, the following methodologies have been identified as HIPs (AAC&U, 2014):

- First-year seminars and experiences
- Common intellectual experiences (such as the core curriculum)
- Learning communities
- Writing-intensive courses
- Collaborative assignments and projects

- Undergraduate research
- Diversity and global learning in courses or programs that examine "difficult differences"
- Service- or community-based learning
- Internships
- Capstone courses and projects

Successful HIPs are strongly student centered and engage a diverse population of learners (Brownell & Swaner, 2010; Kuh, Kenzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2010). HIPs provide students with innovative learning experiences and skills that can help them overcome barriers and achieve success. High-impact practices are also strongly linked with persistence and increased GPAs, higher rates of student-faculty interaction, significant increases in critical thinking and writing skills, greater appreciation of diversity, and overall higher levels of student engagement.

Based on longitudinal studies as well as the analysis of numerous case studies, Kuh (2008) identified several common characteristics shared by HIPs: HIPs require both the student and instructor to devote “considerable time and effort to purposeful tasks” (p. 23). This personal investment encourages students to take responsibility in their educational process in a partnership with their peers and instructors. HIPs help students build relationships with their peers, instructors, and mentors. A strong relationship with others involved in the educational process tends to be a positive factor in retention and completion. A positive relationship between students and instructors and between peers is a strong factor in student success. HIPs provide students with rich and frequent feedback and help students apply the knowledge and skills gained in academic courses to real-life situations. Additionally, HIPs provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning experience and think deeply about their values and goals. Although HIPs may differ in methods and materials, each practice serves to create a powerful learning experience for students and has the potential to help students navigate barriers to success.

The positive effects of HIPs are well-documented in research focused on programs that support student learning. According to Brownell and Swaner (2009) high-impact practices “live up to their name” (p. 30) and offer a wide range of benefits for participants. Research has shown that integrating HIPs into the college curriculum improves the quality of students’ college experience, enriches and promotes deeper learning, and increases retention and completion, particularly for underserved students (Kuh 2008; Swaner & Brownell, 2009). For example, in a study conducted by Huber (2010), results analysis reveals that students who participated in HIPs had an increase in their GPAs and tended to complete their degrees in a shorter period of time. Additional research conducted by National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in colleges in California, Oregon, and Washington found a strong correlation between HIPs and positive self-reporting of achievement of learning goals (Brownell & Swaner, 2013; Finley, 2011). For HIPs to be successfully integrated into the classroom, all faculty—both full-time and adjunct—must be encouraged to be innovative and explore new ways of teaching and learning (McNair & Albertine, 2012). In colleges where HIPs have been successful, instructors were provided with the tools and support to develop “high-quality high-impact practices.” To promote and foster the adoption of HIPs, institutions support the following initiatives: professional development of faculty, mentoring for collaborative teaching, cross-divisional partnerships and collaboration, and a faculty reward system that supports and honors innovation in the classroom. To integrate HIPs into the campus environment, several steps can be taken (AAC&U, 2014). These steps include making an inventory of interest and availability of HIPs that may already be part of the curriculum. The institution should promote HIPs-based learning opportunities early and target underserved students. Additionally, HIPs should be either required or embedded into the core

requirements. To ensure the success and viability of HIPs, the impact of these learning and teaching practices should be assessed often.

Once HIPs are established as part of the campus culture, it is vitally important to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate in as many HIPs as possible (Kuh, 2008; Bass, 2012; AAC&U, 2014). To this end, institutions should establish opportunities for students to participate in at least two high-impact activities during their programs of study and in at least one related to the major field. Because HIPs have a strong impact on student success and completion, first generation students and other underserved groups should be encouraged to participate in high-impact activities.

Below are examples of learning behaviors that may be associated with HIPs and possibly incorporated into many courses and disciplines (Bass, 2012; Brownell & Swaner, 2013):

- Class discussions
- Presentations
- Researching and writing
- Collaborating with other students on a project during and outside of class
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in community projects as part of a course
- Discussed academic or career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas and options with a faculty member outside of class
- Received prompt feedback on academic performance
- Worked harder than you thought or planned
- Worked with faculty on activities outside of coursework
- Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity

For many students, the transition to college can be difficult and fraught with challenges and barriers (Gardner, 2008). First-year seminars have become a common approach adopted by higher education institutions in their efforts to ease the transition to college for new students and address unacceptable rates of retention and completion. Freshman seminars are courses, often mandatory for first-year students, that target barriers to success and provide innovative and student-centered learning opportunities and experiences. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent and reflective writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that can provide a foundation for academic, career, and personal success. **Freshman seminars have been recognized by educational leaders as a high-impact practice that has transformative possibilities for first-year students (Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2004).**

Freshman seminars can be designed to meet the requirements of a high-impact practice by incorporating student centered activities as part of the curriculum (Kuh, 2008; Bass, 2012; Gardner, 2008). Successful freshman seminars, grounded in HIPs, should be specifically designed for first-year students and support their transition to the college environment. Barefoot and Fidler (1996), identified a number of characteristics shared by successful freshman seminar courses. These characteristics, also confirmed by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (2014), include the following features: they carry academic credit; they are integrated into the first-year curriculum as a core requirement; they include assessed academic content such as research skills, technology skills, library use, and writing; faculty are actively involved in all aspects of designing, instruction and

assessment; and students are encouraged to participate in the design and content of the freshman seminar.

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience (2010) identified an additional, more intangible characteristic of freshman seminars. **A successful freshman seminar course can also encourage students to reflect on important decisions and make positive choices that can shape the rest of their lives.** The first year of college has a profound influence on student success---in college and beyond. For this reason, it is important to offer an opportunity for students to mature while they prepare to make important choices that will influence the rest of their lives (Mayhew, Wolniak, & Pascarella, 2008; Skipper, 2005).

Although high-impact freshman seminars share similar characteristics and goals, the structure and pedagogy may differ (Hunter & Linder, 2005; Swing, 2002; Tobolowsky, 2005). Most freshman seminars fall into one of the following five categories:

Extended orientation seminars introduce first-time college students to the academic environment and focus on skills needed to navigate the college environment. The content of an extended orientation seminar might include an introduction to campus resources, academic and career planning, and learning strategies.

Academic seminars with uniform content are usually theme-oriented courses that are often part of the core curriculum requirement. The major focus of this type of seminar is on academic skills that usually include critical thinking, collaborative experiences, and are sometimes part of a general education requirement. Their primary focus is on academic theme/discipline, but they often include academic skills components such as critical thinking and writing skills.

Academic seminars on specific topics allow students to choose a seminar that focuses on a specific need or personal interest. For example, students may choose from a list of options that might include important social or political issues, service learning, or other themes.

Discipline-based seminars are often designed and taught by instructors in a specific discipline and target a skill or need that is of particular importance in the discipline. For example, the English department develops a freshman seminar that focuses on writing or research, or the Math department creates a freshman seminar that concentrates on math skills.

Basic study skills seminars are often required for incoming freshmen who lack basic skills needed for success in college. These seminars often provide instruction on study skills, test-taking skills, technology instruction, and other academic needs.

Many institutions are combining several of the seminar types into a first-year experience that best corresponds to the academic and personal needs of students (Hunter & Linder, 2005). While there are numerous variations among first-year seminars, the goal is to support students in their academic and social development and to ease their transition to college.

Although freshman seminars have been part of postsecondary education for decades, this practice has recently been identified as a high impact innovation that can enrich the learning experience of first-year college students and promote retention and completion (Padgett, Keup, & Pascarella, 2013). According to national research data, 94% of accredited universities and

colleges offer a freshman seminar to students (Policy Center on the First-Year of College, 2002; Padgett & Keup, 2011). The broad-based adoption of freshman seminars as part of the college experience has generated a number of research studies on the effectiveness of this course. A majority of these research studies have examined the impact of freshman seminars on academic success, retention, and persistence to graduation or transfer (Keup & Petschauer, 2011; Padgett, Johnson, & Pascarella, 2012). Data analyses have consistently generated positive results on the advantages of freshman seminars on key educational outcomes.

In a longitudinal study conducted by the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNS), the first-year seminars of 48 colleges and universities were investigated (Padgett, Keup, Pascarella, 2013). The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of a freshman seminar experience on the cognitive and psychosocial development of students during their first year of college as well as subsequent semesters. The participating institutions represented a diverse selection of universities, colleges, and community colleges and more than 4,000 students took part in the study. Student surveys were developed by WNS and administered to students in two sessions—one early in the freshman seminar experience and one in a later semester. The surveys asked students to respond to questions that garnered information on demographics, previous academic experience, and tested basic college level abilities and reading, writing, and critical thinking. The correlational results indicate that first-year seminars improve cognitive and psychosocial development and suggest “that the impact of first-year seminar participation goes beyond students’ experience in that specific course and generalizes to other academic and curricular learning experience” (p. 145).

Community college students face a range of barriers to completion, including a lack of academic preparation (Cho & Karp, 2013). First-year community college students are more likely to need at least one developmental course than their counterparts at 4-year universities, and they are more likely to require a longer period of time to complete these courses (Wirt et al., 2004). Student retention and completion at community colleges have been identified as challenges nationwide (Bundy, 2014). Indeed, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 31% of full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a certificate or degree will complete or graduate. Additionally, statistics indicate that only 45% of first-time college students at community colleges transferred to a 4-year institution (Bailey, Jenkins, & Leinbach, 2006). In a study conducted by the American Federation of Teachers-- Higher Education, four major barriers to academic success in community colleges were identified (American Federation of Teachers, 2011): insufficient funds to attend college and the lack of financial aid advice, a lack of adequate and consistent academic advising, a lack of preparation for college level work, and the challenge of time and balancing personal demands with the demands of college.

In an attempt to help students overcome these barriers to success and to improve academic outcomes, community colleges across the nation have implemented freshman seminar courses (O’Gara, Karp, & Hughes, 2009). This course, which usually targets at-risk students who are often unprepared for the rigors of college, is tailored to provide students with knowledge and skills that will help them meet the challenges of college. The goal of a freshman seminar course is to help direct students to important services offered at the college, such as academic and financial advising, and to help them adjust to the college environment.

In preparing our recommendations and developing our plan for “GPS: Navigate Your Future,” the WSCC QEP Team conducted research on HIPs, particularly upon freshman experiences and ePortfolios. Our research led us to identify both freshman seminars and ePortfolios as best

practices within themselves. According to AAC&U (2006), substantial research to validate the worthiness of freshman seminars exists.

Today's educators recognize the importance of the development of first-year student success programs and the positive impact these programs have in assisting first-year students during their transition into college life (AAC&U, 2006). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), two well-known researchers in the field of first-year seminars, have found that students who attend these classes tend to persist more from the first year of college into the second. Not only have graduation rates of the participants increased between 5 and 15%, but these seminars have had a positive influence on persistence and degree completion.

There are abundant data to support freshman seminars as an effective way of promoting student success and retention. Goodman and Pascarella (2006) found that no matter how the control group in a freshman seminar study was chosen, the end result was that the students who attended first-year seminars were more likely to persist than those who did not. Similarly, Fidler and Hunter (1989) report a positive relationship between higher sophomore return rates and freshman seminar courses. Additionally, in Fidler and Hunter's study, students completing a freshman seminar course had an increased knowledge of student services at their institution.

A key part of a successful freshman seminar is the students' perceptions of the relevance of the seminar. As Rhodes and Carifio (1999) note, students must find value in the course for their experience to be positive. Rhodes and Carifio found that students believed that note-taking, study skills, and test-taking strategies should be taught before their college courses began. Their study also indicated that the choice of instructors for the freshman seminar courses played a huge part in effectiveness and student attitudes toward the course. Gardner (1993) noted that an effective freshman seminar program must be flexible, enhance student success, be tailored to meet student needs, and be appropriate for all student levels (age, academic ability, and so forth). Jewler (1989) found that appropriate instructional methodologies were very important if students were going to be satisfied with their freshman seminar experiences.

Integrating HIPs should be synergistic with a college's vision and mission statement. HIPs need to be woven closely into the fiber of the institution's goals. WSCC's vision is to "facilitate learning without boundaries," commit to "every student's success, exemplify the spirit of perpetual improvement, and ... promote an overarching sense of community" (WSCC, 2012, p. 5). Along with this vision, WSCC's mission is to be committed to "learning that transforms lives and communities" (WSCC, 2012, p. 5). Components of the mission statement include "promoting student success in learning environments that are student centered, innovative, engaging and supportive"; offering an opportunity for instructors to provide "teaching excellence that inspires a quest for lifelong learning"; and providing a component for "respecting uniqueness and valuing diversity" (p. 5). The GPS Portfolio, a significant HIP, is designed to connect with WSCC's vision and integrate with its mission statement. By engaging and empowering freshmen with skills and knowledge that will contribute to their success, the ePortfolio is designed to help students discover and construct knowledge that will impact their academic, social, and career choices and equip them with the skills and resources to be successful in and out of the classroom. Moreover, it is designed to provide opportunities that prepare students for employment and/or career advancement.

The ePortfolio

The ePortfolio is a dynamic electronic learning tool that allows students to showcase their best works and promotes student reflection and engagement (Lorenzo and Ittelson, 2005; O’Keeffe and Donnelly, 2013; Yancey, 2009). This proactive and robust tool begins preparing students for success from the outset and engages them throughout their educational process, while allowing them to become active partners for their own career quests (Cambridge, 2012; Easterling, Hall, & Holzmann, 2006). In an ever-changing environment of economic challenges and a more demanding set of needs and expectations required from employees, the ePortfolio gives students the capstone edge needed to stand out.

Proponents of HIPs argue that ePortfolios, in particular, are changing the landscape of higher education. At a LaGuardia Community College Conference in 2008, Kathleen Blake Yancey claimed that “ePortfolios radically alter how students learn, how faculty teach, and how institutions assess the value of higher education ...” (as cited in Clark & Eynon, 2009, p. 18). This transformation is evidenced by the recent rise in the use of ePortfolios. For example, the ePortfolio Consortium currently has 894 members, of which 60 percent are colleges and universities (Clark & Eynon, 2009). In addition, a study by the Campus Computing Project shows that the use of ePortfolios has tripled since 2003 across all areas of higher education.

The increase in the use of ePortfolios is due to a “pedagogical change in higher education, dynamism of digital communication technologies, pressure for increased accountability in higher education and fluidity in employment and education” (Clark & Eynon, 2009, p. 18-19). EPortfolios are now incorporated into all types of public and private colleges, resulting in statewide initiatives. According to Clark and Eynon (2009), the Minnesota College and University System has implemented an ePortfolio initiative that is available to all state residents and can be used either personally or professionally. California has begun a similar initiative with its focus on bridging the gap between two-year and four-year colleges.

Because of the many purposes and disciplines for which ePortfolios can be used, they are able to reach diverse student populations, support learning, and increase career preparedness (Clark & Eynon, 2009). They have become a tool that captures a student’s entire educational experience as opposed to a tool that applies to only one course. Many schools have begun incorporating ePortfolios into a capstone project where different artifacts are added each year to demonstrate critical areas of proficiency. These artifacts are valuable reflections of student learning and personal growth and can contribute to the assessment process (Cambridge, 2012; Clark & Eynon, 2009; Easterling, Hall, & Holzmann, 2006). Additionally, the pressure for accountability in higher education has led to the increased use of ePortfolios for assessment purposes. The multitude of easy-to-use platforms available for creating ePortfolios has made it possible for more schools to adopt and implement these projects. In this technological age, students respond positively to the opportunity to create projects in a digital environment and work hard to perfect the look and feel of their ePortfolios. Clark and Eynon (2009) argue that “visual rhetoric is an emerging area of interest in composition studies, recognition that imagery and visual design signify a change in the nature of thinking and writing. Through ePortfolios we have an opportunity to harness the power of imagery and digital media to advanced cognitive processes” (p. 21). Clearly, ePortfolios provide a vehicle for students to present themselves effectively in a visual format.

EPortfolios are making the journey from novel to ubiquitous. Clark and Eynon (2009) conclude that ePortfolios have established their place in higher education. As the ePortfolio movement advances, Clark and Eynon identify three key factors that will affect its growth and development.

The first factor relates to social media and how it will change the look and feel of ePortfolios. In order for them to continue to be appealing to students, these authors suggest that ePortfolios need to be easy to use and incorporate many of the interactive features that can be found on social media sites. The second factor that affects the growth is the tension that exists between student-centered and institution-centered portfolios. For example, while some proponents see these portfolios as a great tool to enhance student learning, others see them solely as a tool for assessment. The movement will have to find ways to unite these two views without “sacrificing its focus on student engagement, student ownership, and enriched student learning” (Clark & Eynon, 2009, p. 23). Finally, ePortfolios must adapt to reach across cultures and national boundaries. In the global economy in which we live, educators need to learn from one another and join forces with emerging ePortfolio movements.

EPortfolios facilitate not only a more improved learning environment but also engage students at entrance and teach them how to become active in their own educational endeavors. Students become interested and involved in their learning progress. According to George Kuh (2008), “[E]ducational research suggests that [HIPs] increase rates of student retention and student engagement” (p. 9). EPortfolios provide a culture of evidence and pedagogy. For example, at Oral Roberts University, ePortfolios were employed in every academic program. The learning outcomes were connected with mandatory student assignments and assessment rubrics. Each student at Oral Roberts University created at least two ePortfolios. The first was created for the general education curriculum, and the second focused on each student’s individual area of study. The University initiated use of ePortfolios to act as a “comprehensive assessment system that focused on the acquisition and inculcation of its learning outcomes by students” (Easterling, Hall, & Holzmann, 2006, p. 2). The educators linked the learning outcomes to the University’s mission statement and sought to evaluate curriculum examples of artifacts contained within the ePortfolios including “pre/posttests with differential scoring, essays, analytical lab reports, speech video clips, service learning reports, field tests, music files, etc” (p. 2). The educators chose not only to assess curricular aspects of student life but also to include co-curricular aspects because, as the authors state, “Subjects do not exist in a vacuum” (p. 2). The literature echoes the importance of viewing student learning as a holistic experience (Cambridge, 2012; Clark & Eynon, 2009; Easterling, Hall, & Holzmann, 2006; Kirkpatrick, Renner, Kanae, & Goya 2007). As a result of this holistic method, students will be better prepared for their future endeavors.

The ePortfolios served in two capacities at Oral Roberts University (Easterling, Hall, & Holzmann, 2006). First, the ePortfolios facilitated the achievement of the student learning outcomes and allowed students to track their journeys through the higher education experience. Secondly, the University was able to attain direct evidence of learning through the documentation, which is critical for a variety of reasons. The University was also able to “make informed decisions for improvement of courses, programs, departments, and the university as a whole” (p. 2). Also, programs included in the study at Oral Roberts University excelled in the accreditation process. Site visitors highly complimented the assessment process that was facilitated through the use of ePortfolios. In addition, ePortfolios fostered collaborative relationships among faculty, both intra-departmentally and inter-departmentally. These ePortfolios “produced an improved learning environment and a more cohesive education where students can reach their fullest potential” (p. 2). The positive results of this study reinforce the need for incorporating ePortfolios into planning and assessment.

Cambridge (2012) discusses the value of ePortfolios in his article “EPortfolios: Go Big or Go Home.” He endorses the use of ePortfolios and states that “ePortfolios can play a central role in strengthening teaching and learning in higher education” (p. 52). Cambridge bases his

assessment of ePortfolios on years of research, development, and implementation of the technology. He emphasizes the value of ePortfolios as evidenced by studies performed by the Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research that indicate an “increased student engagement, retention, learning skills, professional identity development, and self-direction” (p. 53). EPortfolios offer a number of benefits to students. They have been implemented at the individual course and departmental levels and have also been “deeply integrated into and across the curriculum and co-curriculum” (p. 52). According to Cambridge, a major benefit of implementation at the departmental level includes the ability to “gather artifacts of student work to demonstrate fulfillment of standards as a component of programmatic assessment”; however, “such applications of ePortfolios usually do little to further learning” (p. 53). Despite the possible pitfalls of improperly implemented ePortfolio initiatives, the author states that deeply integrated ePortfolios “help students develop...the strategies and confidence to learn independently; the understanding of one’s own strengths and predilections to allow for more effective collaboration; and the reflective linking of values and aspirations with knowledge and action to enable charting career trajectories and fulfilling responsibilities as a citizen” (p. 52). Well-designed ePortfolio programs can be integral to student success.

Cambridge (2012) describes research performed by the University of Nottingham and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). The researchers studied 21 ePortfolio projects at universities in the United Kingdom. The study revealed a significant principle that is important to the overall success of a deeply integrated ePortfolio initiative. Cambridge asserts that ePortfolios “are disruptive from a pedagogic, technological and an institutional perspective” (p. 52). He further notes that “disruptive innovations do not simply strengthen an organization’s ability to do what it is already doing: they have the potential to change the very nature of what an organization is seeking to achieve” (p. 52). Hence, ePortfolios have the potential to transform positively a college’s overall learning environment.

Finally, Cambridge (2012) suggests that ePortfolios require changes in both practice and responsibility. These changes are threefold. First, faculty members must embrace a greater responsibility for student learning. The author states that “faculty members must seek to understand and support students’ learning throughout their undergraduate learning careers, not just the learning that relates directly to the intended outcomes of a particular course” (p. 53). The second change in responsibility is the need for collaboration among educators such as “student affairs professionals, librarians, and learning technologists” across campus (p. 53). Lastly, educators must take “students seriously as self-directed, lifelong learners with emerging professional identities, which requires colleges and universities to give students a substantial voice in decision-making about curricula and programs throughout the institution” (p. 53). Clearly, these changes in practice and responsibility must be taken seriously in order to make ePortfolios successful.

Implementing new initiatives involving technology is never easy. Curriculum design and instructional practices, as well as cultural beliefs, social and physical infrastructure, and experience with technology, influence how easily ePortfolios can be integrated into the cultures of colleges. In a two-year study of ePortfolios, research scientists Janice Fournier, Cara Lane, and Stephen Corbett (2007) validate Cambridge’s (2012) assertions that educators must make careful decisions when designing the curricula and programs using ePortfolios. Fournier et al., (2007) suggest that ePortfolios promote lifelong learning, but the change toward this type of learning is a gradual one. In an earlier ePortfolio pilot study, the University of Washington partnered with its Expository Writing Program (EWP) in the English Department to research the implications of using ePortfolios within a specific context. Participating in the study were six teaching assistants (TAs), two administrators from the English Department, and 48 students

from the 12 sections of beginning composition taught by the TAs who volunteered for the study. The EWP was chosen for the pilot program because it already had a paper portfolio assignment in place. Students were required to choose five to seven papers and create a statement in the form of a cover letter to their instructor about how the selected works demonstrated their proficiencies in four targeted learning outcomes. For this study, the assignment was modified into an ePortfolio project where portions of the cover letter were distributed over several Web pages, and students were asked to demonstrate achievement of each course learning outcome.

Fournier, Lane, and Corbett (2007) found the use of ePortfolios in this context to be a success. Students were able to complete the assignment with little to no technical difficulties, and the TAs found that the quality of work either equaled or exceeded the quality of the work submitted using paper portfolios. In addition, the study revealed that students using ePortfolios were more easily able to associate their writings with course learning outcomes. Although the number of TAs choosing to implement ePortfolios had not increased significantly the following year, interviews revealed that instructors had made significant advances in ePortfolio implementation such as using midterm ePortfolios, adjusting course assignments to help students prepare for ePortfolios, integrating new technologies into the classroom, and testing new feedback methods. While this study finds that the implementation of ePortfolios does potentially promote lifelong learning, this change will not be a quick one. These authors purport that changes in instructional practice, departmental and institutional culture, and increased awareness among social and professional counterparts will be necessary for ePortfolios to reach their full potential.

In another study entitled “The Benefits of EPortfolios for Students and Faculty in Their Own Words,” Ross Miller and Wende Morgaine (2009) gathered input regarding ePortfolio usage from students and faculty. The results of the study were positive, reflecting that students perceived their learning to be connected, from core courses across the curriculum to community service projects outside the school. Faculty noted that within the students' ePortfolio entries a deep understanding of learning had taken place. The data gleaned from ePortfolio use can also be documented as a demonstration of educational standards being met and a summary of areas in need of improvement. This study identifies good ePortfolio practices, which should include the process of having students reflect on their works and think about their progress within the learning environment. For this process to occur successfully, the authors believe that students must be provided this opportunity to reflect on their learning outcomes and skills. Having students understand and think in terms of outcomes and skills will be challenging in the beginning. However, in this study, the opportunities to reflect and analyze their learning experience changed how the students viewed what was being taught. The connections and patterns that emerged helped the students to see how all of their work fit together. More importantly, the ePortfolios helped the students to visualize their goal of degree completion.

The students in Miller and Morgaine's (2009) study voiced that the ePortfolio-structured reflective process pushed them to “own” the learning outcomes. They described their progress and cited evidence within their learning collections. One student noted how it enhanced his understanding of the overall higher educational experience. With this benefit, the impact of continued education can be shared among families and within the culture of the community. Another student noted the value of her own personal and professional growth documented within the ePortfolio, claiming that it was more important than the “paper” degree that would be obtained upon her graduation. Resoundingly, students described how the impact would carry beyond graduation into the workforce and to their communities of interest.

The faculty who participated in Miller and Morgaine's (2009) study also noted that students' abilities to transfer learning to new situations were enhanced. The generative interviewing

process guides the students to extract connections and meanings within their learning experiences. Faculty noted that data can be generated on student learning and can be analyzed to improve student learning. Faculty also voiced that assignments should make sense and impact learning as much as possible because of the time and energy required for both faculty and students. In summary, ePortfolios facilitate learning, but reflection is the key to the process. This reflection process, furthermore, must be structured.

Kirkpatrick et al. (2007) believe that students felt more connected to their learning and empowered to extend themselves when incorporating ePortfolios into their learning experiences. This ePortfolio approach does support learning-centered behaviors and attitudes. Instructors participating in Kirkpatrick et al.'s study made the following recommendations: (1) Instructors should integrate ePortfolios into their course; (2) Instructors should assist the student content in the emotional connection by finding interactive ways for cultural expression to find deeper knowledge/connection to cultural values; and (3) Instructors should provide activities that enhance computer multi-media competence through opportunities for video presentations, audio recordings, and digital story telling. These authors also recommend that a peer networking system offering one-on-one support be used. Although maintaining momentum required significant amounts of time in and out of classroom, cross-curricular relationships were strengthened. Moreover, instructors found it important that they refrain from requiring a specific number of artifacts to be presented, instead allowing students the choice of how many or few to upload.

Undoubtedly, HIPs, such as ePortfolios, benefit all students, especially those who are underserved by higher education. EPortfolios make a connection between high-quality teaching and learning and student success. Moreover, ePortfolios are simply an intentional approach to engaged learning and can have a major impact on the promotion of academic excellence and achievement for community college students. To achieve the broad reach intended for high impact practices across the curriculum, static student identities must be challenged, and student participation must be energized to affect student educational goals and new levels of achievement. Moving from the freshman experience to the capstone project through ePortfolios provides an excellent way for students to reach their goals.

Chapter 6: Actions to Be Implemented

WSCC's purpose in "GPS: Navigate Your Future" is to enhance our students' learning during their first-year experience by promoting competency in technology, critical thinking, and written and oral communication. Combined with focused advising and career research, these skills will help our students to begin and complete their journeys toward their educational goals. In preparing this QEP, Team GPS examined internal and external data, searched the literature regarding freshman seminar programs and ePortfolios, gleaned information about best practices in those areas, and sought insight from faculty and students concerning the freshman experience and student needs.

In order to accomplish our goals, the QEP Team divided into two QEP Pods. Pod 1 focused on the GPS Seminar course as a whole, while Pod 2 focused on the GPS Portfolio as a high-impact practice within the GPS Seminar. This chapter discusses the GPS Seminar course and the GPS Portfolio action plans based upon the research and efforts of these two pods.

GPS (Goals–Planning–Success) Seminar

The GPS Seminar is designed to offer entering college students the technology skills, advising, career information and support that they need in order to be successful as they journey toward their educational and career goals. As a part of this course they will have the opportunity to research careers that interest them, develop individual plans of study for their progress through the institution, and create signature assignments that serve as evidence of their communication skills, critical thinking, and reflection. The GPS Seminar will be a one-credit-hour course. It will be required for graduation from associate degree and selected certificate programs. The course will include face-to-face instruction and support, along with supplementary Blackboard instruction and activities designed to provide practice in technology skills. The online component of the course will require students to interact both with their GPS instructors and with their peers.

Pod 1 was given the responsibility of determining who would be required to take the GPS Seminar, how the course would be delivered, what would be included in the curriculum for the course, where the course would be housed, what the staffing needs for the course would be, whether or not the course would require a textbook (and – if a textbook were to be required – which book), and what the master syllabus for the course would include. To decide which students would take GPS Seminar, Pod 1 examined our current requirements for Orientation 101, Orientation 103, and Workplace Skills Development I (WKO), along with the target populations who enroll in first-year experiences at other institutions. Pod 1 recommended that all students be required to enroll in GPS Seminar during their first semester at WSCC. Because some of our programs, particularly in the health field, have a significant number of transfer students, Pod 1 discussed whether or not transfer students should be required to take the course. Based upon their research, Pod 1 recommended that the same student population be required to take GPS Seminar that is currently required to take Orientation 101, 103, or WKO. To be exempt, students must be transfer students, and they must transfer in a minimum of 12 hours. Students who are eligible for exemption have the option of taking GPS Seminar as an elective for the benefits that it will provide. However, those exempt students who choose not to take the course will be provided the opportunity to participate in eHow sessions to prepare for the capstone project. Access to Degree Works and other career and degree-planning resources will be available to all students, regardless of whether they do or do not take GPS Seminar, and all students, even if they are not GPS Seminar participants, will be assigned faculty advisors. Online resources will be available to both GPS participants and exempt students, and all

students will be eligible for ePortfolio accounts. Both part-time and full-time students are required to take the course.

GPS SEMINAR SCHEDULING

Students will meet on campus once per week for 50 minutes. Each section of GPS Seminar will also include a Blackboard component. Classes will be scheduled to align with WSCC's current class schedule and will be offered at a variety of times to allow for flexibility in student scheduling.

During the summer 2013 semester, WSCC offered 9 sections of Orientation 101 and 103 combined. Twenty-seven combined sections were offered during the fall 2013 semester, and 14 combined sections were offered during the spring 2014 semester. For students in WSCC's Technical Division, Workplace Skills Development I (WKO) serves as their orientation equivalent. This one-hour course offers more career-focused orientation to college than is currently offered in ORI 101 or ORI 103. In fall 2013, 7 sections of WKO were offered. Six sections were offered in spring 2014, and 3 were offered in the summer 2014 session.

Using our 2013-2014 enrollment data and schedule information, replacing ORI 101, ORI 103, and WKO would require approximately 66 sections of GPS Seminar per year. Based upon current enrollment, when fully implemented, GPS Seminar would require 34 sections in the fall, 20 sections in the spring, and 12 sections in the summer. As WSCC enters full implementation, we will also offer GPS Seminar in both hybrid and online formats. These courses will meet the current requirements for course development and quality set forth by our eLearning Department.

GPS SEMINAR STAFFING

GPS Director

The GPS staff will be housed in the Academic Division of the College under the supervision of the Academic Dean. Team GPS recommends that the GPS Director, with team-teaching assistance from WSCC advising staff, teach up to 14 sections of GPS Seminar each three-semester academic year (fall-summer). He/she will also have significant out-of-class work responsibilities in the areas of student advising, program planning, coach training, and coordinating all GPS activities. In addition, the GPS Director will lead the GPS Council that is responsible for the implementation phase of the QEP. A significant responsibility of the GPS Director will be oversight of GPS Portfolios.

In order to be considered for the position of GPS Director, the applicant must hold a master's degree from an accredited institution. The GPS Director must have at least three years of successful, documented teaching experience and will need to have technological expertise necessary to work with ePortfolios and Blackboard. Preference will be given to candidates who have coordinated and/or taught college-level courses. The director will hold the responsibility of scheduling training sessions for instructors who wish to teach GPS Seminar and will serve as chairperson of the GPS Council, the group that will oversee the GPS initiative. The director will be placed on Schedule D-1 of the Alabama Community and Technical Colleges Salary Schedule Guidelines (Appendix 6).

Due to the nature of the GPS Director's responsibilities, combined with the considerable planning, organization, personnel training, and continued course development that will be required by the position, Team GPS recommends that careful consideration be given to selection of the person who will hold this position. This individual will be responsible for teaching

summer GPS Seminar courses and for staffing, training, and the many other responsibilities required for the development, implementation, and continued support of both GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios.

GPS Coaches

The remaining sections of GPS Seminar will be staffed by faculty members who elect to serve as GPS Coaches. These instructors will be team teaching GPS Seminar with members of WSCC's advising staff. Both the GPS Coaches and the advisors must participate in pre-teaching training in HIPs and ePortfolios. GPS Coaches will receive one-hour adjunct overload pay for each section of the course that they teach. Advising staff will work with GPS students as part of their advising responsibilities.

GPS Lab Assistant

WSCC will hire a full-time technology support person. This individual will devote half of his/her work time each week to GPS technology assistance (e.g., lab time with students, eHow's, and faculty training). In order to be considered for this position, potential candidates must hold the minimum of a bachelor's degree. This position will include required lab hours set aside for the GPS Lab Assistant to be available to meet with and assist students. The remainder of this individual's scheduled work week will consist of campus technology responsibilities as determined by his/her supervisor. Training in ePortfolios, Blackboard, Ellucian, and other campus technology will be required. This GPS Lab Assistant will be placed on Schedule E3 (Appendix 6) of the Alabama Community and Technical Colleges Salary Schedule Guidelines.

GPS SEMINAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

GPS Seminar is designed to promote technology skills, career exploration, and goal-setting (particularly, in terms of educational and career planning). During their semester in GPS Seminar, students will hone their communication skills and practice critical thinking. They will create a GPS Portfolio that serves as concrete evidence of their learning and reflection. All of these activities will occur in conjunction with intensive and intentional advising. Through these activities, students will emerge from GPS Seminar with a sense of purpose and direction in regard to their educational journeys, along with the tools they need to guide them as they continue traveling toward their goals. The following GPS Learning Goals and Outcomes will be used to measure student success within GPS Seminar:

1. Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multi-media principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.
2. Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.
3. Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.

CLASS SIZE

Pod 1 recommends that the class size for each section of GPS Seminar be limited to 30 students. Most WSCC classrooms and labs accommodate a class of 30. Classes of this size or smaller would allow instructors some time to work with individual students.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR GPS SEMINAR

Course materials will be available through Blackboard and/or the WSCC Bookstore. Students will access their GPS Portfolios via the ePortfolio platform. Students may wish to purchase a flash drive to save their work during the process of developing and editing assignments prior to uploading it to Blackboard or their GPS Portfolios.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED FOR GPS SEMINAR

Because this course relies heavily on technology, students will need reliable and consistent access to a computer with current versions of Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, along with reliable and consistent access to high-speed Internet. Students will also need the current version of Adobe Reader. Each GPS Seminar student will need to access both his/her Blackboard account and GPS Portfolio account. Students will need to access their ePortfolios via the Internet, so computer access will be imperative. On-campus lab facilities are available for students who do not have reliable computer and/or Internet access at home. Lab computers have the required programs needed for this course.

GRADING POLICY

Students in GPS Seminar will earn letter grades based upon WSCC's grading system. The numerical averages and their corresponding letter equivalents are provided below:

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
0-59 = F

Development of an acceptable GPS Portfolio will be required in order to earn a passing grade in the course. Each GPS Portfolio will include as a minimum: an academic course of study graphic, career pathway project, completed technology skills check-off, and a diversity-related artifact.

MASTER SYLLABUS

The master syllabus and course timeline for GPS Seminar are provided as Appendix 7. The syllabus offers a timeline of topics and assignments required in the course. The following general areas of curriculum will be covered in GPS Seminar:

1. Use of technology to include ePortfolio, Blackboard, and Ellucian.
2. Educational planning (to include course of study required and degree level required and other career research).
3. Career planning (to include research, interviewing professionals in the field and/or job shadowing, and exploration of current job market status).

4. Module of instruction on Diversity to promote self-awareness and critical thinking

SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENTS

Specific assignments required in the course will be designated as “signature assignments” and will be included in students’ GPS Portfolios.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Two pilot sections of GPS Seminar will be offered during the fall 2014 semester. One section will be taught as a 9:30 Learning Community course as part of WSCC’s Achieving the Dream initiatives. The pilot section will be conducted using an ORI 103LC designation and will serve a cohort of transitional learning students. An instructor who currently organizes orientation offerings and uses ePortfolios in courses will teach the pilot course. The course will involve collaboration between the ORI 103LC instructor and instructors of transitional English and mathematics courses. The second pilot section will be a current WKO class taught by an experienced WKO instructor, who has received training in ePortfolios. Student ePortfolio accounts for the pilot program will be provided through WSCC’s PAVES initiative from the U.S. Department of Labor.

WSCC will implement GPS Seminar in phases. Our implementation decisions will be driven by data collected each year through a variety of sources. It is our intention to make well-informed, evidence-based decisions that promote student success. Therefore, we will begin with a small pilot in GPS Year 1. In Year 2, as we continue to analyze the results of GPS Seminar to determine how it can best support student success, WSCC will move GPS Seminar into campus-wide implementation.

GPS Portfolios

Embedded within GPS Seminar is the GPS Portfolio, which serves as the second prong of our QEP. Pod 2, the GPS Portfolio Pod, researched best practices in ePortfolios. Pod 2 offered recommendations regarding content, platform, assessment, and other aspects of the GPS Portfolio.

GPS PORTFOLIO DESCRIPTION

The GPS Portfolio (GPSP) will be a dynamic, reflective learning tool that will document students’ journeys through their first semester at WSCC. Each student will develop his/her GPSP as a requirement of GPS Seminar. A minimum number of signature assignments (SA’s) that provide evidence of student learning outcomes will be required of each student during GPS Seminar. These SA’s will provide evidence of students’ communication skills, technology expertise, career research, goal-setting, and educational planning (advising and development of plans of study). Each SA will be graded by the GPS Seminar instructor either prior to being uploaded into the GPS Portfolio or as part of the overall GPS Portfolio final grade. At the end of the semester, the GPS Portfolio will offer clear evidence of each student’s learning, including a number of artifacts that demonstrate that the student has met the SLO’s for GPS.

PLATFORM SELECTION

A number of free ePortfolio programs are available online. In reviewing available programs, Pod 2 was concerned that WSCC would not have guaranteed access to these platforms over a period of time. At any time, a provider of a free platform could remove that platform from the Internet, leaving our students and our institution with no access. Also, using a free platform would require data extraction to be more obvious to students.

Our goal in selecting a platform was to make the platform as simple for students to use as a social media site. After examining both paid and free platforms available for ePortfolios, Pod 2 recommended two possible platforms for ePortfolios at WSCC: Digication and Pruvallu by SchoolChapters. Since students will be the ones using the platform, Team GPS, in conjunction with WSCC's Roadmap initiative (a grant program supported by the American Association of Colleges and Universities), sponsored a Platform Preview Day. Students who participated in Preview Day overwhelmingly selected Digication as their preferred platform. They determined that Digication is very user friendly and intuitively designed. It also offers WSCC the opportunity to pull data that we can use in a meaningful way to assess GPS Portfolios. Two other attractive features of Digication are its nominal per-student cost and the fact that it would not require ePortfolios to be housed on WSCC's server space.

Chattanooga State Community College, one of our Roadmap Phase 2 cluster campuses, has already begun using Digication and is satisfied with its cost, reliability, usability, and overall customer service. Their recommendation finalized our decision regarding this platform. As a part of our Roadmap initiative, we hosted faculty and students from Chattanooga State Community College on our Hanceville campus. They shared their ePortfolio expertise and conducted workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators.

TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT REQUIRED FOR GPS PORTFOLIO

Students will need regular access to a computer with high-speed Internet service in order to work on their GPS Portfolios. Students will need ePortfolio accounts. They will also need technology support from their GPS Seminar instructors. Pod 2 recommends that GPS Seminar instructors and/or WSCC's eLearning personnel offer eHow workshops to support students as they work on their GPS Portfolios during GPS Seminar. These eHow technology workshops would consist of training in specific areas in which students need assistance. Students will need lab space in order to work on their GPS Portfolios during class sessions. Existing campus lab space should be available to accommodate students during class times and for eHow sessions.

GPS PORTFOLIO CONTENT

GPS Portfolios will contain a minimum number of four Signature Assignments in order to meet the criteria for successful completion of the ePortfolio. The GPS Director, in conjunction with all GPS faculty, will be responsible for developing these SA's to fulfill the SLO's and to meet the overall goals of the course. The following minimum content will apply to each GPS Portfolio:

- A completed technology skills check-off sheet ("Ready for College" in Strategic Plan)
- A graphic representation of the student's program of study ("Ready for College" in Strategic Plan)
- A photo essay showing career pathways ("Ready for Work" in Strategic Plan)
- A photo essay on homelessness (the area of diversity emphasis is subject to change in future years) ("Ready for Life" in Strategic Plan)

GPS PORTFOLIO GRADING

Signature Assignments will be graded using rubrics developed by the GPS Director and GPS coaches.

Weighting of the various GPS assignments and activities, including the four signature assignments, will be determined by instructors, with the understanding that no student will earn a passing grade in GPS Seminar without earning a satisfactory score on each of the four signature assignments.

Chapter 7: Timeline

“GPS: Navigate Your Future” will progress over time to include students in all of our divisions. Our timelines for the QEP include a small pilot program in the fall 2014 semester. We believe that our initial pilot will help us to understand more clearly students’ needs and to refine GPS Seminar prior to expanding it to include a larger body of WSCC students. On the following pages is a timeline of our anticipated activities for “GPS: Navigate Your Future” for Years 0-4 of this project.

Wallace State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan: Project Year Zero (2013-2014)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Begin campus dialogue about GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios	Team GPS meeting with President's Cabinet	Summer 2013	Team GPS will meet with the President's Cabinet to report on progress.	Team GPS	Achieved Summer 2013
	Team GPS meetings with eLearning Department	Fall 2013	Team GPS will meet with eLearning Department representatives to discuss ePortfolios.	Team GPS, eLearning Department	Fall 2013-Ongoing
	Team GPS meeting Team GPS department and divisional meetings with faculty and staff, student organization meetings	Fall 2013	70% of WSCC Departments/divisions/student organizations will participate in a QEP small group meeting	Team GPS Co-chairpersons, faculty and staff members	Achieved Spring 2014 (Meetings to continue to include those who were unable to participate)
Develop Freshman Experience Survey	Freshman Experience Survey was developed Team GPS	Fall 2013	The Freshman Experience Survey was developed, formatted, and scheduled for initial administration.	Team GPS	Achieved Fall 2013
Administer Freshman Experience Survey to a pilot group of students who have completed current orientation	Freshman Experience Survey was administered+	Fall 2013	80% of students will indicate that their orientation/freshman experience provided valuable advice about planning their programs of study and choosing a major.	Team GPS Representatives and Instructors	The benchmark was not achieved. Only 64% of participating students indicated that their orientation/freshman experience provided valuable advice about planning their programs and choosing a major.

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
			<p>80% of students will indicate that their orientation/freshman experience provided specific technology skills required for college.</p> <p>80% of students will indicate that their orientation/freshman experience helped improve their performance or grades in other courses.</p>		<p>The benchmark was not achieved. Only 62% of participating students indicated that their orientation/ freshman experience provided specific technology skills required for college.</p> <p>The benchmark was not achieved. Only 15% of participating students indicated that their orientation/freshman experience helped improve their performance or grades in other courses.</p>
Develop GPS pilot course	<p>Curriculum planning meetings</p> <p>Recommend a candidate for GPS Coach for pilot section</p>	<p>Fall 2013</p> <p>Spring 2014</p>	<p>Develop a master syllabus and weekly schedule</p> <p>Meet with members of Team GPS who are interested in coaching the pilot and submit recommendations to President</p>	<p>Team GPS (GPS Pod 1)</p> <p>GPS Co-chairs and Team GPS</p>	<p>Ongoing – projected completion Summer 2014</p> <p>Achieved Spring 2014</p>

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Select GPS Coach for pilot section of GPS Seminar	Summer 2014	College President selects GPS coach	President	Achieved Summer 2014
Develop technology skills checklist for GPS Seminar	Planning meetings with Team GPS and eLearning Department	Spring 2014	Completed technology skills checklist for GPS Seminar	Team GPS	Achieved Summer 2014
Develop GPS Portfolio Rubric	Planning meetings to develop rubric	Fall 2013	Completed GPS Portfolio Rubric	Team GPS	Achieved Fall 2013
Offer professional development for instructors	Drs. Rebecca Reeves and Kathy Buckelew (QEP Co-chairpersons) participated in AAC&U's 2013 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, including the ePortfolio preview day.	Spring 2013	Drs. Reeves and Buckelew attended numerous ePortfolio and high-impact practices training sessions and offered professional development on these topics to the Team GPS.	GPS Co-chairpersons	Achieved Spring 2013
	Drs. Buckelew and Reeves attended the AAC&U Roadmap Project Meeting and Student Success Conference in Miami, Florida. As a part of this conference, they met with institutions currently using ePortfolios and with ePortfolio platform providers.	Spring 2013	Drs. Reeves and Buckelew attended numerous ePortfolio and high-impact practices training sessions and offered professional development on these topics to the Team GPS.	GPS Co-chairpersons	Achieved Spring 2013

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	<p>A representative group of Team GPS members (Roadmap Group) participated in AAC&U's Institute on High-impact Practices and Student Success in Madison, Wisconsin. The work of this team built on the work of a previous team that attended the AAC&U Institute in Portland, Oregon, in Summer 2012.</p> <p>Team GPS members and other faculty participate in Mahara ePortfolio platform workshop.</p> <p>Team GPS members and other faculty and staff will participate in WSCC's eLearning Day.</p>	<p>Summer 2013</p> <p>Summer 2013</p> <p>Fall 2013</p>	<p>Completed overview plan for taking GPS Portfolios beyond GPS Seminar (possible capstone projects)</p> <p>Participants used sandbox Mahara ePortfolios to explore the platform and its connection to Blackboard learning management system.</p> <p>Representative Team GPS members attended the day-long eLearning experience focusing on ePortfolios and technology.</p>	<p>Team GPS (Roadmap Group)</p> <p>WSCC Director of eLearning and eLearning Department</p> <p>Director of eLearning Department</p>	<p>Achieved Summer 2013</p> <p>Upon examination of other potential platforms, the Team GPS decided not to pursue Mahara as its GPS Portfolio platform (Fall 2013).</p> <p>Achieved Fall 2013</p>

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Roadmap Site Visit and HIP's workshops facilitated by AAC&U Liaisons (Dr. Susan Albertine and Dr. Jean Mach)	Spring 2014	100% of Roadmap Team and 50% of Team GPS will participate in HIP's workshops.	Roadmap Team and AAC&U	Achieved Spring 2014
	College-wide professional development workshops on HIP's, ePortfolios, and signature assignments facilitated by Dr. Amanda Hyberger, along with staff and students from Chattanooga State Community College	Spring 2014	Participants were offered a series of large- and small-group workshops focusing on HIP's, ePortfolios, and signature assignments.	Roadmap Team and Team GPS	Achieved Spring 2014
	GPS Portfolio faculty Lunch-and-Learn	Spring 2014	Representatives from Team GPS and other faculty will participate in a lunch-and-learn focusing on ePortfolio use and platforms	Team GPS	Achieved Spring 2014
Engage students in deep reflection and conversation on improving learning experiences in their freshman year and foster interest in ePortfolios	Invite students to engage in conversation about their freshman learning experiences at WSCC with Drs. Albertine and Mach, along with Team GPS members and Assessment	Spring 2014	Students will discuss their freshman experiences – particularly those pertaining to orientation – with AAC&U visiting liaisons.	Roadmap Team and WSCC Faculty	Achieved Spring 2014

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Student ePortfolio forum and Lunch-and-Learn session	Spring 2014	Students will examine and review ePortfolio platforms and make recommendations about GPS Portfolio format.	Team GPS	Achieved Spring 2014
	Initiate WSCC Roadmap ePortfolio Awards and recognize student recipients at WSCC annual Awards Night	Spring 2014	Develop and distribute criteria for ePortfolio Awards, accept and review applications, and select winners.	Roadmap Team	Achieved Spring 2014
	GPS Seminar logo student competition	Spring 2014	Develop and distribute criteria for logo competition submissions, submit logo designs, and choose winning logo	WSCC Students, Team GPS, WSCC Art Department, WSCC Marketing Department	Achieved – Summer 2014
Engage the WSCC community in conversation on improving learning experiences for students at WSCC	Team GPS presentation to Cullman Rotary Club Team GPS presentation to Cullman Chamber of Commerce Team GPS Co-chair workshops on ePortfolios for service-area middle and high school faculty participating in Cullman Area Workforce Solutions (CAWS) program	Summer 2014 Summer 2014	Team GPS will attend at least two meetings for area civic groups by the end of the Fall 2014 semester. Dr. Buckelew conducted three workshop sessions (two in June and one in July) focusing on HIP's and ePortfolios for service-area middle and high school teachers who were participating in the CAWS program.	College Dean (Liaison) and Team GPS Dr. Buckelew, Service-area teachers, CAWS program leaders	In progress – projected completion Fall 2014 Achieved - Summer 2014

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Focus group meeting with service area high school principals and counselors	Ongoing	Team GPS will invite community stakeholders, including service area principals and counselors, to participate in forums focused on the needs of incoming freshmen.	Team GPS, Director of Dual Enrollment, College Dean	In progress – ongoing
	Community engagement discussions on GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios	Spring 2014	Dialogue among Team GPS members and community stakeholders	Team GPS, College Dean, Community Members	In progress – ongoing
Select delivery platform for GPS portfolio	Discuss various ePortfolio platforms with company representatives at SACSCOC Annual meeting	Fall 2013	Drs. Buckelew and Reeves met with Digication and LiveText representatives.	Drs. Buckelew and Reeves	Achieved – Fall 2013
	Discussed various ePortfolio platforms with company representatives at AAC&U Annual meeting	Spring 2014	Drs. Reeves and Buckelew met with Digication leaders to discuss their platform.	Drs. Reeves and Buckelew	Achieved – Spring 2014
	Webinar with Digication on ePortfolio platform and launch details	Spring 2014	Drs. Rebecca Reeves and Glynice Crow (Roadmap Team) participated in a Webinar with Digication co-founder Kelly Driscoll.	Drs. Reeves and Crow	Achieved – Spring 2014
	Webinar with Prualu (School Chapters) on ePortfolio platform and launch details	Spring 2014	Drs. Kathy Buckelew and Rebecca Reeves participated in a Webinar with SchoolChapters Prualu representative Rob Smith.	Drs. Buckelew and Reeves	Achieved – Spring 2014

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Launch GPS marketing campaign	Student and faculty preview of ePortfolio platforms	Summer 2014	WSCC students, Roadmap Team members, and GPS faculty participated in a preview demonstration of Digication and Privalu.	WSCC Students, Roadmap Team, GPS Faculty, and Team GPS	Achieved - Summer 2014
	Select platform	Summer 2014	Based upon student and faculty reviews, Digication was selected as the platform to be used for GPS Seminar. The process of negotiating pricing and availability of pilot accounts was initiated.	Team GPS Co-chairs, Roadmap Team Members, Digication representatives, PAVES program representatives, WSCC Future Foundation representatives	Achieved – Summer 2014
	Select QEP title	Fall 2013	Brainstorming session to select QEP title and catch-phrase	GPS Co-chairpersons and Team GPS	Achieved – Fall 2014
	Select GPS Seminar logo	Fall 2013	Hold student and community competition to develop GPS logo for marketing	WSCC students, WSCC Community, WSCC Art Department, WSCC Marketing Department, and Team GPS	Achieved – Summer 2014
	Develop GPS marketing strategies	Fall 2013	Engage students and campus community in developing marketing strategies for GPS	WSCC students, WSCC Community, WSCC Art Department, WSCC Marketing Department, and Team GPS	Spring 2014 – Projected completion Summer 2014

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Develop GPS website	Spring 2014	Meet with William Weaver (Instructional Designer) to discuss GPS design for document cover and other materials Design and launch GPS Website	Team GPS, William Weaver WSSC Marketing Department (Jesse Cobb), Team GPS Co-chairpersons, Team GPS	Achieved – Summer 2014 Summer 2014 (Updates will be ongoing throughout the QEP cycle.)
Form GPS Community Advisory Committee	Team GPS will invite members of the greater Wallace State community (business, education, and civic leaders) to serve on the Community Advisory Committee to offer guidance throughout the QEP initiative.	Summer 2014	Six members accepted the invitation to join this important committee.	Team GPS	Achieved – Summer 2014

Wallace State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan: Project Year One (2014-2015)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Pilot GPS Seminar	Pilot one section of GPS Seminar in an ORI 103 course in the Academic Division during the Fall 2014 semester and another section in a WKO course in the Technical Division.	Fall 2014	One ORI 103 course will be designated as GPS Seminar and will be taught at a 9:30 time slot as one of WSCC's Learning Communities. One WKO course will be designated as a GPS Seminar.	Team GPS, Transitional Learning Director, Academic Dean, College Dean, Advising Staff, GPS Seminar Coaches	Projected completion - Fall 2014
Form GPS Council	Select members of the GPS Council that will guide the GPS Seminar QEP	Fall 2014	The GPS Council will be selected based upon recommendations from Team GPS, with approval from the College Dean and President.	President, College Dean, Team GPS	Projected completion – end of Fall 2014 semester
Continue marketing of GPS	Updates to Website On-campus marketing campaign for name recognition and engagement of campus community	Ongoing	The GPS Council will continue to ensure campus awareness of and engagement in GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios.	GPS Council, WSCC Marketing Department	Ongoing
Provide support for faculty and staff	Professional development workshops and eHow's on HIP's, signature assignments, and ePortfolios	Fall 2014 - Ongoing	Offer at least two professional development opportunities relating to the QEP.	eLearning Department, GPS Council	Fall 2014 – Ongoing throughout the QEP process

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Engage students in development of GPS Portfolios and recognize students who produce exemplary GPS Portfolios	Recognize student GPS Portfolio Award winners at WSCC annual Awards Night	Spring 2015	Honor the top ten student ePortfolios developed by WSCC students.	GPS Council, Executive Vice President's Office	Projected Completion – Spring 2015
Provide student technology support for GPS Seminar	Offer eHow sessions for students	Fall 2014	Offer at least two eHow/lab sessions per semester for students who are working on their GPS Portfolios.	eLearning Department, GPS Coach	Fall 2014 - Ongoing
Refine GPS Seminar course and make appropriate changes.	Update the course schedule and syllabus as needed	Fall 2014	Based upon student learning needs, the course syllabus and schedule will be revised.	GPS Coach, GPS Council	Fall 2014-Ongoing
Continue GPS Seminar pilot.	Offer one pilot section of GPS Seminar for the Spring 2015 term in both Academic and Technical Divisions.	Spring 2015	Continue the initial pilot with additional GPS Seminar courses during the Spring 2015 term.	GPS Council, GPS Coach	Spring 2015
Evaluate Year One GPS Achievements	Administer student attitude surveys (CCSSE in alternating years, Freshman Experience Survey each semester, Course evaluation each semester)	Fall 2014	Administer student surveys during each semester. The CCSSE is administered campus wide. The Freshman Experience Survey and course evaluation will be administered to GPS Seminar participants.	GPS Council, GPS Coach	Fall 2014 – Spring 2015

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Complete Technology Skills Checklist for each GPS student	Fall 2014	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of participants will demonstrate proficiency in technology areas listed on the checklist.	GPS Council, GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2014 – Ongoing (The checklist will be administered each semester as part of GPS Seminar. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)
	Evaluate GPS Portfolios	Fall 2014	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of GPS Seminar participants will achieve a satisfactory score on all four signature assignments.	GPS Coaches, GPS Students	Fall 2014 – Ongoing (GPS Portfolios will be scored each semester. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)
Secure course designation	Secure new course designation from Postsecondary for GPS Seminar	Fall 2014	Present course description for approval prior to offering the course with its new designation	WSCC Administration, WSCC Curriculum Committee, GPS Council	Projected completion by submission deadline for Fall 2015 schedule

Wallace State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan: Project Year Two (2015-2016)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
GPS Full Launch	Launch GPS Seminar in each major division of the College: Academic, Health, and Technical for both Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 terms.	Fall 2015	All current ORI 101, ORI 103, and WKO sections will transition to GPS Seminar.	GPS Council, Academic Dean, Health Dean, Technical Dean, College Dean, Advising Staff, GPS Seminar Coach	Summer 2016
Continue marketing of GPS	Updates to SACS/QEP Website On-campus marketing campaign for name recognition and engagement of campus community	Ongoing	The GPS Council will continue to ensure campus awareness of and engagement in GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios.	GPS Council, SACS On-campus Liaison, WSCC Marketing Department	Ongoing
Provide support for faculty and staff	Professional development workshops and eHow's on HIP's, signature assignments, and ePortfolios	Fall 2015	Offer at least two professional development opportunities relating to the QEP.	eLearning Department, GPS Council	Fall 2015 – Ongoing Throughout the QEP Process
Engage students in development of GPS Portfolios and recognize students who produce exemplary GPS Portfolios	Recognize student GPS Portfolio Award winners at WSCC annual Awards Night	Spring 2016	Honor the top ten student ePortfolios developed by WSCC students.	GPS Council, Executive Vice President's Office	Spring 2016

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Provide student technology support for GPS Seminar	Offer eHow sessions for students	Fall 2015	Offer at least two eHow/lab sessions per semester for students who are working on their GPS Portfolios.	eLearning Department, GPS Coach	Fall 2015 - Ongoing
Refine GPS Seminar course and make appropriate changes.	Update the course schedule and syllabus as needed	Fall 2015	Based upon student learning needs, the course syllabus and schedule will be revised.	GPS Coach, GPS Council	Fall 2015-Ongoing
Evaluate Year Two GPS Achievements	Administer student attitude surveys (CCSSE in alternating years, Freshman Experience Survey each semester, Course evaluation each semester)	Fall 2015	Administer student surveys during each semester. The CCSSE is administered campus wide. The Freshman Experience Survey and course evaluation will be administered to GPS Seminar participants.	GPS Council, GPS Coach	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
	Complete Technology Skills Checklist for each GPS student	Fall 2015	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of participants will demonstrate proficiency in technology areas listed on the checklist.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2015– Ongoing (The checklist will be administered each semester as part of GPS Seminar. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
	Evaluate GPS Portfolios	Fall 2015	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of GPS Seminar participants will achieve a satisfactory score on all signature assignments.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2015 – Ongoing (GPS Portfolios will be scored each semester. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)

Wallace State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan: Project Year Three (2016-2017)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Continue marketing of GPS	Updates to Website On-campus marketing campaign for name recognition and engagement of campus community	Ongoing	The GPS Council will continue to ensure campus awareness of and engagement in GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios.	GPS Council, WSCC Marketing Department	Ongoing
Provide continued support for faculty and staff	Professional development workshops and eHow's on HIP's, signature assignments, and ePortfolios	Fall 2016	Offer at least two professional development opportunities relating to the QEP.	eLearning Department, GPS Council	Fall 2016 – Ongoing Throughout the QEP Process
Engage students in development of GPS Portfolios and recognize students who produce exemplary GPS Portfolios	Recognize student GPS Portfolio Award winners at WSCC annual Awards Night	Spring 2017	Honor the top ten student ePortfolios developed by WSCC students.	GPS Council, Executive Vice President's Office	Spring 2017
Provide student technology support for GPS Seminar	Offer eHow sessions for students	Fall 2016	Offer at least two eHow/lab sessions per semester for students who are working on their GPS Portfolios.	eLearning Department, GPS Coach	Fall 2016 - Ongoing
Refine GPS Seminar course and make appropriate changes.	Update the course schedule and syllabus as needed	Fall 2016	Based upon student learning needs, the course syllabus and schedule will be revised.	GPS Coach, GPS Council	Fall 2016-Ongoing

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Evaluate Year Three GPS Achievements	Administer student attitude surveys (CCSSE in alternating years, Freshman Experience Survey each semester, Course evaluation each semester)	Fall 2016	Administer student surveys during each semester. The CCSSE is administered campus wide. The Freshman Experience Survey and course evaluation will be administered to GPS Seminar participants.	GPS Council, GPS Coach	Fall 2016– Spring 2017
	Complete Technology Skills Checklist for each GPS student	Fall 2016	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of participants will demonstrate proficiency in technology areas listed on the checklist.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2016– Ongoing (The checklist will be administered each semester as part of GPS Seminar. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)
	Evaluate GPS Portfolios	Fall 2016	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of GPS Seminar participants will achieve a satisfactory score on all four signature assignments.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2016 – Ongoing (GPS Portfolios will be scored each semester. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)

Wallace State Community College Quality Enhancement Plan: Project Year Four (2017-2018)

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Continue marketing of GPS	Updates to Website On-campus marketing campaign for name recognition and engagement of campus community	Ongoing	The GPS Council will continue to ensure campus awareness of and engagement in GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios.	GPS Council, WSCC Marketing Department	Ongoing
Provide continued support for faculty and staff	Professional development workshops and eHow's on HIP's, signature assignments, and ePortfolios	Fall 2017	Offer at least two professional development opportunities relating to the QEP.	eLearning Department, GPS Council	Fall 2017 – Ongoing Throughout the QEP Process
Engage students in development of GPS Portfolios and recognize students who produce exemplary GPS Portfolios	Recognize student GPS Portfolio Award winners at WSCC annual Awards Night	Spring 2018	Honor the top ten student ePortfolios developed by WSCC students.	GPS Council, Executive Vice President's Office	Spring 2018
Provide student technology support for GPS Seminar	Offer eHow sessions for students	Fall 2017	Offer at least two eHow/lab sessions per semester for students who are working on their GPS Portfolios.	eLearning Department, GPS Coach	Fall 2017 - Ongoing
Refine GPS Seminar course and make appropriate changes.	Update the course schedule and syllabus as needed	Fall 2017	Based upon student learning needs, the course syllabus and schedule will be revised.	GPS Coach, GPS Council	Fall 2017-Ongoing

GPS LANDMARK	ACTIVITY	START DATE	BENCHMARK/ACHIEVEMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECTED COMPLETION/ CURRENT STATUS
Evaluate Year Three GPS Achievements	Administer student attitude surveys (CCSSE in alternating years, Freshman Experience Survey each semester, Course evaluation each semester)	Fall 2017	Administer student surveys during each semester. The CCSSE is administered campus wide. The Freshman Experience Survey and course evaluation will be administered to GPS Seminar participants.	GPS Council, GPS Coach	Fall 2017– Spring 2018
	Complete Technology Skills Checklist for each GPS student	Fall 2017	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of participants will demonstrate proficiency in technology areas listed on the checklist.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2017– Ongoing (The checklist will be administered each semester as part of GPS Seminar. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)
	Evaluate GPS Portfolios	Fall 2017	Upon successful completion of GPS Seminar, 100% of GPS Seminar participants will achieve a satisfactory score on all four signature assignments.	GPS Coach, GPS Students	Fall 2017 – Ongoing (GPS Portfolios will be scored each semester. Data garnered will be used to refine GPS Seminar to improve student learning.)

Students, community, administration, faculty, and staff will all play an integral part in the success of “GPS: Navigate Your Future.” This timeline reflects our anticipated actions, the person(s) responsible, and dates for achieving the landmarks of our QEP. Adjustments to our timeline may occur as we review data and determine the best route for our journey toward student success.

Chapter 8: Organizational Structure

From the earliest stages of the QEP process, Team GPS actively sought the insight and participation of WSCC faculty, staff, students, and administration. The broad-based involvement of the College community served to build a strong framework for the QEP initiative. The following chapter expounds upon the organizational scaffolding required in order to implement “GPS: Navigate Your Future.”

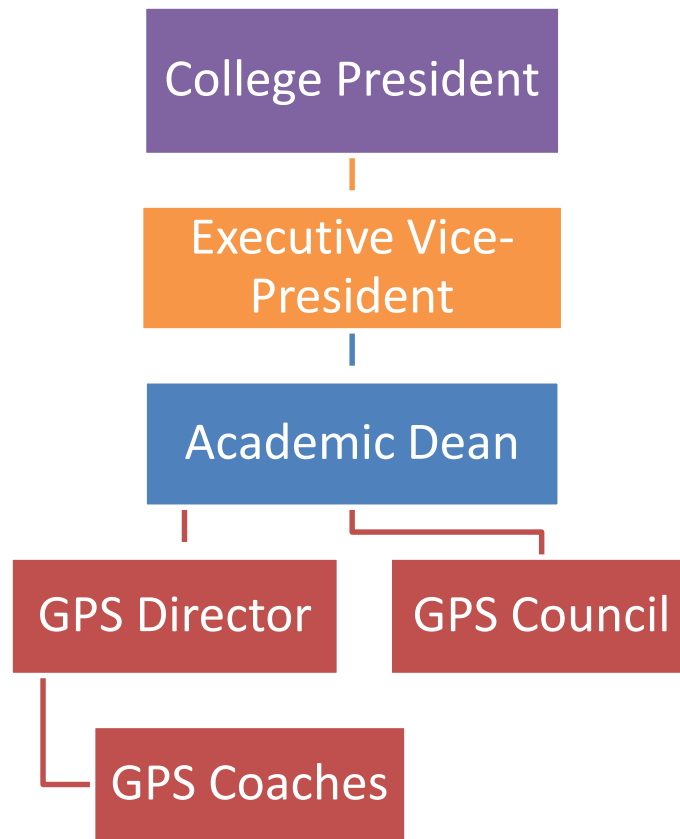
GPS Governance Structure

The GPS Seminar will be housed within WSCC’s Academic Division and will fall under the overall management responsibility of the Academic Dean. Once the QEP is approved, the GPS Director will be named and will report directly to the Academic Dean. To guide the effectiveness of the GPS Seminar, the GPS Director will be advised by a GPS Council, comprised of individuals recommended by Team GPS and appointed by the President. The GPS Director will serve as chairperson of the GPS Council. The GPS Council will have the following responsibilities:

- Provide general oversight of the GPS Seminar curriculum, assessment procedures, and faculty during the initial launch of GPS Seminar (years 1-4)
- Collect and analyze (in conjunction with eLearning, College Dean’s Office, and the Academic Dean’s Office) assessment data relating to GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios
- Provide feedback and reports on this project to the President and the Executive Cabinet
- Offer guidance and recommendations to administration and faculty relating to GPS Seminar and GPS Portfolios

Figure 8.1 shows the organizational chart for GPS.

Figure 8.1 GPS Organizational Chart



Composition of the GPS Council

The GPS Council will include faculty and staff who have expertise in teaching, technology, advising, and career planning. The GPS Council members will be recommended by Team GPS and appointed by President following the SACSCOC site visit in October 2014. The GPS Council will include the following College personnel:

- A chairperson (the GPS Director)
- A student representative
- An administrative representative
- The Director of Advising
- A transitional learning representative
- An eLearning representative
- A technical faculty member
- An academic faculty member
- A health faculty member
- An advising representative
- A GPS coach

This council will be appointed during the fall 2014 semester and will take over from Team GPS upon approval of the QEP by SACSCOC. At that time, this group will become responsible for the implementation phase of the QEP.

GPS Coaches

Selection of appropriate coaches will be imperative in order for GPS Seminar to succeed. GPS coaches will need to be innovative, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, flexible, and student centered. The following requirements will apply to faculty in the GPS Seminar:

- All GPS coaches will participate in professional development— with emphasis on HIPS, ePortfolios, and advising.
- All GPS coaches will hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree.

Figure 8.2 Organization of the GPS Seminar – Significant Actors and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Academic Dean	Advising GPS Seminar Employees
GPS Director	Scheduling, Organizing Faculty, Budget Decisions, Structuring and Revising GPS Seminar, Holding GPS Coaches’ Meetings, Overall Assessments of GPS Seminar Courses, Reporting to the GPS Council and College President, Advising Students
GPS Coaches (Faculty)	Teaching GPS Seminar Courses, Advising Students, Attending GPS Coaches’ Meetings, Assessing Student Progress
GPS Lab Assistant	Providing Technology Support for GPS Students, Assisting Students with Technology Needs

Significant Actors in the GPS Seminar Initiative

Students

Through CCSSE results, discussions with student organizations, student surveys, and student representation on the GPS Council, students play a major role in “GPS: Navigate Your Future.” Our QEP focuses on student learning. Students will provide both survey data and GPS Portfolio data that will help us to tune and refine the GPS Seminar throughout the course of our QEP.

Deans

In addition to the campus personnel listed in Figure 8.1, this initiative will require broad-based campus support. Although the governance for the initiative will fall under the office of the Academic Dean, the support of other division deans will be crucial in the success of GPS. Also, as the QEP Team’s liaison to the Executive Cabinet and the individual whose office is responsible for data gathering, the College Dean will play a key role during the implementation phase.

Directors

Further support will be required from the Director of eLearning, who, along with his staff, will be instrumental in the GPS Portfolio launch and maintenance. Both the pilot for GPS Seminar and a number of sections of the full implementation will enroll students who are served by the Transitional Learning Division, so the Director of Transitional Learning must be involved in the planning and implementation process. The Director of Advising will be responsible for overseeing the scheduling of advising staff as team teachers for GPS Seminar. The Director of Marketing, along with her staff, will be responsible for the campaign to promote “GPS: Navigate Your Future” both on our campus and to our college community as a whole.

Faculty and Staff

Faculty from all divisions will be involved – whether directly or indirectly – in GPS Seminar. These instructors may serve as coaches or guest lecturers for GPS Seminar sessions, contribute significant assignments to the GPS Portfolio, and/or collaborate with GPS Coaches on curricula and assignments within the GPS Seminar.

Advising staff will play a key role as team teachers within all sections of GPS Seminar.

Community Members

Professionals representing business and industry in our service area will be active participants in supporting the career piece of the GPS Seminar. As they complete the career research for GPS Seminar, students will seek advice and assistance from individuals who are already working in fields in which the students are interested. For example, one activity in GPS Seminar will be an interview with a professional in a field the student has chosen to research.

Secondary counselors and administrators in our service area were surveyed very early in the QEP topic selection process regarding barriers to student success. These professionals have guided our students through secondary school and can be a valuable resource of continued information about students’ strengths and weaknesses as entering freshmen.

Chapter 9: Resources

Wallace State Community College is committed to providing the financial and human resources, physical space, and technology needed for the success of the QEP. This goal is evidenced by the following commitments:

- Aligning the QEP with the College mission and Five-Year Strategic Plan and support of administration, faculty, and staff
- Reallocating existing funding to support the QEP (Tuition monies for GPS Seminar)
- Providing adequate human resources for GPS Seminar instruction and support
- Providing adequate and strategically located space and technology resources for GPS Seminar courses
- Providing ongoing technical support to students and faculty for ePortfolio training

Alignment with College Mission and Strategic Plan

As mentioned in previous chapters, our QEP is strongly aligned with the College Mission and Five-Year Strategic Plan. The major focus of both initiatives is student success – helping WSCC students achieve their academic and career goals. Administration, faculty, and staff have been kept abreast of the progress of the QEP at each step of the process and have consistently expressed commitment to GPS Seminar as a confirmation of the College Mission and Strategic Plan. At a QEP Team meeting held in December 2013, Dr. Vicki Karolewics emphasized the importance of creating a sustainable and self-supporting gateway experience for WSCC students. This support was echoed by the President’s Cabinet.

Reallocation of Existing Funds to Support the QEP

Figure 9.1 presents the projected expenditures and revenues for GPS Seminar over a five-year period.

Expenditures	YEAR 1 (Pilot Year) 2014-2015	YEAR 2 2015-2016	YEAR 3 2016-2017	YEAR 4 2017-2018	TOTAL
GPS Director	\$32,180 ^a	\$123,516 ^a	\$123,516 ^a	\$123,516 ^a	\$402,728
GPS Coaches	\$0 ^b	\$23,400 ^b	\$23,400 ^b	\$23,400 ^b	\$70,200
GPS Lab Assistant	\$16,118-\$28,957 ^c	\$38,684-\$69,496 ^c	\$38,684-\$69,496 ^c	\$38,684-\$69,496 ^c	\$132,170 - \$237,445
ePortfolio Platform	\$21,000 ^d	N/A ^d	N/A ^d	N/A ^d	\$21,000
On-campus Workshops	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$6,000
Training Materials and Supplies	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$2,000
CCSSE	N/A	\$7,400	N/A	\$7,400	\$14,800
Promotional Materials	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$4,500
External Evaluator	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$4,500
Copying Costs	\$2,000	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$5,600
Office Supplies	\$800	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$2,300
				TOTAL	\$665,798 - \$771,073

^a Based on salary and benefits for Dr. Kathy Buckelew, named GPS Director in January 2015. Full-time posting begins October 1, 2015 (YEAR 2). The YEAR 1 cost is based on release time for Dr. Buckelew and a second instructor.

^b Based on the published institutional payment for a one-credit-hour faculty overload; 66 estimated sections less 14 taught by GPS Director: 52 x \$450 = \$23,400 annual cost.

^c Based on beginning May 1 (salary and benefits pro-rated for May 1 through September 30. (Fiscal year begins October 1).

^d YEAR 1 cost will be paid by the institution. YEAR 2 through YEAR 4, a \$33 fee, covering two years of use, is assessed for students at time of enrollment in GPS course.

Providing Adequate Human Resources

As described in “Chapter 6,” GPS Seminar will require a GPS Director, a number of faculty coaches, and a GPS Lab Assistant. The cost for GPS coaches will be the cost of a one-hour faculty overload. The salaries for all personnel will be adequately covered by GPS Seminar tuition funds as indicated on the budget on page 66. GPS Seminar faculty will receive professional development training in high impact practices, including ePortfolio technology. The funding sources for professional development expenditures will be derived from GPS Seminar tuition and monies already allocated to professional development by the College. To broaden and enrich instruction, faculty from all divisions will be invited to share their knowledge and expertise with GPS Seminar students – an investment of time and effort by faculty and staff that will not require funding from the college.

Provision of Adequate Space and Technology

In 2014 construction was completed on the new Health and Life Sciences Building, opening space across the College and providing much needed office and classroom space for other departments and divisions. The shifting and reallocation of offices and classrooms around the campus will allow adequate space for GPS Seminar classes without additional cost to the College. Computer labs, located in a number of buildings across the campus, will provide sufficient computers for GPS students and may be scheduled for their use as needed, also without additional cost to the college.

GPS Portfolios are an important element of the GPS Seminar. To provide our students with a quality product that evolves with students as they progress in their education and career endeavors, WSCC will have students pay in Years 3, 4, and 5 a small GPS Portfolio fee to cover the cost of Digication, a format chosen by the QEP Team as the best and most cost-efficient ePortfolio product currently available (see Figure 9.1). Student fees will cover the cost of ePortfolios with no additional cost to the College. Note that in the first year of implementation (Year 2), the college will provide this service at no cost to students.

Providing Ongoing Technology Training and Support

Because a lack of technology skills was identified as a barrier to student success, providing ongoing technology and ePortfolio training and support is an important focus of the GPS Seminar. WSCC’s eLearning Department currently offers free eHow workshops for students, faculty, and staff. eHow workshops target specific technology skills, software programs, and Blackboard assistance and support. They are offered at various times to meet the needs of a broad range of schedules. GPS Seminar students will be encouraged to take advantage of these eHow opportunities during their GPS Seminar experience – and throughout their tenure at WSCC. This technology training and support is currently in place and will not require additional funding from the College.

Summary

WSCC will reallocate adequate funding over a five-year period to implement the QEP. We have also tentatively identified strategically located space for GPS Seminar courses, as well as established computer labs that may be used by GPS seminar students. Staffing needs for GPS Seminar will include a GPS Seminar Division Chairperson and full-time and adjunct faculty members teaching a one-credit-hour overload. GPS Seminar faculty will be trained in HIPs and ePortfolio technology with funds allocated for the QEP and described in Figure 9.1. These resources, facilities, personnel, and professional development workshops will provide the institutional capability needed to support and sustain our QEP. Dr. Karolewics has reviewed the resources and approved the budget for Year 1 of GPS Seminar.

Chapter 10: Assessment for Continuous Improvement

The knowledge and skills that students acquire throughout their college careers have a direct impact on their future success. For this reason, it is imperative that colleges ensure quality educational experiences through administering effective assessments and using assessment results to improve student learning. To evaluate student learning in GPS Seminar, a strong, comprehensive assessment plan will be developed and refined as part of the QEP process. This chapter describes the multi-faceted strategy for assessing student learning (direct and indirect and formative and summative assessments) and the QEP's four student learning goals and outcomes and the methods and materials that will be used to assess each outcome. Additionally, benchmarks for each SLO will be presented as well as how GPS faculty and the GPS Council will use this data to continuously improve the student learning experience in the GPS Seminar.

Types of Assessments

A **direct measure** evaluates student performance by examining samples of student work. This type of assessment allows instructors to capture a sample of what students can do, providing strong evidence of student learning. Examples of direct assessments include student writing assignments, research-based assignments, performance checklists, and ePortfolios. In contrast, an **indirect measure** is based upon a report of perceived student learning. These reports can come from a variety of perspectives, including those of students, faculty, staff and other members of the college community. Indirect measures can enable us to glean information about what students are learning and how this learning is valued by diverse constituencies. Examples of indirect measures include student and faculty surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

In addition to direct and indirect measurements, GPS Seminar will also utilize formative and summative assessments. **Formative assessments** monitor student performance with on-going evaluations of student work. Because formative assessments provide consistent feedback throughout a course, students can use this information to identify their strengths and weaknesses and address areas or skills that need work. Formative assessments also help instructors recognize gaps in student learning and address problems immediately.

Summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning at the conclusion of an instructional component by comparing it against an established standard or benchmark. The goal of summative assessments is to make an evaluation of student competency after an instructional phase is complete.

A strong, comprehensive assessment framework is vital to the success of the Wallace State Community College's QEP. By using a wide variety of assessment measurements that are aligned with the GPS Seminar student learning outcomes, GPS Seminar has the potential to provide our students with knowledge and skills that will help them effectively navigate their college journey. Table 10.1 identifies the GPS Seminar student learning outcomes and the direct assessment instruments that will be used to measure the effectiveness of each outcome. This chart also identifies each measurement as a formative or summative assessment. Table 10.2 describes the indirect measurements that will be used to evaluate student success and the impact of the GPS Seminar on learning.

Figure 10.1 GPS Seminar Student Learning Goals and Outcomes and Measurements

GPS Seminar Student Learning Goals and Outcomes	Direct Measurements
1. Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multi-media principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS Technology Check-Offs (Appendix 9)
2. Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS Program of Study Graphic (Appendix 8)
3. Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS Photo Essay Rubric (Appendix 8)
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS Photo Essay Rubric (Appendix 8)

Table 10.2 Indirect Measurements

Indirect Measure	Measurement Schedule
CCSSE Survey	CCSEE Surveys are administered in alternating spring semesters to returning students.
Student Forums	Student forums on the learning experiences provided by GPS Seminar and other topics will be conducted each semester.
Student Surveys	Course surveys will be conducted at the end of each GPS course.
External Review	Annual comprehensive review by qualified practitioner

According to the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, a growing number of the nation’s community colleges “are focusing on assessment because they recognize the need to improve progression and retention of their students and because they accept the mandate to prepare students well for the workforce, for transfer, and for the demands of educated citizenship” (2011). The broad-based and multi-faceted plan developed by the QEP team to assess the GPS Seminar and ePortfolio reflects this focus on student learning and success.

Establishing Benchmarks of Success

Establishing benchmarks to measure success of student learning and identify weaknesses or gaps in student skills or knowledge is a vital element in Wallace State’s QEP. Benchmarks also allow faculty to make adjustments to their teaching practices and activities. The benchmarks established for selected GPS Seminar learning activities are described in Figure 10.3.

Figure 10.3 Measuring the Success of the Quality Enhancement Plan

GPS Learning Objective	Performance Instrument	Assessment Schedule	Benchmark	Current Status
1. Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multi-media principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Seminar Student Technology Skills Checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once per semester near the beginning of GPS Seminar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students will satisfactorily complete all items on the technology skills checklist as indicated by instructor sign-offs. 	
2. Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Program of Study Graphic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the middle of the GPS course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students will design a satisfactory (defined as "C" or better) graphic depiction of their academic pathway, including courses and timeline, as measured against the departmental rubric. 	
3. Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Photo Essay Rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the middle of the GPS course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students will achieve a passing score (defined as "C" or better) on the career pathway photo essay as measured against the departmental rubric. 	
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Photo Essay Rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the last quarter of GPS course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students will achieve a passing score (defined as "C" or better) on a photo essay on 	

about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.			homelessness as measured against the departmental rubric.	
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Plotting the Course for Success

A popular anecdote about the life of Albert Einstein describes how, when Einstein was approximately five years old, his father showed him a compass (American Museum of Natural History, 2014). Young Einstein was fascinated with the movement of the needle. Years later, his description of the event was as follows: "That experience made a deep and lasting impression on me Something deeper had to be hidden behind things." Einstein's early experience with the compass set him on a path to discovery and success. In fact, Einstein became so successful that he is arguably the most recognized person in American history. Einstein's first encounter with the compass was powerful and relevant to him and served to guide him both literally and figuratively as he sought answers to the mysteries of science and embarked on an amazing journey toward a distinguished career. Wallace State envisions our QEP initiative as the modern equivalent of Einstein's compass for our students. When students arrive on our campus, we want to offer them a tool that guides them, sparks their interest, and leads them to reflect, question, and create as they establish their own paths to success: "GPS (Goals-Planning-Success): Navigate Your Future."

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Chapter 12: Appendices

Appendix 1: WSCC Faculty and Staff Forum Excerpts

Excerpted Comments from Faculty Round Table Forums – January 2011

When asked about major areas where they felt WSCC could improve student learning, faculty and staff responded with the following comments (broken down here by major areas that were identified).

A Need for Better Orientation Experiences

“Students need to be more informed – make ORI course better.”
“floundering students . . . arrive on campus with few skills . . . increase role of orientation”
“change orientation”
“Hire someone to be an orientation teacher!”
“Beef up orientation.”
“Orientation training”
“People need to understand how important it is.”
“Hire someone to be an orientation teacher!”
“Work closely with instructors to make sure that the students know what is needed”
“Make this a **department** and not volunteerism.”

A Need for More Frequent and Intentional Advising

“Targeted advisement, more advising, more advisors”
“One-on-one advising”
“Strong need for in-depth advising”
“advising and preparing students”
“making sure they are meeting with their advisors”
“require students to see advisor to get a 2 year plan”

A Need for More Technology Experiences

“Fear of failure and technology”
“lack of computer skills, technology, etc.”
“They are intimidated by technology.”
“PLEASE OFFER A BASIC SKILLS COMPUTER CLASS.”
“Include computer literacy [in orientation].”
“Activity for basic skills for online learning”
“Navigate through Blackboard”
“Skills test or assessment to get into an online class”

A Need for More Career Exploration/Guidance

“[S]tudents need more career guidance.”
“career choice”
“help them with their career path”
“. . . motivate them towards a future career”
“Career counseling”
“More exposure to career opportunities”
Allow students “to experience career opportunities.”
“In conjunction with orientation, take career class, linking with other communities with Skype, going to businesses and making visits, instructors available for workshops and visits, advising”
“Career exploration”
“Orientation should contain a strong career component.”
“Professional dress”

Appendix 2: Survey of Service Area Principals and Advisors

WSCC QEP Topic Survey-High School Principals - Spring 2011

Wallace State Community College is in the early stages of preparation for the next SACS reaffirmation of accreditation. As a major component of the process the College will be preparing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), which will address student learning and success. The College has identified the QEP focus, which will potentially address student preparation for college, improve high school to college transition, and increase college success and retention.

Your completion of this survey will assist the College in narrowing the focus for the QEP while giving insight into how the College and Secondary Education Programs in our service area can collaborate to enhance student success.

Q1 Using a rating of 5 for "Most Important" and 1 for "Least Important," rank the statements listed below as you feel they relate to student success.

5 4 3 2 1

1. Provide assistance in the early identification of college-bound students (9th-10th grade.)

2. Provide pre-assessment to determine readiness for college-level courses and provide assistance to enhance social growth necessary for college success.

3. Collaborate with the high schools to determine the need for an academy for upper level high school students/college prep program to be facilitated by the College.

4. Provide assistance to prepare students for ACT and COMPASS testing for college placement.

5. Collaborate to identify curriculum standards needed to prepare students for college-level courses in English and Math through the establishment of faculty teams specialized in these disciplines.

6. Provide assistance in career exploration through utilization of WSCC virtual reality labs and other technological resources for exposure to real-world job skills/opportunities in academic, health, and technical programs.

7. Provide additional career coaches to work with college-bound students and facilitate parental involvement.

8. Provide assistance to college-bound students to strengthen technology skills to include basic computer programs/software such as Microsoft Office and Blackboard as a component of the WSCC college-prep program.

9. Provide program-specific checklists for guidance counselors to utilize in assisting college-bound students, which would include the following recommendations: deadlines, admission requirements, prerequisite courses, and other program-specific selection criteria.

Q2 Please provide additional comments and suggestions.

Appendix 3: Student Survey

QEP Topic Student Survey-Preparation for College Success Spring 2011

Your completion of this survey will assist the College in narrowing the focus for the Quality Enhancement Plan as a part of the accreditation process. This will also give insight into how the College and High Schools in our service area can work together to improve student success in college.

Q1	When did you decide you were going to attend college?	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade	Not sure
Q2	QEP Insight	YES	NO	Not Sure	N/A	
	Did you prepare academically to attend college by taking necessary high school classes that would prepare you to enter college level courses?					
	Were English and math college preparation (advanced) courses offered at your high school?					
	If they were not offered, do you think it would have been beneficial if college preparation courses had been available?					
	Was there assistance (classes or study sessions) available to help you prepare for the ACT and/or Compass (College Placement) test?					
	If assistance was available, did you take advantage of the service?					
	When you were choosing your major (area of study) for college, did your high school adequately inform you of your career options?					
	In high school, were you exposed to real-world job skills/opportunities in academics, health and technical programs that helped you choose a major?					
	Were Career Coaches available at your high school?					
	If Career Coaches were available at your high school, did they assist you in establishing a career path and help you build a schedule of courses needed?					
	If Career Coaches were available at your high school, did they adequately provide you information needed to determine your major?					
	During high school, were tools such as KUDAR, Alabama Career Success kits, or other resources available to help choose your major?					
	If available, what tool did you use?					
Q3	QEP Insight	YES	NO	Not Sure	N/A	
	Upon graduation from high school, I had adequate technology skills needed for college-level courses.					
	My parents/guardians were involved in my transition from high school to college?					
	Upon graduation, I understood my role, responsibilities, and expectations required for college success.					
	Upon graduation, I had a clear understanding of my role, responsibilities and expectations required for personal growth, social growth, and college success.					
Q4	Please provide any additional information that you have learned in your high school to college experience that would be helpful for high school students to know before entering college.					

Freshman Seminar

A Bridge to Success



Wallace State Community College – Hanceville

2012
WSCC QEP Team

Freshman Seminar

A Bridge to Success

Part I: Background and Rationale (The Need for a Bridge)

WSCC requires that entering students take a freshman orientation class. For Academic Division students who do not test into transitional courses, the class is a one-credit-hour course designated "Orientation 101." For technical students and students who test into transitional courses, the class is a two-credit-hour course titled "Orientation 103." In the past, orientation courses have been taught as mini-term and full-semester classes. However, WSCC has made a recent transition to a one-day orientation format for Orientation 101 and a two-day format for Orientation 103. Currently, the curricula for these courses focus on such topics as test-taking skills, learning strategies, time management, and other similar content, along with housekeeping tasks such as getting student ID's and becoming familiar with campus. These topics are all important and necessary, but are they enough to ensure the success of our transitional students?

Recent WSCC data indicate that students who matriculate into our institution via transitional courses are not making a successful transition into for-credit coursework. These students often arrive on our campus underprepared and may find themselves easily discouraged. Many young people arriving on campus directly from high school are underprepared for the challenges they will face as college students. Some are also first-generation college students, who may not know how to "do" college and who lack mentors that can guide them in this process. Additionally, transitional courses include nontraditional students, who may need to develop a sense of place on our campus. The diversity of population in our transitional courses is vast.

The abyss between transitional students and success is wide and treacherous. Therefore, ACC&U's Dr. Tia McNair, Senior Director for Student Success, Office of Engagement, Inclusion and Success urged our team to focus on our transitional students and to develop an on-campus student success project as we prepare for our upcoming QEP and SACS accreditation process. Since transitional education is the bridge to continued education, constructive employment, and full participation in society, the bridge that we need to build in order to cross this gap involves significant enhancement of our current orientation format for transitional learners. If we want to promote a journey of completion for our transitional students, we must design and build a strong, innovative bridge that spans this gap. Through an orientation redesign infused with high-impact practices, WSCC can provide the bridge these students need in order to succeed.

Our Transitional Learning Department was created several years ago to address the unique needs of students who place into transitional courses. Much research and restructuring were involved in this process, and transitional courses were removed from the oversight of their respective academic departments. The courses were then placed under the umbrella of "transitional learning" in an attempt to better address the needs of this population. Based on recent statistical data from WSCC's Institutional Research Department, WSCC's transitional learners need additional support in order to be retained and to be successful in post-transitional courses. According to George Kuh (2008), "educational research suggests [that high-impact practices] increase rates of student retention and student engagement." Therefore, we recommend establishing a Freshman Seminar that would incorporate high-impact practices (e.g., service learning, e-portfolios, research, writing, internships), along with intensive advising and peer mentoring. Freshman Seminar (which is considered a high-impact practice in itself) could provide the enhanced student support these students need.

Part 2: Project Description and Goals (Designing the Bridge)

"Freshman Seminar: A Bridge to Success" is a course re-design that will incorporate enhanced overall student support (such as student coaching, peer mentoring, and intentional advising). Freshman Seminar will require high-impact practices, such as research and reflection. For example, each student will be required to complete a semester-long career/field project that entails research, significant reflective writing, and community involvement. Students will also be involved in collaborative activities and assignments throughout the course. A facilitator will be responsible for each Freshman Seminar course, and guest experts will develop and present modules focusing on essential skills and strategies for college success. An English instructor, for example, might develop and present a module on responsible research prior to students embarking on the career/field project, and an e-learning expert might develop and present a module on Blackboard navigation. All facilitators and experts will be trained in high-impact practices and will be exemplary, innovative instructors.

In order for WSCC to raise the educational attainment levels among its transitional students, a new way of thinking—a collective vision—must be implemented college wide. First, more transitional students need to be retained through their first year of college. This retention is difficult at best because failure rates among underserved students in transitional courses are alarming. Second, because these courses are prerequisites for later classes, transitional students must not only complete them but must also effectively master the skills and knowledge provided by the courses. We believe many students become frustrated when attempting to navigate the challenges of matriculation and often find themselves overwhelmed. The goal of “Freshman Seminar: A Bridge to Success” is to provide the support needed to prepare and equip students with the information and skills needed not only to survive but also to enjoy the college experience.

Student Goals

- Foster students' ability to navigate the college experience successfully.
- Use peer mentoring and student coaching to aid students in meeting the challenges of college life.
- Establish relationships with advisors, instructors, mentors, and peers that promote a sense of community and self-efficacy.
- Equip students with the technology, time management, listening, organization, and communication skills to navigate the college experience.
- Better prepare transitional students for the rigors of college-level curricula.
- Engage students in high-impact practices that foster connection and collaboration.
- Incorporate purposeful learning activities that connect Freshman Seminar with other coursework.

Institutional Goals

- Prepare students for college-level work so that they will persist and complete their programs of study.
- Develop a Freshman Seminar course infused with high-impact practices.
- Align the curriculum of Freshman Seminar with WSCC's Student Learning Outcomes: thinking critically, learning actively, using technology effectively, and interacting in a diverse environment.

Part 3: Barriers and Challenges to Accomplishment (Construction Delays)

- Stakeholder resistance
- Staffing and scheduling issues
- Logistical barriers

Part 4: Opportunities for Support (Abutments)

- QEP Team
- Transitional Learning Department
- ACTION Center Staff
- Faculty, Staff, and Administration
- eLearning Department
- Master Teacher

Part 5: Engagement Plan for Stakeholders (Spans)

- Professional development for faculty, staff, and administration
- Employee meetings
- Cross-divisional collaboration sessions
- Student focus groups

Part 6: Communication Strategy (Publicizing the Bridge)

- Web presence
- Local media
- On-campus communication (Lions' Pride, Campus E-mail, Digital Signage, SGA News Clips)
- Publicity materials (Posters, Campus Catalog, Schedule, *The Mane Issue*)

Part 7: Actions and Timeline (Building the Bridge)

- QEP Architects schedule conference with college president (Summer 2012).
- QEP Architects present to the full QEP Team and QEP Advisory Committee (Summer 2012).
 - Potential re-focusing of one QEP prong
 - Need for changes and high-impact practices

- QEP Architects hold conference with WSCC Executive Cabinet (Summer 2012).
- QEP Team conducts student and faculty focus groups (Fall 2012).
- President appoints/selects Freshman Seminar staff (Fall 2012).
 - Facilitators
 - Module instructors
 - Director/Chairperson
- QEP Team, QEP Advisory Committee, and Freshman Seminar staff develop Freshman Seminar curriculum and materials (Fall 2012).
 - Partner with instructional designers to develop online components of the course.
 - Garner Title III support for the project.
 - Team with Advanced Visualization Center to develop 3-D stereoscopic objects and materials.
 - Collaborate (Transitional Learning, Curriculum Committee, QEP Team, Freshman Seminar staff and faculty) to develop curriculum.
- QEP Team representatives address WSCC faculty and staff at employee meeting (Fall 2012).
 - Campus-wide meeting to introduce the plan to faculty and staff stakeholders
 - Introduction to high-impact practices
- QEP Team representatives and WSCC Marketing staff develop a marketing strategy plan (Fall 2012).
 - Partner with the Marketing and Public Relations Department in . . .
 - development of the marketing strategy plan.
 - implementation and distribution of marketing materials to promote the project.
- QEP Team representatives and WSCC Professional Development Committee design and facilitate initial professional development for faculty and staff (Spring 2013).
 - Create and deliver . . .
 - informational sessions for faculty and staff at-large.
 - training for High-Impact Practices for faculty and staff facilitating sections of content.
- Director of e-Learning and Director of Information Services create reporting structures and curricular adjustments needed for enrollment, evidence-collection, and scheduling of Freshman Seminar (Spring 2013).
 - Develop needed programming and reports to validate success of the project.
 - Update rules for enrollment of students within developed course.
- Transitional students, QEP Team, Freshman Seminar facilitators, guest experts, e-learning staff, and administration pilot Freshman Seminar (Summer 2013).
- Transitional students, QEP Team, Freshman Seminar facilitators, guest experts, e-learning staff, and administration implement Freshman Seminar for all first-semester transitional students (Fall 2014).

Part 8: Evidence of Success (Crossing the Bridge)

- Increased retention of students within transitional courses
 - Assessment: withdrawal data, grades, student satisfaction surveys
- Increased matriculation to subsequent gateway courses
 - Assessment: enrollment data (repeaters, registrants in gateway courses)
- Increased success of students within the subsequent gateway courses
 - Assessment: retention data, grades
- Increased overall retention of students within the project's cohort
 - Assessment: withdrawal/enrollment data
- Employer satisfaction with WSCC completers
 - Assessment: focus groups, phone surveys, mail/e-mail surveys
- Alignment of needs and essential learning outcomes as defined by employers
 - Assessment: employer advisory committees (a.k.a. craft committees); CAWS (Cullman Area Workforce Solutions); national, regional, and state employer surveys

Appendix 6: Salary Schedules D-1 and E3

Alabama Community and Technical Colleges

Schedule D-1

Full-time Instructors, Counselors and Librarians 2013-2014

Action Item _____

6/27/2013

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Rank	Salary Step	Salary Step												
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	10	15	20	25	27
IV	9-Month	50,437	51,771	53,105	54,439	55,774	57,108	58,442	59,777	61,111	65,114	69,117	73,120	74,454
	Summer	15,573	15,987	16,401	16,815	17,229	17,643	18,057	18,471	18,886	20,128	21,370	22,612	23,026
III	12 Month	66,009	67,758	69,506	71,255	73,003	74,751	76,500	78,248	79,996	85,242	90,487	95,732	97,480
	9-Month	45,404	46,739	48,073	49,407	50,742	52,076	53,410	54,744	56,079	59,548	63,017	66,487	67,821
II	Summer	14,016	14,430	14,844	15,258	15,672	16,086	16,500	16,915	17,329	18,405	19,481	20,559	20,973
	12 Month	59,420	61,169	62,917	64,665	66,414	68,162	69,911	71,659	73,407	77,953	82,498	87,046	88,794
IA	9-Month	41,741	43,075	44,409	45,744	47,078	48,412	49,746	51,081	52,415	55,084	57,752	60,421	61,755
	Summer	12,885	13,299	13,713	14,127	14,541	14,955	15,369	15,784	16,198	17,026	17,854	18,682	19,096
IB	12 Month	54,626	56,374	58,122	59,871	61,619	63,368	65,116	66,864	68,613	72,109	75,606	79,103	80,851
	9-Month	38,077	39,411	40,746	42,080	43,414	44,748	46,083	47,417	48,751	51,420	54,089	56,757	58,091
IC	Summer	11,756	12,170	12,584	12,998	13,412	13,827	14,241	14,655	15,069	15,897	16,725	17,553	17,967
	12 Month	49,833	51,581	53,330	55,078	56,827	58,575	60,323	62,072	63,820	67,317	70,814	74,310	76,059
IA	9-Month	34,414	35,749	37,083	38,417	39,752	41,086	42,420	43,754	45,089	47,757	50,426	53,094	54,429
	Summer	10,626	11,040	11,454	11,868	12,283	12,697	13,111	13,525	13,939	14,767	15,595	16,423	16,838
IB	12 Month	45,041	46,789	48,537	50,286	52,034	53,782	55,531	57,279	59,028	62,524	66,021	69,518	71,266
	9-Month	34,414	35,749	37,083	38,417	39,752	41,086	42,420	43,754	45,089	47,757	50,426	53,094	54,429
IC	Summer	10,626	11,040	11,454	11,868	12,283	12,697	13,111	13,525	13,939	14,767	15,595	16,423	16,838
	12 Month	45,041	46,789	48,537	50,286	52,034	53,782	55,531	57,279	59,028	62,524	66,021	69,518	71,266

Alabama Community and Technical Colleges

Schedule E1 to E5

Full-Time Support Personnel 40 Hours Per Week 2013-2014

Action Item _____

6/27/2013

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Salary Schedule	Grade	Salary Step												
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	10	15	20	25	27
E1	01	45,883	46,776	47,670	48,563	49,456	50,350	51,243	52,137	53,030	54,817	56,604	58,391	59,284
E1	02	41,420	42,313	43,207	44,100	44,994	45,887	46,780	47,674	48,567	50,354	52,141	53,928	54,821
E2	02	41,420	42,313	43,207	44,100	44,994	45,887	46,780	47,674	48,567	50,354	52,141	53,928	54,821
E2	03	36,958	37,851	38,745	39,638	40,532	41,425	42,319	43,212	44,105	45,892	47,679	49,466	50,360
E3	03	36,958	37,851	38,745	39,638	40,532	41,425	42,319	43,212	44,105	45,892	47,679	49,466	50,360
E3	04	32,494	33,387	34,281	35,174	36,068	36,961	37,854	38,748	39,641	41,428	43,215	45,002	45,896
E3	05	28,032	28,925	29,819	30,712	31,606	32,499	33,393	34,286	35,179	36,966	38,753	40,540	41,434
E4	05	28,032	28,925	29,819	30,712	31,606	32,499	33,393	34,286	35,179	36,966	38,753	40,540	41,434
E4	06	23,568	24,461	25,355	26,248	27,142	28,035	28,929	29,822	30,715	32,502	34,289	36,076	36,970
E5	06	23,568	24,461	25,355	26,248	27,142	28,035	28,929	29,822	30,715	32,502	34,289	36,076	36,970
E5	07	22,678	23,571	24,464	25,358	26,251	27,145	28,038	28,932	29,825	31,612	33,399	35,186	36,079

Appendix 7: Master Syllabus and Course Timeline for GPS Seminar



ORI 110 - 1 Credit Hour CONTACT INFORMATION

Your instructor will provide you with his/her contact information. If you are having difficulty with this course, you should contact your instructor. If the issue cannot be resolved with your instructor, you should contact Dr. Kathy Buckelew, GPS Director, at 256.352.8192 or kathy.buckelew@wallacestate.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to research, analyze, and explore their career and educational plans, to create a personalized plan of study, and to develop and enhance their technology skills. As a significant part of the course, students will create an ePortfolio to document their learning journeys and to provide a place for showcasing their best work. Students will also develop a strong plan of study.

COURSE DESIGN

This course utilizes the computer, the Internet, and the course packet for completing assignments. Assignments will be posted either in Blackboard or Digiication (ePortfolio) or both. Occasionally, an assignment may require emailing through your Wallace State email account. All assignments will have a presence on Blackboard, whether or not the completed task is posted there or elsewhere. The assignment link on Blackboard will instruct where it should be uploaded. All Blackboard assignments are uploaded to their respective links. Unless students are otherwise instructed, assignments are not emailed.

Your instructor will provide a dated schedule of class meetings and assignment deadlines for your course, which will be posted on Blackboard at the beginning of the semester.

This schedule will include a list of assignments, their possible point values, and their due dates. Please print the schedule for your class to help you to stay organized during the course of the semester.

WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

At WSCC, we expect students to achieve the following student learning outcomes:

- LO1. Learns actively
- LO2. Thinks critically
- LO3. Communicates clearly – written
- LO4. Communicates clearly – oral
- LO5. Uses technology
- LO6. Cultural awareness

These broad, institution-level learning outcomes provide the basis for our narrower GPS student learning goals and outcomes.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The following are the learning goals and outcomes for this course:

- GPS Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate collegiate mastery of the technology associated with multimedia principles and techniques as a foundation for academic achievement and personal reflection.
- GPS Learning Outcome 2: Students will design goal-directed educational plans contextualized for the contemporary college milieu.
- GPS Learning Outcome 3: Students will analyze the interrelationship between career planning and learning through career explorations that reflect adaptive personal and professional opportunity and growth.
- GPS Learning Outcome 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and transformationally about themselves and their place in the post-modern social and cultural environment.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS COVERED

1. Technology (collegiate technology needed for student success)
2. Academic Pathways and Advising (developing your plan of study)
3. Careers (researching career pathways and preparing for a career)
4. Diversity (celebrating the things that make us unique)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There is a required binder for this course to be purchased in the campus bookstore.

Other materials required are listed below:

- reliable and dependable access to a computer and to the Internet; FireFox browser recommended as other browsers may cause problems with accessing and uploading assignments through Blackboard
- a current version (2007 or more recent) of Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint
- Adobe Reader (downloadable for free at the Adobe website)
- USB (flash/jump) drive for saving your documents
- money loaded on your Lion Card for on-campus printing services

Your instructor may require that you read a text or view a video as part of your assignment for Module 4.

If you do not have Internet access or any of the applications listed above, you will need to use labs on campus. Campus labs are equipped with the technology you need. A list of available lab facilities is available on your Blackboard course.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

In order to complete this course successfully, you must participate in the class, which includes attending class, in addition to checking the assignment schedule, Blackboard and student email, and the assignment links to stay on track with the progression of your work.

You are expected to accept responsibility for class content and for meeting all class assignment deadlines. All assignment due dates are posted on the assignment schedule, which is printable. Assignment due dates are also posted under each assignment's link.

Assignments are uploaded to their respective links by clicking on the assignment link and using the *attach file* browse button. They are not emailed unless otherwise instructed. All assignments are due on the date posted.

GRADING

All grades are accumulated for a total of points earned. There are 1,000 possible points in this course.

Signature Assignments

Signature Assignments for this course will be weighted to make up most of the points in the course. All instructors will require that students complete the four Signature Assignments. Of the 250 points required for each module, the Signature Assignment will carry the most weight. Signature Assignments will be graded using the departmental rubric and checklist.

Point Distribution

Module 1: 250 Points

Signature Assignment 1: Technology Skills Checklist (minimum of 200 points)
Additional Instructor-selected Assignment(s) (maximum of 50 points)

Module 2: 250 Points

Signature Assignment 2: Graphic Representation of Plan of Study (minimum of 200 points)
Additional Instructor-selected Assignment(s) (maximum of 50 points)

Module 3: 250 Points

Signature Assignment 3: Career Pathways Photo Essay (minimum of 200 points)
Additional Instructor-selected Assignment(s) (maximum of 50 points)

Module 4: 250 Points

Signature Assignment 4: Diversity Photo Essay (minimum of 200 points)
Additional Instructor-selected Assignment(s) (maximum of 50 points)

Points Required to Earn Each Letter Grade for the Term

900-1000 points = A
800-899 points = B
700-799 points = C
600-699 points = D
Below 600 points = F

Standard letter grading and points (as indicated in the *WSCC Catalog*) are used in this course.

Development of an acceptable GPS Portfolio will be required in order to earn a passing grade in the course. Each GPS Portfolio will include as a minimum each of the following items: a graphic representation of your plan of study, a career pathways photo essay, a completed Technology Skills Checklist, and a diversity photo essay.

The instructor reserves the right to reassign a grade on any assignment a student submits for this course.

Every student must earn a grade of “C” (70) or better on all Signature Assignments in order to earn credit for this course.

The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to the syllabus, the schedule, and/or the assignments.

Copies of the Evaluative Rubric for GPS Projects and the GPS Seminar Technology Skills Checklist are available via Blackboard and in your GPS Binder.

COLLEGE POLICIES

Academic Integrity Pledge:

“Ethical behavior is important to the foundation of Wallace State’s educational system. Students will be asked to make and sign a simple honor pledge on all work: ‘I pledge on my honor that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.’ Learning necessitates personal challenge and support, with individual students doing their own work under the tutelage of instructors.” [*Wallace State Community College Catalog*]

Academic Misconduct:

Any students participating in academic dishonesty are subject to the procedures and consequences outlined in the current *Wallace State Community College Catalog*. Any submitted assignment that appears to be a copy of another student’s work will necessitate that each student involved will receive a zero (0) score for that assignment. If the action continues, each student involved will receive an “F” for the course.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

Disability assistance is available for those who have disabilities that may prevent them from performing class assignments, as outlined in the *Wallace State Community College Catalog*.

The Director of Special Populations, Ms. Lisa Smith, is located on the 8th floor in the James C. Bailey Commerce Center. You may call (256) 352-8052 to reach Ms. Smith. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance.

Ethical Use of the Network/Internet and Email

The Wallace State Community College network is provided for use by students and is to be used for education only. The student is responsible for complying with the conditions of Internet usage as outlined in the *Wallace State Community College Catalog*.

Cell Phone Usage

Cell phones and other electronic communication devices are prohibited during class/lab. An emergency situation should be approved by the instructor before class. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the *Wallace State Community College Catalog*.

Student Dress Code

Students are expected to use mature judgment regarding proper dress and hygiene while on the WSCC campus, as outlined in the *Wallace State Community College Catalog*.

Public Health

In compliance with recommendations from the Alabama Department of Public Health, Wallace State Community College has in place programs to prevent and mitigate spread of the seasonal and H1N1 flu. Please assist us by frequently washing your hands, following posted guidelines to prevent the spread of flu, and using the hand sanitizer provided when entering and exiting each class. College students have been given priority for immunization against H1N1 flu by the CDC. WSCC encourages each student to obtain vaccinations for both the seasonal and H1N1 flu.

Make-up Work

According to the *Wallace State Community College Catalog*, "It is the decision of the instructor whether the student will be permitted to make up the class work missed." No make-up work will be given unless there is **valid documentation** for unavoidable absences: mandatory participation in WSCC activities, such as athletic or performing arts events; personal illness or accident; death of immediate family member(s); mandatory court appearances; and military service. An acceptable excuse must be brought to the instructor at the class meeting following the missed class(es). After the next meeting, the excuse will not be accepted. Routine doctor or dentist visits **are not excused**. If a student fails to attend class, it is his/her responsibility to obtain the covered assignment and to be prepared for the next class. The instructor will not re-teach the material. Without proper documentation, missed work will earn the grade of zero. All make-up work (without exception) will be given on a date and at a time and place specified by the instructor. A missed make-up assignment cannot be rescheduled.

Classroom Etiquette

Students may be dismissed from class for disruptive behavior (e.g., sleeping, routine tardiness, interrupting the instructor, or distracting other students). A student who is dismissed from class may not return to subsequent classes until he/she has attended a conference with the instructor and the GPS Director. If the behavior continues, the student will be referred for disciplinary action and may be permanently removed from the class.

Tardiness is unacceptable and may negatively affect your grade. Tardy students may not be permitted to make up quizzes or work that is already in progress when they arrive. Tardy students should wait until the instructor admits them before entering the classroom. If assignments are due at the beginning of class, and a student is tardy, his/her assignment may be penalized. After class is dismissed, it is left to the discretion of the instructor whether to accept a late assignment.

Students are expected to remain in class until they are dismissed by the instructor. Students who are ill or have other special circumstances should let the instructor know prior to class that it may be necessary for them to leave before class ends.

STUDENT SUCCESS RESOURCES

Advising Center	256-352-8040	Career counseling, study skills, academic planning
Assessment/Testing Center	256-352-8248	COMPASS and other testing services

Wallace State Library	256-352-8259	Research assistance and to obtain a card for the Alabama Virtual Library
Blackboard Help	256-352-8374	On-campus assistance for Blackboard issues
Lion Central One-Stop Enrollment Center	256-352-8238	The one-stop source for student information
Financial Aid	256-352-8182	Financial aid
WSCC Bookstore	256-352-8100	Textbooks and other supplies
Cashier	256-352-8141	Information about your student account

COURSE SCHEDULE

An overview of the course schedule is provided on the following page. Your instructor will provide a dated schedule of class meetings and assignment deadlines for your course, which will be posted on Blackboard at the beginning of the semester.

Class Meetings	Modules
Weeks 1-4	<p>Module 1: Technology Signature Assignment 1: Technology Skills Checklist</p> <p>These class sessions will focus on collegiate technology used on WSCC's campus (e.g., Blackboard, Ellucian, Digication ePortfolios, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint). Students will complete a technology skills checklist to demonstrate competency in collegiate technology.</p>
Weeks 5-8	<p>Module 2: Program of Study and Advising Signature Assignment 2: Graphic Representation of Plan of Study</p> <p>These class sessions will focus on developing a plan of study for completion of a credential at WSCC and preparation for transfer if applicable. Working with their advisors and independently, students will develop graphic representations of their plans of study.</p>
Weeks 9-12	<p>Module 3: Careers Signature Assignment 3: Career Pathways Photo Essay</p> <p>These class sessions will focus on career pathways and choices of major, with an emphasis on researching careers in students' respective areas of interest. As a part of this module, students will create career pathways photo essay projects that highlight careers in their areas of interest.</p>
Weeks 13-14	<p>Module 4: Diversity</p>

	<p>Signature Assignment 4: Diversity Photo Essay (Year 1: Emphasis on Homelessness) This year, our diversity emphasis will be homelessness. WSCC students will study the story of Liz Murray, a young woman who earned a scholarship to Harvard despite a number of challenges, including being homeless as a teenager. Murray’s autobiography, <i>Breaking Night</i>, was adapted into the movie <i>Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story</i>. Students will complete a photo essay focusing on homelessness as part of this module.</p>
<p>Weeks 15-16</p>	<p>GPS Portfolio Showcase Students will share their GPS Portfolio signature assignments with their peers during classroom presentations.</p>

Appendix 8: GPS Portfolio Rubric
Wallace State Community College GPS Portfolio Assessment Rubric

Evaluative Rubric for GPS Projects

Name of Student: _____

Semester: _____

Assignment:

- _____ Program of Study Graphic
- _____ Career Exploration Photo Essay
- _____ Diversity Photo Essay

Instructor Scoring:

A = Exceeds expectations C = Meets expectations F = Below expectations

Score	Definition
A: Exceeds Expectations	Project clearly demonstrates superior mastery of program principles incorporated into assignment. Student demonstrates knowledge of applicable tools and materials and is able to incorporate this knowledge into a project that exceeds simulated “real life” workplace expectations. No major errors and no more than one minor error are present.
C: Meets Expectations	Project demonstrates a basic level of mastery of program principles incorporated into assignment. Student demonstrates adequate knowledge of applicable tools and materials and is able to incorporate this knowledge into a project that meets simulated “real life” workplace expectations. No major errors and no more than four minor errors are present.
F: Below Expectations	Project fails to demonstrate a basic level of mastery of program principles incorporated into assignment. Student does not demonstrate adequate knowledge of applicable tools and materials and is not able to incorporate knowledge into a project that meets simulated “real life” workplace expectations. One or more major errors are present.

Appendix 9: Technology Skills Checklist

GPS Seminar Technology Skills Checklist

Skill Check boxes to indicate individual skill mastery.	Area 100% Completed
General Computer Skills (including minimum skills listed below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save a file to a computer and to a jump drive <input type="checkbox"/> • Retrieve a saved file <input type="checkbox"/> • Save a file in another format (e.g., Word file as PDF) <input type="checkbox"/> • Save a file to a specific area/folder <input type="checkbox"/> • Move files from location to location <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blackboard (including minimum skills listed below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log in <input type="checkbox"/> • Upload/attach a file <input type="checkbox"/> • Check and send Blackboard email/messages <input type="checkbox"/> • Check grades <input type="checkbox"/> • Check announcements <input type="checkbox"/> • Access and download files <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
ePortfolio (including minimum skills listed below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log in <input type="checkbox"/> • Set up an ePortfolio with personalized options <input type="checkbox"/> • Upload and save material <input type="checkbox"/> • Revise material <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
MyWallace (including minimum skills listed below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check grades <input type="checkbox"/> • Register for classes <input type="checkbox"/> • Access DegreeWorks <input type="checkbox"/> • Check financial aid <input type="checkbox"/> • Access transcript <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
WSCC Student Email and WSCC Website (including minimum skills listed below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send appropriate emails using rules of netiquette <input type="checkbox"/> • Access and complete a personalized STARS transfer guide (for transfer students only) <input type="checkbox"/> • Locate current semester schedule and WSCC Catalog <input type="checkbox"/> • Access WSCC Library and AVL within WSCC Website <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/>