Vernon College

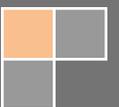# Annual Progress Report

Quality Enhancement Plan

2008-2010

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Director of Quality Enhancement
November 8, 2010

INITIAL QEP DESCRIPTION

2009-2010

Emphasis continues to be placed on providing strategies for incorporating engagement into courses and services which will lead to higher achievement of student learning outcomes. Vernon College targets student learning outcomes on a project-by-project basis using established competencies from course syllabi and as identified through individual pilot project applications and evaluation. As engagement techniques are integrated into a course or project, specific student learning outcomes are tracked and assessed to determine if increased learning did occur due to increased engagement techniques. Adjunct faculty, distance learning courses, online courses, and student support services staff receive the same attention and training as face-to-face courses.

Following approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, formal implementation of the Vernon College QEP began Fall 2009. Pilot projects began in the spring 2008 semester and continue to be conducted as a means of testing the applicability of different engagement strategies. As the QEP progresses, collaboration and connectivity remain the foundation for success in high achievement of student learning outcomes.

2008-2009

The goal of the Vernon College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), named VConnected, is to increase student learning through improved engagement by fostering an environment of collaboration and connectivity between students, faculty, and support personnel. The College will improve student learning by focusing on engagement through a three-part plan: transform curriculum and instruction, provide innovative professional development opportunities, and create a technology rich environment for instructional and student support services. Faculty and staff will be provided the necessary training for successful QEP implementation. The initial focus of professional development activities will be to create a base of new knowledge about assessment tools such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), engagement techniques, and innovative technologies.

The next emphasis will be placed on providing strategies for incorporating engagement into courses and services which will lead to higher achievement of student learning outcomes. Vernon College will target student learning outcomes on a project-by-project basis using established competencies from course syllabi. As engagement techniques are integrated into a course or project, specific student learning outcomes will be tracked and assessed to determine if increased learning did occur due to increased engagement techniques. Adjunct faculty, distance learning courses, and online courses will receive the same attention and training as face-to-face courses.

Following approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, formal implementation of the Vernon College QEP begins Fall 2009. Pilot projects have been conducted since the spring 2008 semester as a means of testing the applicability of different engagement strategies and will continue into the implementation phase. As the QEP

progresses, collaboration and connectivity will remain the foundation for success in high achievement of student learning outcomes.

INITIAL GOALS & INTENDED OUTCOMES

2009-2010

Initial Goals

Goals were reviewed by the QEP Implementation Committee and no changes were made.

Intended Outcomes

Engagement Methodology (Student Support Services) – Offer comprehensive educational programs and student support services with a continued focus on quality improvement.

- Student Response System – Utilized clickers to enhance financial aid presentations to high school students.
- Virtual Library – Continue to use WIMBA Live Classroom to assist students from a remote location.

Engagement Methodology (Instructional Services) – Add quality to an ever-increasing program of educating students in both traditional and nontraditional settings.

- WIMBA Live Classroom – Increased the scope to include dual credit high school students who previously used ITV classrooms. WIMBA allows students to actively participate in class by interacting and collaborating with each other and the instructor.
- Podcasts – Used an audio digital recorder to create and post podcasts of lectures as a student resource in Blackboard.
- Group Collaboration – Found innovative method to collaborate on group projects using audio and video technology.
- Virtual/Simulated Lab Software – created a more realistic lab environment for online students.

Professional Development – Reinforce and redirect attention to what matters most, educating students effectively.

- Provided resources (e.g., clickers, Camtasia software, internet tools) through the development of the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory.
- Scheduled, promoted, and taught face-to-face professional development sessions through the VC Cafe.
- Created the Pilot Mentor Program to offer additional training and support.

Assessment – Give faculty and staff an opportunity to implement research-based best practices that can make a significant difference in student success and retention.

- Pilot project results – continued to create best practices based on established engagement methods and student learning outcomes.
- Engagement surveys – Continued to build a culture of evidence to drive decisions that will affect student learning (e.g., administration of the SENSE).
- Course/department/program assessment tools – Continued to articulate the relationship between engagement methodology and student learning, and ensure that evidence is

> collected to document the impact of a change in engagement methodology (e.g., pre and post tests, embedded test questions, departmental surveys, end-of-semester course review).

2008-2009
Initial Goals
The goal is to increase student learning through improved engagement. Engagement will be increased by:
- Transforming curriculum and instruction,
- Training faculty and staff in engagement techniques through professional development opportunities, and
- Creating a technology-rich environment for instructional and student support services.

The QEP will be integrated into the infrastructure of the college by incorporating collaboration and connectivity into every aspect of the students' collegiate experience, including instruction and student support services. It is the goal of the project to infuse active learning strategies in all courses and student support services by 2014.

Intended Outcomes
Engagement Methodology (Student Support Services) – Offer comprehensive educational programs and student support services with a continued focus on quality improvement.
- Website – Posting video tutorials on how to use a service.
- Virtual Library – Use WIMBA Live Classroom to assist students from a remote location.

Engagement Methodology (Instructional Services) – Add quality to an ever-increasing program of educating students in both traditional and nontraditional settings.
- WIMBA Live Classroom – Allow students to actively participate in class by interacting and collaborating with each other and the instructor.
- Podcasts – Use Wimba Live Classroom or Blackboard to create and post podcasts of lectures as a student resource.
- Blackboard – Implement discussion boards to promote student networking and sharing of ideas.

Professional Development – Reinforce and redirect attention to what matters most, educating students effectively.
- Hire full-time Director of Quality Enhancement Plan and Instructional Designer.
- Provide resources (e.g., computers, Camtasia software, collaboration area).
- Schedule, promote, and teach professional development sessions.

Assessment – Give faculty and staff an opportunity to implement research-based best practices that can make a significant difference in student success and retention.
- Pilot project results - create best practices based on established engagement methods and student learning outcomes.
- Engagement surveys – create a culture of evidence to drive decisions that will affect student learning (e.g., CCSSE, SENSE).

- Course/department/program assessment tools – articulate the relationship between engagement methodology and student learning, and ensure that evidence is collected to document the impact of a change in engagement methodology (e.g., pre and post tests, embedded test questions, departmental surveys).

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES & REASONS

2009-2010

Changes

As Vernon College works to establish a system that can be maintained and supported, while being mindful of SACS criteria, several processes have been developed and enhancements of current processes have been made. Four areas became the focus: promotion, communication, support, and assessment.

To promote and communicate the goals of the QEP, established outlets were identified to provide ongoing or frequent communication. These include: faculty/staff development presentations, monthly President's College Update, the Quest newsletter, pilot application promotional materials, student orientations, and new employee orientations. In addition to hiring a Director of Quality Enhancement, an Instructional Design & Technology Coordinator and providing Faculty Innovation Centers, further support has been added in the form of the creation of Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory, Pilot Mentor Program, and a professional development program promoted as the VC Café.

The Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory is a collection of hardware and software that is available for checkout or downloads by any faculty or staff member. The list is standardized for certain products in an effort to provide more effective and efficient training and support. The Pilot Mentor Program was established to offer additional training and support for those hardwares, softwares, or engagement methods deemed a best practice by the QEP Pilot Project Program. Each individual who volunteered for the Pilot Project Program also serves as a mentor through the Pilot Mentor Program.

To ensure assessment, the QEP has been incorporated into the College's annual planning cycle which includes the Priority Initiatives and Annual Action Plans. Further, the Office of Quality Enhancement uses individual pilot reports, the QEP Annual Progress Report, and the End of Semester Course Review (ESCR) as additional assessment tools. National surveys continue to be the primary engagement assessment and include the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE).

Why Change?

Processes must be created or enhanced to ensure that student learning is improving as a result of increased student engagement activities.

NOTE: For purposes of this report, processes developed and enhancements are included as a significant change.

2008-2009
Changes
The focus of the VConnected plan is clear—increase student learning by increasing student engagement. The plan is comprehensive as it addresses instruction, student support services, and use of technology with the intention of bringing about long term change. When first submitted, the cause and effect relationship between student engagement and student learning was not articulated clearly. "Engagement is good, but it is only a means to a more important end—student learning—and not an end in itself." (Response Report 13). For this reason, the QEP was enhanced to put emphasis on: (1) identifying student learning outcomes in each course or student support service area, and (2) implementing assessment tools to determine the success of each outcome. Beginning the 2009 fall semester, these changes will become a reality as Vernon College transitions from piloting the project in the preparation phase to implementing the project.

Why Change?
- "The plan relied too heavily on a single measure of success, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). CCSSE measures the extent to which students perceive they are engaged in the classroom and elsewhere in the institution. Although CCSSE provides a wealth of detailed information regarding student perceptions of engagement, it is nonetheless an *indirect* measure of student learning. If the overall goal of the project is to improve student learning, then the college had to couple CCSSE with *direct* measures of student learning." (Response Report 13).

- "The plan assumed that an increase in the number of student engagement activities would produce an increase in learning. The college had to articulate how it would evaluate whether or not student learning had improved and thus whether or not the project was successful." (Response Report 15).

DIRECT QEP IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING
Instructional Services
2009-2010
During the first year of QEP implementation, five pilot project proposals were submitted and approved to continue testing the applicability of VConnected. Cindy Coufal, English Instructor, piloted the use of Wimba Live Classroom in lieu of ITV in her ENGL 1302 Composition II (Dual Credit) class. The second project was piloted by instructor Mark Holcomb who introduced virtual/simulated lab software into his course to provide an engaged lab experience for his online students. Technology was incorporated into a group project documentary in Chad Mueller's government class to increase collaboration. The fourth instructor project involved Dina Neal providing lecture podcasts as a supplement to the written course content materials. All four of the proposals focused on engagement methods to enhance different aspects of a course and therefore lead to increased student learning. Each VConnected team member researched and developed their projects in the Fall 2009 semester and implemented them in the Spring 2010 semester.

Cindy Coufal - English Instructor

Cindy Coufal observed that many of her ENGL 1302 Composition II high school students found it difficult to perform optimally with the ITV cameras. They either did not participate at all or they acted out, distracting everyone else in the class at various locations. She chose to use Wimba Live Classroom to give the students an opportunity to interact in a "one-on-one" environment without being distracted by classmates on camera.

In high school ITV classrooms, there is only one microphone at the front of the room. Students are only able to ask questions if they relay their question to the student sitting closest to the microphone. Therefore, students rarely, if ever, ask questions. With the use of Live Classroom, each student had a computer and was able to use the chat feature to ask questions. Students were able to text the teacher individually without other students knowing what they have asked or commented. Mrs. Coufal reported that when surveyed, the spring semester students perceived to be engaged at a higher level than those students the previous semester.

Mrs. Coufal compared the averages of major assignments and found that the students in the dual-credit high school Live Classroom section performed better than previous years' counterparts. Additionally, these students communicated with their instructor more than students in previous sections. For 23 Live Classroom archived sessions, there were 411 text chat messages from students for an average of 17.8 text messages per class session. This compares to 0 text chat messages from previous years' students since this communication tool was not available. Further, the students enrolled in the spring semester sent 412 e-mails during the duration of the course compared to 378 the previous semester.

Mark Holcomb – Industrial Automation Systems Instructor

Mark Holcomb created a hybrid delivery using virtual/simulated lab software (Multisim) to engage students in lab projects normally delivered in a face to face class. Students were responsible for completing 8 lab assignments and were encouraged to contact the instructor during online office hours for assistance. Wimba Live Classroom was the tool used to provide the opportunities for online instructor assistance.

Early in the semester, Mr. Holcomb observed the need for a more detailed tutorial on how to use Wimba Live Classroom in conjunction with the Multisim lab software. Email communication helped fill the gap and allowed the instructor to answer students' questions on labs. This proved to be a successful communication tool for those not comfortable with Wimba Live Classroom. The electronic lab software used in this project resulted in good lab projects and the majority of students giving positive remarks on software use. Additionally, students scored high on lab project related questions on the final exam. In an end of semester survey, students reported that Multisim was an excellent substitution for hands on, face to face lab projects.

Chad Mueller - Government Instructor

The American Government I students were split into groups of 3-4 and were required to produce a documentary. Chad Mueller instructed his students to depict and describe at least one factor that guided at least one of their political opinions. Each group member was asked to

document a different factor. Mr. Mueller noted that the political socialization documentary activities turned out to be quite impressive. Instead of just sharing their written thoughts with their peers as they had in the past, the students produced presentations which included video, digital pictures, and audio narration. Also, by working collaboratively, each student was exposed to at least one facet of their group members' political socialization. This seemed to reinforce for the students the different factors which influence our political socialization.

Mr. Mueller reported that 94% of those who attempted the documentary project scored perfect in comparison to 90% last semester. Ninety percent of those who completed the documentary project achieved a perfect score when completing the "list and describe at least five of the roots of our political socialization" learning objective on the exam. In comparison, only 82% achieved this same learner objective last semester. Finally, Mr. Mueller will produce a video trailer of various class activities to show on the first day of class in future semesters in order to increase the engagement of his students.

Dina Neal – Psychology Instructor
In an effort to provide online students with supplemental study resources, Dina Neal began podcasting her Psychology lectures. She started by capturing live lectures during face-to-face classroom sessions which included student's questions and comments. Mrs. Neal then uploaded the podcasts into Blackboard for General Psychology (Online) student access. As a result, students were provided with further insight regarding course content. In addition to presenting course content via lecture notes and Powerpoint slides, students were now able to listen to the lecture or utilize the podcast as a review prior to an assignment or exam.

Mrs. Neal used a survey of student opinion and reported that the majority of students who took the opportunity to listen to the podcasts liked them. They also indicated that they like it when the chapter objective being discussed was specified. A couple of students said they knew they did better on exams because they had listened to the podcasts. They also said they liked the live class lectures and discussions. In the future, Mrs. Neal will require students to listen to the podcast lectures just as she requires readings.

Gary Don Harkey – Dean of Instructional Services
In addition to the pilot projects, Dr. Harkey incorporated an End of Semester Course Review (ESCR) as a self assessment tool that requires each instructor to review their courses at the end of each semester. Instructors use the data to enhance the quality of their courses which includes student engagement with the end goal being increased student learning. The office of Instructional Services, Instructional Design and Technology, and Quality Enhancement use the data from the questions in the Teaching Techniques and Strategies section to enhance policies, procedures, processes, and practices. These questions include: Technology Used, Engagement Techniques, and Assessments.

2008-2009

Under the QEP, five pilot project proposals were submitted and approved to continue testing the applicability of VConnected. Four of these proposals focused on utilizing Wimba Live Classroom to enhance different aspects of a course. These pilots were submitted by:

- Greg Fowler – Criminal Justice Instructor, CRIJ 2314 Criminal Investigations (Online)
- Renee Wooten – Spanish Instructor, SPAN 1412 Beginning Spanish (Online)
- Teresa Ramos – Child Development Instructor, TECA 1354 & 1303 Child Growth and Development (Online)
- Lynn Kalski – Director of LVN Program, LVN Faculty Meetings (Remote Campuses)

The fifth pilot project consisted of student group collaboration for research and information gathering, presentation of materials, and test preparation and evaluating. This project was piloted by Larry Jordan, Government Instructor, in his GOVT 2301 American Government class. Each VConnected team member researched and developed their projects in the Fall 2008 semester and implemented it in the Spring 2009 semester.

Greg Fowler – Criminal Justice Instructor

In an effort to provide additional engagement opportunities with the intent of increasing test scores and student retention, Greg Fowler introduced Live Classroom into his Criminal Investigations course online. His primary focus was the exam review process. The original project was to have the class meet four times to review for the major exams using Live Classroom. Through his research he found that meeting with the class more than four times would be essential to the success of the project. Therefore, the number of meetings was increased to ten so that each chapter could be reviewed and discussed.

Mr. Fowler solicited student feedback at the conclusion of the course. Comments indicated that students: enjoyed the contact with the instructor and other students, agreed the contact with the instructor allowed them to ask questions, liked that they were able to hear and respond to other students questions, and felt that the Live Classroom was very similar to a traditional classroom. Additionally, on the occasion that they had to miss class, they found it very helpful and convenient that they could either view the video of the class discussion or download it as a pod cast and listen to it anywhere.

Perhaps the best result of the pilot project was the student retention rate. Typically in Mr. Fowler's traditional internet class, the success rate (a grade of "C" or better) is between 50% and 66% with the remainder of the students either dropping the class or receiving a grade of "D or F". The pilot class, however, had a success rate of 100%. He cited the success of one non-traditional student in particular. The student had limited computer skills and scored average in traditional face to face classes. They attempted internet classes on two prior occasions and made an "F" in each of them. In the pilot class the student attended each meeting, was able to operate the technology, and participated in the Live Classroom discussion. The student indicated to Mr. Fowler that they never could have been successful in an internet class without the use of Live Classroom. Although they continue to be an average student, they were able to be successful for the first time in an online course. For an instructor who teaches solely online, Mr. Fowler stated that the use of Live Classroom allowed him to interact with the students on a level that he had not been able to previously obtain.

Renee Wooten – Spanish Instructor

Renee Wooten used Live Classroom to organize small communicative, tutorial groups of 6-8 students in her Beginning Spanish online course. The goal was to have students utilize technology to actively participate in class activities, to collaborate with fellow students, and to increase communication between classmates and the instructor. The weekly sessions were mandatory (expressed in the Course Outline, resulting in a 10% grade for attendance) and several weekly sessions were offered to accommodate a variety of student schedules.

When compared to the same course taught the previous semester, there was a 23% increase in the total number of students that successfully completed the course. The actual letter grades were slightly improved as well. Furthermore, the class survey showed that the student satisfaction rate improved for the Spring 2009 course. Eighty-seven percent of students cited the online tutorials as helpful in the success of the course. Individual student comments included: "I thought the web sessions were very helpful", "Thank you for being so helpful and involved", "I think I understood more when I was able to hear the professor explain the grammar", and "I really like these [sessions]. Thanks!"

Ms. Wooten, who at the time of the pilot had taught this online course for three years, felt more closely connected to her students after attending the tutorial sessions. Many of the online students made time to visit Ms. Wooten's office to chat and ask questions. She stated that this type of interaction almost never happens between the instructor and online students. She believes that because she was a face, an actual speaking person and not a computer screen, the students felt more comfortable engaging with her. It seemed like the students were in a "normal" classroom setting, and they were displaying behaviors consistent with those that the "live" students display when subject to the group process.

Teresa Ramos – Child Development Instructor

Teresa Ramos created small learning communities in her Child Growth and Development and Families, School, and Community courses. The class was divided into six groups consisting of four students each. Each group was given a question to discuss using the discussion boards in Blackboard. They were also given the opportunity to post and share their answers in the larger class discussion board. The goal was to allow students to have more reflective and insightful group discussions. In addition, Ms. Ramos archived audio lectures using Wimba Live Classroom. She posted the lectures for students to view prior to group discussions.

The student's feedback was positive. They enjoyed the small group interaction which provided networking opportunities and felt it was a good way to share different points of view. Most of Ms. Ramos's students plan to be teachers and this project allowed them to communicate with each other about future classes, lesson plans, and ideas on what grade is best to teach. This was an unexpected occurrence that proved to be a positive outcome of the project.

The retention rate for Ms. Ramos's internet class was around 95% and 83% of the class scored an "A" or "B". The instructor observed the students had more interaction on a weekly basis with each other and with the instructor than previous online courses.

Lynn Kalski – Director of LVN Program
Live Classroom is a tool Lynn Kalski utilized to enhance collaboration with LVN faculty and administrative staff. An additional student learning outcome that he hoped to accomplish was to increase the effectiveness of the LVN program's learning activities and success of vocational nursing students. By scheduling meetings through Live Classroom, Mr. Kalski hoped to increase the number and effectiveness of meetings, decrease the amount of travel, decrease the number of errors/conflicts in administrative tasks (e.g., schedules), and increase consistency and continuity.

In order to assess the success of conducting meetings using Live Classroom, the frequency and number of interactions after the introduction of the new technology was compared with the same type of interactions in previous years. There was an increase in the number of meetings, but technical difficulties and faculty implementation of the WIMBA system cast doubt on the effectiveness of the interactions. Due to these difficulties, the project will be reassessed at the end of the Fall 2009 semester to determine whether his student learning outcomes were achieved as a result of implementing Live Classroom.

Larry Jordan – American Government Instructor
Larry Jordan designed his course around three primary areas of study: analysis of the material, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. Students were divided into three groups. The Research and Information Group was responsible for reading the text and collating the material. Utilizing this material, the Presentation Group designed and implemented a method of presenting the information. Finally, the Testing and Evaluation Group created, designed, administered and graded the tests based on the information provided by the first two groups.

Three different exams were designed to assess how well the information and the presentation of such were communicated to the class. The first exam consisted of two tests—one being created and administered by the Testing Group, the other being prepared by the instructor— using the student information gathered and presented. When compared to the instructor's questions, the students' questions were broader in scope and dealt with more common knowledge. Mr. Jordan noted that the comparison of the grades on the tests were not unexpected. The class scored higher on the test created by the Testing Group, the average being about 12 points. The second exam was designed exclusively by the Testing Group. The scores on this test again indicated that students score better on their own tests, with the grades ranging from 80 to 92. The third exam was a comprehensive final of the instructor's questions. Since each score was passing, this exam demonstrated that the students understood and retained the content provided by the groups during the semester.

Overall, this pilot class confirmed that having the students analyze the text and material increased student engagement. The students also learned to collaborate and communicate with one another once they realized the dependence of each group on the other. Mr. Jordan stated that the engagement increased in two ways: *more* students were engaged and the *level* of engagement rose. As demonstrated by the student scores on the final comprehensive exam, his student learning outcomes were achieved using this method.

Marian Grona – Director of Library Services

Marian Grona continued her pilot project involving virtual library assistance using Wimba Live Classroom. In year two, she reported ongoing technical and electrical problems at STC that may have contributed to a lack of participation and usage of the service. Ms. Grona solicited the assistance of a student focus group to determine what was causing the lack of student involvement. The library learned that several items need to be addressed in the areas of assessment, participation, and technology. In response to student recommendations, the library will: (1) improve the instructions for accessing library assistance, (2) promote an awareness of virtual services, (3) improve virtual library procedure, and (4) assess student learning outcomes with a point of contact survey.

Paula Whitman – Mathematics Instructor

Paula Whitman has continued to have students use clickers in her classroom. In the second year, she extended the classroom engagement questions to online classes. After students watched the classroom lecture video, they were required to complete and submit an online quiz indicating their answers to the engagement questions. In the future, Mrs. Whitman will continue to use clickers and engagement questions in her courses. She also plans to redesign her lectures to more closely align questions with homework assignments.

Student Support Services
2009-2010

Melissa Elliott – Director of Financial Aid

To encourage prospective students to actively participate in financial aid presentations at area high schools, Melissa Elliott implemented the use of clickers. The student response system (clickers) was incorporated into her presentation with the goal of increasing the retention and understanding of the information presented. In past presentations, it was perceived that the participants understood the information presented. The following day, however, the financial aid office would receive numerous phone calls pertaining to questions over information that should have been retained from the previous presentation.

Mrs. Elliott first used the clickers at the Region 9 High School Counselor workshop. She stated that the clickers were very well received and that the feedback was positive. Some of the comments received were as follows: "Excellent training!", "Great use of technology and interactive presentation approach!", and "Enjoyed the quizomo game with the response clicker... Kept people engaged and on track...Good idea". As a result of the success at the Region 9 workshop, Mrs. Elliott decided to implement the presentation at all 18 financial aid workshops at various high schools for senior students and/or their parents.

Response results of the clicker participants were compared to a control group and the anticipated project results were achieved. The clicker participants scored higher when compared to the control group on all questions. In addition, the project allowed for immediate feedback to the presenter. They immediately received results and could provide additional information or explain the material again as needed. Participants who answered incorrectly had

the opportunity to see the correct answer and further explanation. In the past, participants approached the presenter following the presentation and asked numerous general questions that had been covered during the workshop. After utilizing the clickers, the number of general questions after a presentation was reduced by more than half.

<u>Garry David – Dean of Administrative Services</u>
Garry David reported that they have continued to offer the student ID card program. The number of cards issued this year, as compared to the 08-09 academic year, significantly increased. The number of checks printed decreased while direct deposits increased by 53%. This is an indication that the students were in fact using their ID cards and therefore learning about the advantages of it. Total dollars of student refunds issued using direct deposit increased by 57.8%. In the future, his office plans to explore the idea of adding a contact us/instant message feature to the website to increase student communication.

<u>John Hardin III – Dean of Student Services/Athletics Director</u>
In the Fall of 2009, Student Services presented a new Freshman Orientation Program which highlighted all areas of student safety. The program included physical safety, health related issues, academic integrity and computer safety including safe use of social networking sites. Freshman Orientation will continue to be evaluated for topics of interest that are timely as well as relevant to student needs. Safety issue topics will continue to be implemented as a major focus of Freshman Orientation.

Mr. Hardin stated that Student Services had hoped to amend the counseling services section of the VC website to include more information and printable information pieces. This goal was not achieved as Vernon College opted to redesign and reformat the entire Vernon College website. However, they will continue to update their internal information and will be ready to provide new and improved information upon request.

<u>Joe Hite – Dean of Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Registrar</u>
The registration process was reviewed by members of the Administrative Team with assistance from other faculty and staff. A detailed flow chart was developed and recommendations for improvement were made. Campus Connect was "opened" during regular registration in an effort to decrease time spent in line and improve traffic flow. This change also allowed students to stay home and re-register if they were canceled for non-payment or do not live near a Vernon College campus. Signage was improved to assist students to their correct location at regular registration. It was also recommended that Campus Connect remain open during the "Late Registration and Schedule Change" periods to allow online registration and schedule changes after faculty advising.

Although the vast majority of Admissions, Records, and Financial Aid services are available online, students still interact with office staff by telephone and email. In addition, the Admissions staff interacts with each student who attends each onsite registration or orientation. Financial Aid staff interacts with students through telephone, email, Facebook, and onsite registration in addition to conducting "Financial Aid Nights" at many service area high schools.

The offices of Admissions, Records, and Financial Aid are also looking into utilizing the student email system for official communication instead of the traditional mailings. There is currently no student communication policy involving email. This would need to be researched and updated before the college could cease mailing official communications in favor of email communication.

2008-2009

In order to determine an initial benchmark for student support services, a report was requested from each department. The report included details of current student engagement projects as well as instances of student interaction and future projects in which student learning outcomes could be applied and assessed.

Gene Gooch – Dean of Administrative Services

Gene Gooch reported there were no current student engagement projects as their student interaction is limited to payments and receipt of financial aid. Currently the student ID card program has the most interaction with the students. They are in the process of developing a marketing plan to increase participation in this program.

John Hardin III – Dean of Student Services/Athletics Director

Under the direction of John Hardin III, this department had intentions of making the New Student Group Advising sessions available online. However, once feedback was received from the students, it was determined that an in-person delivery method was preferred. The process is again under review and in the future supplemental materials may be made available as an online reference. Additionally, beginning in the 2009 fall semester, multimedia message boards displaying electronic messages will be used to communicate activities and services available to students.

Joe Hite – Dean of Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Registrar

According to Joe Hite, applying for services online is their primary method of student interaction. On-site registration, however, involves face-to-face interaction with students and staff from all offices. His department is researching ways to provide online registration through Campus Connect on this day in an effort to streamline the process. As a potential project, Dean Hite is researching the feasibility of utilizing student email accounts as the primary means of communication.

Office of the President
2009-2010

Dr. Dusty Johnston – President, Vernon College

Through the Office of the President, Director of Institutional Advancement, Michelle Alexander, implemented the Scholarship Tracking and Review System (STARS). This program permits and encourages students to apply for all Vernon College scholarships online. Through the use of a questionnaire, STARS then sorts and assigns the student's applications to those scholarships they have been identified as eligible for. The number of applicants has increased from approximately 200 in the 2008-2009 academic year without STARS to approximately 500 in 2009-2010 with STARS.

Additionally, based on engagement data, Dr. Johnston created an Academic Advising Task Force to review current policies, procedures, processes, practices, timelines, and functions and to make suggested additions, deletions, and changes to ensure effectiveness, student friendliness, and compliance with state and federal regulations where applicable. The task force began in February of 2010 and will continue into the 2010-2011 academic year.

2008-2009

Dr. Dusty Johnston – President, Vernon College

As an engagement effort through the Office of the President, Coordinator of Marketing and Alumni Relations, Christie Lehman, created and maintains Vernon College social networking pages using Facebook and Twitter. With the support of Dr. Johnston, Mrs. Lehman uses these sites to push college announcements, events, activities, and photos to our students, faculty, and staff. The project was implemented in the summer and will be evaluated at the end of the academic year to determine the effectiveness and feasibility of continuing to communicate via these methods.

QEP SUMMARY

2009-2010

- The goals of the QEP will continue to be integrated into the planning and effectiveness process of the college. It is identified as a Priority Initiative and included as a statement of need, objective, and/or strategy in the Annual Action Planning process.

- Evaluation and assessment processes were enhanced.

- Other QEP enhancements were established including the Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory and the Pilot Mentor program.

- The pilot project program approved, tracked, and reported five pilot proposals during the first year of implementation.

- The Quality Enhancement Implementation Committee provides oversight for the implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan as written in the February 27, 2009 Revised QEP document.

2008-2009

- The goals of the QEP will be integrated into the planning and effectiveness process of the college. As a result, each component of the college will address attaining the goals of the QEP on their annual action plans. Through this method, the QEP will be incorporated into the infrastructure of the college.

- The Director of Quality Enhancement Plan and Instructional Designer positions were filled this year.

- Several engagement methodologies have been tried and assessed both in and out of the classroom. The results have been positive and suggestions for improvement have been noted. We will continue to build on these efforts as we expand the QEP program throughout the college.

- The QEP Implementation Committee has been structured to assess and evaluate the progress of the QEP and to ensure completion of each initiative.

COMMITTEE REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This QEP Annual Progress Report was reviewed and approved by the QEP Implementation Committee on this 8th day of November, 2010.

Committee Members:

Criquett Lehman, Committee Chair/Director of Quality Enhancement

Stacy Lallmann, Student Billing Accountant

Greg Fowler, Division Chair: Behavioral & Social Sciences

Cindy Coufal, 09-10 Pilot Participant

Joe Johnston, Division Chair: Communications

Chad Mueller, 09-10 Pilot Participant

Karen Gragg, Division Chair: Math & Science

Dina Neal, 09-10 Pilot Participant

Mark Holcomb, Division Chair: Information & Technology and 09-10 Pilot Participant

Michelle Alexander, 10-11 Pilot Participant

Shana Munson, Division Chair: Allied Health & Human Services

Katrina Brasuell, 10-11 Pilot Participant

Roxie Hill, Instructional Design and Technology Coordinator

Deana Lehman, 10-11 Pilot Participant

Melissa Elliott, Director of Financial Aid and 09-10, 10-11 Pilot Participant

Richard Warren, 10-11 Pilot Participant

Kristin Harris, Associate Dean of Student Services/Director of Counseling

Michelle Wood, 10-11 Pilot Participant