

Implementation Strategy for the Freshman Academy

The implementation strategy for the Freshman Academy has six steps.

Responsible Parties: The two co-chairs of the Curriculum Team (representing a lead faculty member and a proven staff member at the college) as well as the Co-Director of the QEP (a faculty member) are responsible for ensuring that the Freshman Academy curriculum is carried out effectively and that all materials (both academic and promotional) for its implementation are in place.

Step One: Curriculum Development

The QEP Curriculum Team, which consists of two co-chairs and several faculty and staff team members, is responsible for crafting the curriculum design for the Freshman Academy. Over the last several months, this team has explored First Year Experience literature; attended a First Year Experience workshop; participated in Student Focus Groups; conducted the QEP Literature Review; and reviewed a variety of materials (textbooks, technologies) that will be used as part of the course. To date, the teaching modules within the Freshman Academy have been completed and the activities outlined within the syllabus (See Appendix). In addition, the textbook, as well as a technological component, *My Skills Lab*, is currently in the developmental stages of production and is projected to be finalized and delivered by early fall 2009. The textbook, which is currently in the production stage, will be uniquely designed and tailored to fit the Freshman Academy curriculum components.

Step Two: Marketing of the Freshman Academy

Another important component of the Freshman Academy is its promotion, both internal (in the class) and external (college-wide). Currently and continued throughout the duration of the QEP, the QEP Curriculum Team will work with the QEP Marketing Team to select and strategize appropriate promotional materials that will help to advance the Freshman Academy themes and initiatives.

Step Three: Freshman Academy Pilot

The Freshman Academy is on track to be piloted in the spring of 2010. The pilot will consist of two first-year orientation class sections and will serve as the first test of the Freshman Academy curriculum, the faculty, and student engagement activities. Both class sections will be randomly selected based on class size; the two largest classes will be selected for the pilot. The classes will be monitored for progress and will be used as a basis for improving and strengthening the Freshman Academy curriculum, materials, activities, and assessments.

Step Four: Freshman Academy Pilot Assessment

During the summer of 2010, following the Freshman Academy Pilot, the Curriculum Team will work to review the results of the Freshman Academy assessment. Much emphasis will be placed on faculty comments about the delivery of the proposed curriculum, as well as student input. The curriculum will undergo a review and analysis for the purpose of modification. It is during this time that if new additions need to be added to the curriculum, prior to the fall launch, then all such changes need to be made.

Step Five: Freshman Academy Official Launch

Following the summer assessment of the piloted Freshman Academy, the official Freshman Academy will be launched during the fall of 2010. The course ORN101, which is a one credit, two-hour course (a change from a one credit, one-hour course) will be implemented college-wide. All first semester students, except transfer students with more than 11 credit hours, will be required to enroll in the Freshman Academy. According to previous enrollment trends, the college is anticipating that it will need to run at least 15 sections of this course, with 25 to 30 students in each section. Students who do not enroll in the course will be flagged in the college's internal AS400 operational system and will be placed on a processing hold the next time they attempt to register. In doing so, it will prevent the student from re-registering without adding the course. Thus, this will ensure that all students required to take ORN101 will enroll in the course by the second semester, at the latest.

Step Six: Freshman Academy Implementation Cycle & Evaluation

Following the official launch of the Freshman Academy, the Freshman Academy course (ORN101) will be offered each semester (spring, summer, and fall) of the year. The summer term of each school year will be used to assess the overall effectiveness of the course. Needed changes, whether material or otherwise, will be implemented in the fall.