

Assessment

Internal Assessment

The QEP Director, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, members of the QEP Committee, and additional First Year Experience faculty developed two internal assessments to evaluate the QEP Student Learning Outcomes: an ePortfolio and a pre- and post-test. The ePortfolio, the culminating project for First Year Experience, includes assignments that specifically assess critical thinking skills, such as concept mapping, reflection of service learning, and letter to a freshman, and the relationships among the Student Learning Outcomes, the ePortfolio, and the ePortfolio assignments are illustrated in the Student Learning Outcome chart below.

The pre- and post-test is administered each semester. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment compiles the data and submits results to the QEP Director, who uses the data to provide updates to the President's Cabinet and the QEP Committee to facilitate curriculum changes and course redesign in consultation with First Year Experience faculty.

Table 10.1: Outcome Assessment Matrix

Student Learning Outcome	In-Class Assignment	ePortfolio Rubric Assessment Component	External Assessment(s)	QUEST Component
1) Analyze claims and supporting evidence of arguments.	Concept Map	Critical Thinking: Assessment of content, insight, and analysis of arguments and information.	CCSSE Question 5d: "Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods"; ETS Analytic Skills Section: "Analyzing and evaluating arguments, including understanding or assessing the structure of the argument independent of the evidence offered, such as identifying stated and unstated premises, conclusions and intermediate steps"; ETS Synthetic Skills Section: "Understanding implications and consequences, including identifying unstated conclusions or implications and consequences that go beyond the original argument."	Use; Evaluate
2) Reflect and make connections between their educational and personal experiences.	Service Learning Reflection; Letter to a Freshman; Common Novel Reflection	Reflections: Assessment of connections between educational and personal experiences.	CCSSE Question 5b: "Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory"; CCSSE Question 5c: "Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways."	Use; Test
3) Ask pertinent questions to solve authentic problems.	Academic Plan	Connections: Assessment of connections to course topics and solutions to authentic problems/situations.	CCSSE Question 5e: "Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations"; CCSSE Question 5f: "Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill."	Question; Use; Solve

*The ePortfolio serves as an internal assessment.

**The FYE pre/post test also provides internal assessment data.

External Assessments

In spring and summer 2017, the QEP External Assessment Subcommittee met to examine nationally recognized, reliable, and valid assessments that could measure growth of critical thinking skills within the First Year Experience milieu, considering institutional capability. The Subcommittee recommended, and the QEP Committee adopted, the ETS Proficiency Profile and the CCSSE, based on the charts below. Although MSCC had offered CCSSE every second year, alternating with SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement), the QEP budget allows CCSSE assessment each year for the next five years. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment arranged for Center of Community College Student Engagement to include specific, institutionally designed questions to address students' perceptions regarding their experiences regarding critical thinking within coursework at MSCC as part of the annual CCSSE.

Table 10.2: Relevant CCSSE Scores

CCSSE Critical Thinking Means			
Item/Year	Motlow Mean	Medium College Mean	Cohort Mean
Item 5: During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?			
1 = Very little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much			
5b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.			
2012	2.80	2.90	2.90
2013	2.84	2.90	2.91
2014	2.81	2.91	2.92
2015	2.82	2.92	2.93
2016	2.80	2.93	2.94
2017	2.84	2.90	2.91
5c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways.			
2012	2.80	2.77	2.78
2013	2.69	2.77	2.78
2014	2.73	2.78	2.79
2015	2.66	2.80	2.80
2016	2.71	2.81	2.81
2017	2.76	2.87	2.88
5d. Making judgements about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods.			
2012	2.56	2.57	2.61
2013	2.61	2.60	2.61
2014	2.62	2.62	2.62
2015	2.56	2.63	2.64
2016	2.60	2.64	2.65
2017	2.63	2.64	2.66
5e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.			
2012	2.61	2.70	2.71
2013	2.57	2.71	2.72
2014	2.66	2.72	2.73
2015	2.59	2.74	2.74
2016	2.55	2.74*	2.75*
2017	2.59	2.74	2.76
5f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill.			
2012	2.68	2.83	2.83
2013	2.65	2.83	2.84
2014	2.77	2.86	2.86
2015	2.62	2.87*	2.87*
2016	2.69	2.87	2.87
2017	2.64	2.85*	2.86*

At the end of each entering student’s sophomore year, he or she will be required to take the ETS Exit Exam. This exam measures students’ ability to use critical thinking skills and provides proficiency scores for the institution.

Table 10.3: ETS Proficiency Profile

ETS Critical Thinking Proficiency Score 2012-2017		
Year	Proficient	Not Proficient
2012-13	4%	76%
2013-14	3%	78%
2014-15	4%	76%
2015-16	2%	77%
2016-17	2%	77%

MSCC’s QEP title QUEST is an acronym that stands for question, use information, evaluate data to solve problems, and test solutions. Each of these elements is a skill needed for critical thinking. As evident in the table provided, each element of the QEP acronym corresponds with a Student Learning Outcome and subsequently aligns with assessments.

10.4: Outcome Assessment Matrix

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For further information on Motlow State's Quality Enhancement Plan, please contact: Meagan McManus, QEP Committee Chair, mmcmanus@mscc.edu or Dr. Scott Cook, Vice President of Quality Assurance and Performance Funding, scook@mscc.edu