

Senators,

Please share this knowledge with your department head and colleagues. The intent is for this Senate meeting to be a pilot forum. Additional forums will be conducted online and face-to-face during the fall. Any questions may be directed to me or other members of the QEP Team. Tarleton SACS reaffirmation information and committee members can be found at: <http://www.tarleton.edu/~sacs/>

For Tarleton's reaffirmation by SACS (site visit in Spring 2010), we must develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) related to student learning. A QEP is a five year *plan*

- Has broad based involvement of institutional constituencies in topic selection and development
 - Based on research and best practices
 - includes a broad-based institutional process identifying key issues emerging from assessment
- Identifies goals and a *plan* to assess their achievement.
- demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP,
 - Integrated into the institution-wide planning process
- We will make our **final topic selection by January 2009**; it will be **reviewed by the SACS visiting team in early 2010**
 - Upon approval in 2010, implementation will begin
 - SACS will review progress in 2015

Universities in general, and Tarleton is no exception, expect their graduates to have the following abilities, among others:

1. the ability to communicate effectively in writing;
2. the ability to communicate effectively through speaking;
3. critical thinking and analytical skills;
4. the ability to reason quantitatively;
5. a respect for contributions of the arts;
6. the ability to make ethical decisions; and
7. to demonstrate leadership qualities

The surveys conducted in Fall 2007 and early Spring 2008 of Tarleton faculty, staff, and students strongly support these expectations.

Our QEP may be tied to one of the abilities listed above. Note that the QEP may relate to graduate students, undergraduate students, or both. It may also target a relatively narrow sector of our student body, if we so choose, such as the Freshman Year Experience.

One of the sources of data that may be used to support ideas for our QEP is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which Tarleton has administered in 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007. Our NSSE results indicate, among other things, that our students report doing less academic writing and fewer quantitative problems sets and being less challenged academically than students at our peer institutions.

Today we will focus on a couple of the areas, with the opportunity to provide similar input on other areas coming soon.

1. How would students be different if the QEP topic emphasized
 - a. Effective communication in writing and/or speaking
 - b. Critical thinking and analytical skills
 - c. A respect for or appreciation of the arts

2. How might a plan be implemented in your degree program (or what initiatives could be developed) to address
 - a. Effective communication in writing and/or speaking
 - b. Critical thinking and analytical skills
 - c. A respect for or appreciation of the arts

3. If our QEP related to greater rigor and academic challenge, how can you visualize this being implemented?