



The College of Central Florida's (CF) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), "StartSmart@CF: Enhancing the First-Year Experience," enriches the student's first year of college and improves the environment for student learning by providing clear academic pathways designed with integrated support and engagement.

Our Quality Enhancement Plan, "StartSmart@CF," was selected following a year-long institutional search in which the college constituency – faculty, staff, students, administrators and community – reviewed our institutional data and engaged in discussion groups, roundtables and surveys to identify topics that aligned with the college's strategic plan. While a number of issues emerged during this phase, most concerning to faculty and staff were the challenges our students seem to face transitioning to CF. Our review of data and in-depth discussions about student learning indicated that many students lack the knowledge and skills to identify a program of study aligned with their interests and abilities, develop an appropriate academic plan, access support resources and persist to achieve their goals. It became clear that we could improve the environment for student learning at the college by providing a structured experience that would engage, guide, and support students in their critical first year.

The QEP Design Team analyzed internal and external data, conducted an extensive review of the literature on student success and engagement and examined best practices in first-year experience programs and services in developing the QEP. In addition, the Design Team established the following student learning goal to shape the design of strategies and actions:

Student Learning Goal: To improve students' capabilities to achieve their educational goals.

As a result of this research and planning process and to best achieve our student learning goal, StartSmart@CF is designed as a structured first-year experience that features developmental advising to guide and engage students along coherent academic pathways and support them with an integrated and software supported early intervention model to connect them more efficiently and effectively to vital resources. As they experience StartSmart@CF, we expect students will:

- Gain the knowledge and skills needed to identify a major program of study that matches their capabilities, interests, and educational/professional goals.
- Gain the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the detailed academic pathways that reflect their academic goals.
- Demonstrate increasing knowledge and skills necessary to overcome barriers to academic success.

StartSmart@CF aligns with the college's vision statement "to be the first choice for quality higher education in our community." It also supports the college's core values of empowerment, engagement and excellence by empowering students to navigate detailed academic program pathways, to engage with faculty and staff to attain academic success, and to excel in the academic planning skills necessary to attain their educational goals.

Contact Information:

Karla Brantley Wilson, Implementation Director StartSmart@CF  
Associate Professor, Psychology  
wilsonkb@cf.edu