

## *Launching Better Learners through Critical Thinking*

### **Patrick Henry Community College**

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC) in Martinsville, Virginia focuses on the development of critical thinking skills, a topic energized with infinite possibilities for students, faculty, staff, and the community at large. Aligning with PHCC's mission and vision, the QEP seeks to improve students' critical thinking skills in every decision made in their academic and personal lives. By developing the students' problem-solving skills, as well as their abilities to use deductive and inductive reasoning to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of arguments, conclusions, and issues, the QEP has the potential to make a long-lasting impact on the lives of each student. To that end, the following student learning outcomes are in place:

- Conceptualize and construct deductive and inductive arguments.
- Evaluate the credibility of sources of information and opinion and determine when and what additional information is needed for a given purpose.
- Analyze common types of information, generalizations, and reasoning.
- Synthesize, make inferences, and actively apply learned concepts in different curricula contexts.

The QEP also establishes a systematic structure of assessment whereby each of the student outcomes can be regularly measured. Using numerous types of formative assessments, as well as the California Test of Critical Thinking Skills (CTCTS) as its primary summative assessment, the QEP sets forth the following three goals:

- By the end of year three (spring 2010), all PHCC graduates will score at or above the test norms in all sub-categories of the CTCTS.
- By the end of year five (spring 2012), all PHCC graduates will score at or above the Virginia Community College System average in all sub-categories of the CTCTS.
- By the end of year five (spring 2012), the graduates of PHCC will demonstrate growth of 2.0 or better (based upon entrance scores) in all sub-categories of the Critical Thinking Core Competencies test (California Test of Critical Thinking Skills).

Numerous strategies are in place to ensure that the Patrick Henry Community College QEP improves the critical thinking abilities of students and impacts their lives for years to come.

#### **Contact Information:**

Greg Hodges, Assistant Dean of Arts, Science, and Business Technology  
276-656-0213; [ghodges@ph.vccs.edu](mailto:ghodges@ph.vccs.edu)