

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES OF NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
2010 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLANS  
(The information was retrieved from  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/2010TrackAQEPSummaries.asp>.)

Listed below are the North Carolina Community Colleges that submitted Quality Enhancement Plans (QEP) reviewed by SACS Commission on Colleges for reaffirmation in **June 2010**. For each institution, the list includes the title of the QEP and the summary. The summaries are provided below.

Carteret Community College

Going PLACES: Planning Life, Academic & Career Education Strategies

Robeson Community College

RCC 4 R.E.A.L: Reading Engages Active Learning

Tri-County Community College

Career KEYS: A Quality Enhancement Plan

## **“Going PLACES: Planning Life, Academic & Career Education Strategies”**

**Carteret Community College**  
**Jennifer Ulz, Accreditation Liaison**  
**252.222.6190, [jau@carteret.edu](mailto:jau@carteret.edu)**

### **Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary**

Carteret Community College has identified ***Going PLACES: Planning Life, Academic, & Career Education Strategies*** as the topic for the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Carteret’s QEP represents its response to institutional needs that were identified through careful analysis of institutional data and with broad-based input from College stakeholders. ***Going PLACES*** addresses student need for expanded support as students begin college and progress through their academic careers.

Extensive research in institutional data by a representative QEP Development Team indicated that students who completed a Success & Study Skills course early in their college careers had higher overall success rates than students who did not complete the course. The team also comprehensively researched academic advising, freshmen seminars and experience, student use of resources, Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL), national organizations, and community colleges that exemplified best practices in first year advising and experiences. The QEP Team involved the college community at several points during topic selection and development, including a vote on the Institution Level Learning Outcome on which the QEP should focus - students’ personal growth and responsibility. The team asked the College community respond to white papers to determine which would become the QEP. Finally, the team involved the college community in interactive learning about the QEP. Development activities led to the formulation of the QEP purpose:

Through course-centered academic advising, ***Going PLACES*** will improve student learning and the learning environment by giving students the skills, knowledge, and attitudes they need to create and execute a successful life plan.

Carteret Community College’s QEP has four college-level learning outcomes, meaning that these broad outcomes encompass all of the learning outcomes for ***Going PLACES***.

- CLLO1. Students demonstrate an understanding of campus resources and support services.
- CLLO2. Students show mastery of basic academic skills.
- CLLO3. Students demonstrate self-awareness.
- CLLO4. Students use critical thinking skills through problem solving.

These will be achieved through a redesigned Success & Study Skills class for first-year students that encompasses the broad principles of academic advising, and that incorporates a process-oriented guided-inquiry learning methodology (POGIL) to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The redesigned Success & Study Skills classes will be taught as a series of Learning Modules involving several departments at the College in partnership with class faculty facilitators. The QEP Team developed a detailed timeline from the pilot year (2009-2010) through 2014 that incorporates outfitting a dedicated classroom with appropriate furniture and technology, staff development in POGIL, advising, learning styles, and software, and formative assessment. Comprehensive assessment will include collection and analysis of numerous data sets. Annual reports by the QEP Implementation Team will provide highlighted overviews of what is working well and what has been accomplished as well as pinpoint areas needing improvement. Progress in achieving QEP objectives will be reported to all constituent groups. A summative evaluation of the QEP’s overall impact on the institution’s learning environment and the quality of its students’ learning that is based on both quantitative and qualitative data will be included in a final report for the Commission on Colleges.

## ROBESON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RCC 4 R.E.A.L.  
Reading Engages Active Learning

Robeson Community College (RCC) in Lumberton, North Carolina, began in 1965 and has been growing ever since. It now serves a population of over 120,000 people in the state's geographically largest county. The local economy has been based on agriculture and textile manufacturing, all of which have drastically declined in recent decades. Now serving over 2,000 curriculum students each semester, the College is committed to offering the people of this area a wide variety of educational opportunities that can prepare them for the modern workforce and improve their overall well-being.

Surveying students, faculty, staff, and area employers resulted in the college selecting reading as the topic for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). A review of the literature on reading theory, coupled with analysis of RCC's institutional data, showed the relevance of Louise Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory to the needs of the College's student population and produced two key findings:

- Analysis of ACT's COMPASS Test scores indicated that a significant number of first-time students at RCC read below a 5<sup>th</sup> grade comprehension level, yet the lowest reading course offered, RED 080, assumes students can read at least at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- Evaluation of course success rates across the curricula, along with faculty perceptions about students' reading abilities and habits, showed that students in all programs and majors need to improve their reading comprehension. This finding reflects national statistics that reading rates are in decline across the United States.

RCC proposes to address these needs by tracking two student cohorts: (1) students enrolled in the RED 080 course and (2) first-year students admitted to the Nursing and Respiratory Therapy programs. For the first cohort, the Continuing Education /Basic Skills Division will offer a literacy improvement course that will prepare students for RED 080. This new course will incorporate MyReadingLab software and will provide students with individualized learning tailored to their specific needs. Faculty for the second cohort will incorporate reading and metacognitive strategies in their classrooms: concept maps, question-answer generation, and summarization.

Expanding the QEP's reach across campus, the College will also establish The Learning Center (TLC) where students may receive assistance from faculty and staff in all academic areas. To encourage reading as a pastime, reading centers will be located in certain campus buildings and a variety of reading materials are to be provided. A student book club with student-chosen material will meet, and a guest speaker series will bring writers to campus to read their selections.

Contact Person: Ms. Crystal Edmonds  
Department Chair, English and Humanities  
Email Address: [cedmonds@roberson.edu](mailto:cedmonds@roberson.edu)

# Career KEYS: A Quality Enhancement Plan

Tri-County Community College

QEP Co-Coordinators

Julie Hanwell, Instructor, jhanwell@tricountycc.edu

Linda Kressal, Dean of Learning Resources, lkressal@tricountycc.edu

Tri-County Community College (TCCC) serves three counties in rural, far western North Carolina. Since 1999 the area has endured the closing of major employment sources, specifically furniture and textile plants. Recent unemployment rates have been staggering, and TCCC students have been increasingly concerned about whether jobs will be available at graduation. **Career KEYS**, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), was supported both by internal data and by a careful analysis of the economic situation in our service area. It was designed and refined based on months of surveys, interviews, focus groups and college-wide or community-based presentations beginning in the spring of 2008.

**Career KEYS** is a comprehensive process to help our students succeed by enhancing learning for career readiness. The essence of the plan is to integrate specific career readiness elements into a cross-section of classes and course work in order to offer students an effective and practical advantage for career preparation. After the topic was identified and found to be aligned with the College mission “to help students succeed and to enrich the communities we serve,” the QEP team explored how its implementation would achieve both academic integrity and practical application.

Implementation of the plan will be guided by three intersecting career readiness KEYS.

- **Key #1: Career Explore**—ensuring that students’ interests and skills are well-matched with preferred careers in order to increase the return on investment in their education.
- **Key #2: Career Equip**—ensuring that students are well prepared academically and technically to apply knowledge in a variety of life situations.
- **Key #3: Career Engage**—ensuring that students possess an assortment of job search skills that will aid them in pursuing employment in their preferred fields.

The QEP team identified six critical employability skills that could be measured and evaluated on an ongoing basis. These employability skills span all industry types, business sizes and job levels because they are generic in nature rather than job specific. The six employability skills identified by the TCCC QEP team are: 1) General Education; 2) Knowledge of career expectations and skills; 3) Interpersonal communication and self-presentation; 4) Effective listening; 5) Effective observation; and 6) Teamwork.

Students are introduced to the Career KEYS process early in an introduction to college course where career inventories and skill assessments are administered. The final phase is a nationally recognized career assessment which is administered during the student’s capstone course. The resulting certification will provide the student with a powerful tool to gain access to the employment market.

The College has earmarked significant human, financial and physical resources to **Career KEYS** and has established a reasonable timeline to ensure accurate and comprehensive assessment of the project.