

To facilitate the reading of this Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), the document has been divided into two parts: (1) the general plan and (2) implementation of the first phase of the plan (Section 9.0). In addition, some terms have been specifically defined for this QEP so that they are not confused with general colloquial meanings. Therefore, the following essential terms are presented in advance. A list of key initials and acronyms can be found on the following page.

Topic	<p>General name describing institutional QEP initiative to improve student learning; the focus areas and issues narrow this topic</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CTC's topic:</u> Creating a Culture that Focuses on Enhancing Student Learning</p>
Focus areas	<p>Classification of working QEP units into two groups: those that directly affect student learning (instructional) and those that indirectly affect student learning (non-instructional), wherein unique issues can be identified and addressed</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CTC's focus areas:</u> Instructional and Support Services (Non-instructional)</p>
Issue	<p>Unique area determined by the institution to be a predominant challenge within each focus area--The issues may change with each new phase and are used to direct improvement in student learning.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CTC's Phase 1 issue for the instructional focus:</u> Instructional Feedback</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CTC's Phase 1 issue for the support service (non-instructional) focus:</u> Service Excellence</p>
QEP Primary Goal	Improvement of the quality of student learning
QEP Unit Goal(s)	Unique goals set by individual units that determine how one of the designated issues are used by that unit and its members to direct strategies designed to improve student learning
Challenge	A barrier to student learning
Institutional Context	Events within the institution's recent development that provide background and meaning to the topic and issues, leading to a deeper understanding of the institution's challenges and justification of the QEP topic
Assessment	Systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development (Marchase, 1987)

Direct methods - methods where student learning is directly observed or measured

Indirect methods - methods where student's or third party's perception about learning is measured

Student Learning

The change in students' knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values attributable to instructional feedback and service improvements

QEP Unit

A department, site, or a mixture of several sites/departments which generally is responsible for its own budget

4.3.2 Process of Issue Development

One of the first actions of the QEP Core Committee (QCC) was to coordinate the survey process with Noel Levitz, which is used to narrow the topic and gather further information on the institution's strengths and challenges as they pertain to student learning and its potential barriers. The initial survey considered was the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which would have provided more data on instructional processes directly related to academic achievement. However, the first survey period was scheduled for October 2003, and at that time, the CCSSE was neither web-based nor designed to be administered by the delivering institution's personnel. Due to CTC's worldwide presence, it was imperative to seek a survey that could be administered online and by CTC personnel so that CTC could manage its administration and analysis continuously and permanently. Therefore, the QCC opted for three satisfaction surveys from Noel Levitz for the QEP:

- The **Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)** that assesses satisfaction of students in traditional face-to-face classes in twelve (12) areas:
 - ⇒ Academic Advising Effectiveness
 - ⇒ Campus Climate
 - ⇒ Campus Support Services
 - ⇒ Concern for the Individual
 - ⇒ Instructional Effectiveness
 - ⇒ Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
 - ⇒ Registration Effectiveness
 - ⇒ Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
 - ⇒ Safety and Security
 - ⇒ Service Excellence
 - ⇒ Student Centeredness
 - ⇒ Academic Services
- The **Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS)** that parallels the SSI and allows institutions to compare perceptions of students with those of faculty and staff
- The **Priorities Survey for the Online Learner (PSOL)** that targets the needs and priorities of students in distance learning programs in five (5) areas:
 - ⇒ Academic Services
 - ⇒ Enrollment Services
 - ⇒ Institutional Perceptions
 - ⇒ Instructional and Accreditation Support Services
 - ⇒ Student Services

Aside from the surveys being web-based, there were other significant factors contributing to the selection of these surveys.

- Noel Levitz allows institutions to customize each survey with ten questions of their own design. Therefore, CTC asked the Distance Learning Department, Faculty Senate, and the QCC to design questions that lent themselves heavily to instruction because there was originally only one section, *Instructional Effectiveness (Instructional Services on the PSOL)*, addressing this topic that plays such a vital role in the QEP.
- A wide array of other service-related topics could provide useful information in removing barriers to student learning.
- Noel Levitz provides national and individual benchmark comparisons with other community colleges and similar two-year institutions and can provide year-to-year and target group reporting.
- Noel Levitz surveys establish relevant internal and external measures.
- Institutions can electronically monitor survey numbers as surveys are completed to ensure that the required number of responses is attained.
- All surveys and supporting survey information can be consistent in that they can be disseminated electronically.
- All the surveys measure importance **and** satisfaction, and cross-sectioning these two factors render constructive information on strengths and challenge that can then be cross-referenced with other institutional processes.

Justification of Issues

To tap into issues that lead to improved student learning, CTC conducted needs assessments through Noel Levitz surveys, comparing the findings to other institutional data, such as grade distributions, departmental exams, and student services wait times, and student persistence, along with strengths and challenges cited in Strategic Planning, to arrive at new issues every two years. In addition, other data such as grade distribution reports and pre-posttest results are also used. As this process matures, new assessment elements such as consistent, standardized tests are added. The QEP has been developed to allow for future adjustments to its processes and necessary streamlining. To ensure that the topic and issues have broad-based appeal, they were disseminated electronically to all constituencies and presented in training sessions, providing ongoing opportunities for feedback. The Noel Levitz surveys add invaluable credibility to the issue selection process since all constituencies take part in the survey process, and the analysis is done by an impartial external source.