

Quality Enhancement Plan: Cultivating Personal and Social Responsibility for Student Success

Institution: Blue Ridge Community College

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Blue Ridge Community College has long collected environmental scanning data to help the College achieve its mission and to stay focused on community needs. A recurring theme in much of this data has suggested that employers and community leaders have become increasingly concerned with workforce deficits centered on work ethic and personal responsibility. A two year process that included surveys, additional data analysis, and feedback from college stakeholders resulted in the choice of **Personal and Social Responsibility** as the topic that would generate the greatest improvement in BRCC student learning and student success.

BRCC's QEP is structured in three parts and is explicitly designed to align with dimensions of personal and social responsibility embedded in the Personal and Social Responsibility Index (PSRI), designed by researchers at Iowa State University. The PSRI scale measures the climate of personal responsibility on a college campus along five dimensions: Striving for Excellence, Cultivating Academic Integrity, Contributing to a Larger Community, Taking Seriously the Perspective of Others, and Developing Competence in Ethical and Moral Reasoning. This measure was launched in association with the "LEAP" initiative, a 2005 effort of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Many essential learning outcomes in this initiative are organized around the broad topic of "Personal and Social Responsibility" and serve as the organizing principle for BRCC's three-part QEP.

The first focus of the QEP centers on ethics and integrity. The College will re-create our Honor Code by establishing an honor system equipped with academic and social values espoused by the institution, with particular emphasis on concepts surrounding the principles of "restorative justice" that are gaining a research and applied foothold in higher education. *Goal of Initiative One:* Improve student success through implementation of restorative justice online modules developed for students who violate the Honor Code.

A second area of the QEP develops a series of online modules aimed at enhancing student behavioral competencies and soft skills. Many students come to higher education ill-equipped with the basic tools necessary to assume personal responsibility for actions required as part of a successful collegiate life. The QEP will offer a series of interactive activities, taught by College faculty and staff, designed to broaden and deepen student understanding of specific topics related to the five dimensions of Personal and Social Responsibility. This structure will promote the engagement of employees from all over the College who will be offering workshops and interactive activities in a variety of areas related to soft skills. By engaging in interactive workshops, students' knowledge and understanding of specific aspects of personal and social responsibility will be enhanced, and they will improve their ability to be successful in the chosen program of study at the College. *Goal of Initiative Two:* Improve student success through student participation in online modules designed to enhance soft skills.

Finally, our third area of focus centers on increasing student ability to understand the perspective of others through the creation of a project similar to the well-known *Humans of New York* book and website. This initiative creates a yearly presentation that demonstrates the multiple perspectives of our campus community and assesses the impact of the creation and the presentation of the project through a pair of online modules. *Goal of Initiative Three:* Improve student success by enhancing their individual perspective-taking abilities. In particular, students will enhance the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to relate to others from different cultural perspectives.