Northern Virginia Community College
Quality Enhancement Plan
*Revised April 2012*

**GPS for Success:**
Teaching and Learning through Academic Advising

Reaffirmation of Accreditation
Dates of On-Site Review: November 15 – 17, 2011
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Preface

The QEP Development Committee appreciates the thoughtful feedback in the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee On-Site Review. The QEP Development Committee has revised the chapters on Desired Student Learning Outcomes, Timeline, and Assessment. Details of these revisions are described below.

As stated in the QEP, research states that the relationship with the faculty advisor has an impact on students. NOVA recognizes that it takes more than merely identifying one’s faculty advisor to address this importance. The intent is to ensure that students in the QEP population meet with their faculty advisor. The student learning outcomes have been revised to include a new outcome (1.4) that addresses this issue: First-time-to-college curricular students who are recent high school graduates will develop the practice of meeting with a Faculty Advisor. The Advising Specialist will ensure that the student has been assigned to an appropriate Faculty Advisor, will notify the student and Faculty Advisor of the assignment, and will verify that the student has met with the Faculty Advisor before registering for the spring semester. An evaluation and assessment of this student learning outcome is addressed in the assessment chapter.

The term “academic goal” is defined in the revised Desired Student Learning Outcomes chapter. The term “semester-by-semester academic plan” that was addressed in the original QEP needs clarification. To elucidate the intent of the academic plan, it has been renamed the “academic program completion plan,” and is defined in the revised chapter on Desired Student Learning Outcomes. A revised student learning outcome, now outcome 1.5, addresses the development of the academic program completion plan: First-time-to-college curricular students who are recent high school graduates will develop an “academic program completion plan,” organized by semester, with guidance from an advisor. An evaluation and assessment of this student learning outcome is addressed in the assessment chapter.

The QEP Development Committee recognizes ambiguity of the “when necessary” clause in the original student learning outcomes for continuing students. A key question to ask is “Who gets to make the decision that revision is necessary?” An advisor may understand the factors that lead to the need to revise a student’s goal, program of study, or program completion plan. However, it is the student’s understanding and eventual actions that are key. Advisors will indicate whether a student should revise goals, program, or plans, and will communicate such guidance to the student. However, it is the student who makes the ultimate decision. The revised outcome (2.2) reads as follows: Continuing curricular students will determine if the academic goal, program of study, or academic program completion plan needs revision. An evaluation and assessment of this student learning outcome is addressed in the assessment section chapter.

NOVA has revised the assessment plans to be more comprehensive, systematic, and complete. All assessments will be coordinated by the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, with cooperation from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment; the Advisory Council on Academic Planning and Advising, the campus Coordinators of Student Success; campus Faculty Advising Managers; and campus Implementation Task Forces. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising, a part of the Advisory Council, will inform the Administrative Council on a regular basis, and feedback will be used to improve implementation efforts.

The original QEP document referenced the use of the CCSSE, SENSE, and NOVA’s graduate survey to gauge the learning that occurs through the QEP. However, these assessment tools do not use identifiers, so it would not be possible to determine how the QEP population performs. In order to get an accurate picture of the QEP population’s performance, a new assessment plan has been developed. This plan includes the use of cohorts, an electronic checklist, assessments in the Blackboard e-learning platform, and focus groups, and is detailed in the revised chapter on Assessment.
I. Executive Summary

GPS for Success: Teaching and Learning through Academic Advising

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) is the largest institution of higher education in Virginia and one of the largest community colleges in the nation, serving over 75,000 students on six campuses and at three educational centers. With commitment to the values of access, opportunity, success, and excellence, we offer numerous degree and certificate programs in a wide variety of transfer and career fields. NOVA faculty and staff take great pride in providing our students with in-person and online post-secondary teaching, learning, and workforce development to ensure our region has an educated population and globally competitive workforce. We are fortunate to have students coming from more than 180 countries, making NOVA one of the most diverse colleges in the country.

NOVA has seen the reaffirmation process not only as an occasion to demonstrate compliance with the requirements and standards of The Principles of Accreditation but also as an opportunity to enhance the quality of our programs and services. NOVA’s QEP, GPS for Success: Teaching and Learning through Academic Advising, is an action plan to enhance students’ academic planning skills. Through our research, we have found that students need deliberate actions to help them develop the academic planning skills that will allow them to succeed in college. In particular, these skills are especially important for those curricular students who are first-time-to-college and recent high school graduates. Specifically, the QEP will focus on the Goals, Plans, and Strategies that students will develop in order to attain their academic goals.

NOVA continues its commitment to the quality of instruction and improving the quality of support services. By addressing the critical academic planning skills that students need to complete their programs, NOVA is dedicated to the success of its students. The GPS for Success will create opportunities for students to develop these skills through a comprehensive and consistent academic advising process. First-time-to-college curricular students who are recent high school graduates will develop academic goals, verify their program of study, identify their faculty advisor, and develop an academic plan. Continuing curricular students will evaluate their academic performance and revise their academic goals, program of study, and academic plan when necessary.

Advising is an opportunity to teach the student the crucial planning skills that will be invaluable beyond the student’s academic career. The GPS for Success: Teaching and Learning through Academic Advising, is a metaphor expressing the idea that advising is a tool to be used to guide a student’s academic career. Just as a GPS requires thoughtful input, the advising process demands that a student address critical issues, such as academic goals and choosing an appropriate program of study. The result is a well-thought-out plan that can be used and adapted, if necessary, to guide the student to success. This reflection on performance is another critical skill that the student will develop through academic advising. In short, the QEP is focused on improving students’ academic planning skills.
II. Process Used to Develop the QEP

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) followed the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requirement that the process for selecting and developing the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) includes “a broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies” (CS 3.3.2). The process used to develop the QEP occurred in a number of stages:

(1) Formation of Leadership Team and Reaffirmation Steering Committee

As required by the Commission on Colleges, NOVA established a Leadership Team for Reaffirmation of Accreditation. Members of the Leadership Team are:

Dr. Robert Templin, President
Dr. John Dever, Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Services; Accreditation Liaison
Dr. George Gabriel, Vice President of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment
Ms. Charlotte Calobrisi, Special Assistant for Compliance Certification; Associate Professor of English as a Second Language and French
Ms. Alison Thimblin, Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan; Assistant Professor of Mathematics

President Templin appointed the SACSCOC Reaffirmation Steering Committee at the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester. The chairs of the committee are Ms. Charlotte Calobrisi and Ms. Alison Thimblin (of the Leadership Team). The Steering Committee is made up of 20 individuals, representing all six campuses, the Extended Learning Institute, and College Staff (see appendix). These members, including administrative faculty, teaching faculty, professional faculty, and classified staff, were selected to represent the diverse NOVA college community. In addition to addressing the compliance certification, the Steering Committee was also tasked with oversight of the QEP. According to Dr. Templin’s charge (see appendix), the Reaffirmation Steering Committee would identify “the major topics under consideration followed by a recommendation of the top two or three topics by March 31, 2010. The topics should be ones that significantly advance the institution in accord with the goals of its strategic plan.” The Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis. Minutes of the meetings may be found on the NOVA Web site (http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/sacsaccreditation/steeringcommittee/index.html).

(2) Formation of Campus Committees and Identification of Topic

Participation in the QEP topic selection process was encouraged in a number of ways. Frequent articles were published in the Intercom, the weekly online college newsletter for faculty and staff. Multiple presentations were made across the campuses and to various college units, such as the Deans Working Group, the Academic Deans Council, the Instructional and Student Services Committee, the Professional Development Committee, and the College Senate.

Each campus formed a QEP committee (see appendix) to investigate institutional data and discuss ways that NOVA could significantly enhance student learning. These committees, made up of faculty, staff, and students, also discussed ways to disseminate information about the QEP proposal process. Faculty members were recruited through their campus provost and deans, while student participation was encouraged by student services staff on each campus. A Blackboard Organization was established for all participants to read, post, and discuss topics of interest.

To encourage student participation, separate student forums were held at the various campuses. Students were invited to enjoy a free lunch (pizza) and to discuss how NOVA could improve students’ learning experiences. Students were encouraged to speak freely, and assured that responses would be recorded as anonymous. In addition, student participation was encouraged through clubs and organizations. Solicitation from these student groups was made electronically (see appendix), and
responses were received by email and by campus mail. Feedback from the campus committees was presented to the Reaffirmation Steering Committee and the Administrative Council (the President’s immediate professional staff). Progress reports on the compliance certification and the QEP were discussed at a number of College Board meetings as well.

The campus committees were instrumental in forming the QEP Topic Proposals. Proposals were solicited from October 2009 through March 2010. These preliminary proposals were shared with a variety of college groups (such as the Reaffirmation Steering Committee, the Deans Working Group, the Instructional and Student Services Committee, the College Senate, and the Achieving the Dream Core Team) in order to receive feedback to refine the proposals. Achieving the Dream is a national initiative focused on helping close the gap in achievement and success for community college students. Through the initiative, colleges are encouraged to create a culture of evidence, to track and monitor student success, and to develop best practices for serving students.

The proposals were submitted to the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee, which carefully reviewed them. The top four proposals were forwarded to the Administrative Council, with recommendations from the Steering Committee. In April 2010, the Administrative Council affirmed the selection of the QEP topic, Enhanced Academic Advising. The next chapter, “Identification of the Topic,” details a full accounting of the selection of the topic.

(3) Formation of the QEP Development Committee and Topic Development

In order to fully develop the QEP, a diverse QEP Development Committee was formed. Due to the size of this committee (30 members), a leadership group of this committee, called the Operational Group, was established. At the end of the Spring 2010 semester, each provost nominated at least two representatives (at least one teaching faculty and one student services member) to the QEP Development Committee, based on their commitment and dedication to academic advising. In addition, there is representation from Achieving the Dream, First Year Experience, Pathway to the Baccalaureate, and the Extended Learning Institute. A number of key administrative personnel were identified as resources for the QEP Development Committee, including the following:

- Special Assistant for Compliance Certification
- Vice President for Research, Planning, and Assessment
- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Associate Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management
- Coordinator, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Associate Vice President for Academic Services
- Vice President for Instructional and Information Technology

The Administrative Council affirmed the QEP Development Committee membership in August 2010 (see appendix).

As stated in the charge to the QEP Development Committee from President Templin (see the appendix), and in accordance with the SACSCOC Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation, the QEP Development Committee was asked to

- Define the student learning outcomes
- Research the topic
- Identify the actions to be implemented
- Establish the timeline for implementation
- Organize for success
- Identify necessary resources
- Assess the success of the QEP
- Prepare the QEP for submission to the COC
The QEP Development Committee worked closely with the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee, the Administrative Council, and other college units and initiatives in order to foster faculty, staff, and student support for the project.

(4) Formation of Implementation Committees

In order to implement the QEP, a number of committees have been formed to develop and carry out the actions specified in the plan. Members of the QEP Development Committee are committed to the development of training resources (discussed in “Actions to be Implemented”). Each campus will form a Campus Implementation Task Force to address campus-specific issues. The chair of each task force, as well as the Special Assistant for the QEP, will form a college-wide Implementation Task Force to ensure a consistent plan across the college. In addition, a college-wide Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising, made up of Provosts, Deans of Students, the Special Assistant for the QEP, and Academic and Student Services leadership, will be formed to provide guidance to the College Implementation Task Force. This Advisory Council will provide an updated annual plan regarding the ongoing implementation of the QEP to the President and the Administrative Council.

(5) Endorsement by College Units

Once the topic of improving academic planning skills through academic advising was identified, the college researched the current state of advising, and the benefits of a more consistent, comprehensive advising experience. The progress made by the QEP Development Committee was shared through numerous presentations during the Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011 semesters. Due to the nature of the topic of academic advising, it was crucial that students, as well as personnel from both student services and academic services had the opportunity to understand the objective of the QEP and had the opportunity to provide feedback. Presentations and breakout sessions at the college convocation, the classified staff convocation, the student services “Day of Learning,” and the spring Power Up Your Pedagogy college conference provided these opportunities to faculty and staff beyond the membership of the Reaffirmation Committee, Campus Committees, and QEP Development Committee. In addition, forums with various college groups were held to discuss specific QEP details (such as personnel, resources, training, and workload). These groups included campus provost staff meetings, the Deans of Students Working Group, the Academic Deans Council, registrars, new faculty, veteran faculty, and academic division classified staff. Student focus groups were held on multiple campuses to solicit student feedback on the direction of the QEP. NOVA’s talented communication design students were tasked with the creation of a logo for the QEP. Through both their in-class and outside-of-class discussions, these students have become very involved in the redesign of academic advising web pages on the NOVA Web site. By having this valuable student input, the QEP is being paved in part by those who will benefit from it.

The Administrative Council was updated frequently throughout the development of the QEP. Feedback and recommendations was taken back to the QEP Development Committee and Reaffirmation Steering Committee for consideration. On September 13, 2011, the QEP was endorsed by the Administrative Council (see appendix for minutes).
III. Identification of the Topic

Institutional Research and Identification of the Topic

As discussed in the previous chapter, during the Fall 2009 semester, campus committees were formed to investigate how NOVA could enhance student learning. Participants were provided with reports from NOVA’s Office of Institutional Research (see appendix for links to the reports on the NOVA Web site). The following is a summary of the reports reviewed by the campus QEP committees that provided the foundation for most of the discussions.

Graduate Surveys

Through the Office of Institution Research (OIR), the Graduate Survey collects information on graduates' employment and educational goals (Graduate Survey instrument in the appendix). The graduates are also asked to evaluate their academic instruction, instructors, and college services and facilities, and to provide feedback on their college experience through a series of questions: What was best about their education? What problems did they experience as students? How could the college improve its services? The campus QEP committees reviewed the responses from the classes of 2006 and 2008.

The responses of rated items were summarized in NOVA OIR Report No. 28-08, Evaluation of NOVA Instruction, Services, and Facilities: Class of 2006 and Report No. 24-10, Graduate Evaluation of NOVA Instruction, Services, and Facilities: Class of 2008. Students rated a number of items regarding NOVA: (1) education, (2) instruction, (3) faculty, and (4) services and facilities, using the following scale: excellent=4 points, good=3 points, average=2 points, below average=1 point, and poor=0 points. Campus committees focused on items that received the lowest scores in each category and items with average scores of less than 3 points. Most items in the education category had an average score of about 3, with the exception of "cooperating with others" in 2006 and "understanding international issues" in 2008. The rating of instruction resulted in average scores all greater than 3. Of the four items related to faculty, three scored higher than 3, and one item "faculty advisement" scored slightly less, with an average score of 2.96. Many items in the category "college services and facilities" had average scores slightly less than 3. However, there were a number of items with an average score less than 3 that concerned the campus committees. These included career and educational planning services, course and program advisement, personal counseling, and student activities. These items are summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Average 2006 Score</th>
<th>Average 2008 Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education: Cooperating with others</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: Understanding international issues</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty: Advisement</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Services and Facilities: Career and educational planning services</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Services and Facilities: Course program and advisement</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Services and Facilities: Personal counseling</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Services and Facilities: Student activities</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OIR Reports 26-08 and 24-10 summarize demographic responses as well as satisfaction with NOVA education, advising, and course availability. Responses from the classes of 2006 and 2008 were similar:
Satisfaction with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006 “Very Much Satisfied”</th>
<th>2008 “Very Much Satisfied”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course availability</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graduate survey also included three free response questions:

Question 1: What was best about your [NOVA] experience?
Question 2: What were the major problems, if any, in your NVCC experience?
Question 3: How can [NOVA] improve its instruction and service?

Many responses by the class of 2006 referred to improving academic advising services, including help with registration and guidance in the selection of an appropriate program and courses. Students also expressed frustration with a confusing advising process. Inconsistent communication and a lack of communication were also cited as problems. Responses by the class of 2008 were similar to those two years prior: Students were content with the quality of education they received, but expressed dissatisfaction with items related to academic advising.

National Surveys

NOVA participates in both the Community College of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE). The Office of Institutional Research prepared research reports on the Spring 2008 CCSSE, and these were also used to help identify the topic for the QEP. The OIR Research Report 25-08 explains

Every year, a set of colleges nationwide participate in the CCSSE. The survey focuses on exploring aspects of teaching, learning, and retention in community colleges. The purpose of the survey is to help the institutions assess their performance, identify the areas that merit attention, and help devise policies to maximize student outcomes and retention. The survey also serves as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of an institution’s past initiatives. Based on previous research in education, CCSSE has identified five areas that are important for quality educational practices: Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction and Support for Learners. These areas have been designated as benchmarks for assessing institutional performance. Each benchmark corresponds to a group of conceptually related items on the survey.

Campus committees reflected on the results of the 2008 CCSSE and compared NOVA’s performance to the average of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) institutions and to NOVA’s performance in previous years (see Research Report 24-08: CCSSE, Summary of 2008 Survey Results). Scores are standardized so that the national average for each benchmark is 50. The five benchmarks and comparisons are summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>NOVA</th>
<th>VCCS</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Effort</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Campus committees reviewed the results for each benchmark. Taking the results of the survey as a whole, committee members felt that students lacked college preparedness skills and were unable to receive the support needed to develop those skills. Personal experiences with students supported these ideas: Students expressed a lack of knowledge of the expectations of college and often did not have the ability to develop the skills that were required. While NOVA provides a variety of student support services, committees surmised that students were either unaware of their availability, or did not take advantage of them for other reasons. Through the institutional research, it became clear that students came to college without the requisite skills to succeed and with little appreciation of the demand college would impose on them. Moreover, they often lacked the ability to develop these skills without assistance.

NOVA’s participation in SENSE provided additional valuable information. The SENSE is an annual survey conducted by the Center for Community College Student Engagement and is administered to institutions across the country. NOVA was among the various community colleges that participated in the first nationwide survey in Fall 2009. The survey focuses on assessing student engagement in the early weeks of college life and was administered to NOVA students during the fourth and fifth weeks of the Fall 2009 semester. The SENSE measures performance among six benchmarks:

1. Early Connections
2. High Expectations and Aspirations
3. Clear Academic Plan and Pathway
4. Effective Track to College Readiness
5. Engaged Learning
6. Academic and Social Support Network

The QEP Development Committee started by reviewing a summary of the data in OIR Research Report 25-10, SENSE: Overall Benchmark Comparison. For all but two benchmarks, NOVA’s scores were similar to the national average or the average for other extra-large colleges. However, for the benchmarks Early Connections and Clear Academic Plan and Pathway, NOVA scored lower when compared to both groups:

![Figure 1: SENSE Benchmark Comparison](image)

Note that like the CCSSE, SENSE scores are standardized so that the average score of participating colleges is 50.
The questions related to the Early Connections benchmark asks students to respond to the following items using a five-point scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree:

1. The very first time I came to this college I felt welcome.
2. The college provided me with adequate information about financial assistance (scholarships, grants, loans, etc.).
3. A college staff member helped me determine whether I qualified for financial assistance.
4. At least one college staff member (other than an instructor) learned my name.

In addition, students are asked to respond “yes” or “no” to the following question:

5. A specific person was assigned to me so I could see him/her each time I needed information or assistance.

The benchmark Clear Academic Plan and Pathway asks students to respond to the following items using a five point scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree:

1. I was able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient for me.
2. An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester/quarter.
3. An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major.
4. An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them.
5. A college staff member talked with me about my commitments outside of school (work, children, dependents, etc.) to help me figure out how many courses to take.

NOVA’s core and campus Achieving the Dream teams have been instrumental in the analysis and dissemination of the data from SENSE. A team of faculty and staff involved with the NOVA Achieving the Dream Initiative and the Chair of the QEP Development Committee attended the Entering Student Success Institute (ESSI) in March 2011. Participation at ESSI allowed an in-depth look at the SENSE data and an opportunity to develop an agenda to address critical benchmarks. Through these discussions, this group focused on the ways that NOVA could improve students’ early experiences and help students develop a clear academic plan. Items relating to the Early Connection benchmark were beginning to be addressed by the Achieving the Dream initiative, such as new student orientation and student orientation and advising sessions. As themes emerged and the focus of the QEP was refined, it became clear that the QEP should concentrate on helping students develop the skills and abilities to develop an academic plan and pathway.

Emerging Themes

Through the investigation of these reports, several themes emerged, most of which have overlapping concerns. College readiness, academic preparedness, and collaborative learning opportunities were themes echoed across campuses. In discussions, many students stated they lacked the academic planning skills to successfully reach their goals. Faculty noted students were unable to articulate their academic goals. Those students who did have well-stated goals felt frustrated they did not have the guidance (or were unaware of available services) needed to develop an academic plan.

In addition, student discussion groups were held at multiple campuses. Students were introduced to the QEP concept and were asked (1) what they thought was best about their NOVA education so far; and (2) how NOVA could improve their education. Students praised a number of individual faculty and staff for positive in-classroom and out-of-classroom experiences. In addition, students expressed satisfaction with the quality of instruction. When discussing issues to be improved, students mentioned items of universal concern: cafeteria food, parking, and the cost of textbooks. Students cited specific instances of excellence with student services personnel and Faculty Advisors. However, overall,
students expressed dissatisfaction with guidance and the availability of help regarding (a) registration, (b) course selection, and (c) academic planning.

To investigate student opinion on the themes that emerged, teaching faculty were asked to post a survey of student learning needs in their Blackboard courses and to encourage students to take the survey. Students were surveyed on their interest in various topics that had been discussed during the faculty and staff discussion groups. From November 2009 – February 2010, there were over 2500 responses. Students overwhelmingly stated the need for a variety of skills and abilities that could be developed through academic advising. For instance, nearly 70% of students need help in understanding how their NOVA education will transfer to a four-year institution, over 65% of respondents agree that they need help determining which classes to take, and over half stated that they needed help setting educational goals.

To ensure that a variety of topics were being considered, a QEP Blackboard Organization was established in Fall 2009. (A Blackboard Organization is a convenient way for a group of individuals to access the same documents and participate in asynchronous online discussions.) This enabled campus participants to continue the discussion of the topics that were brought up at the campus meetings. Each campus had its own discussion board to post reflections on various topics and could read posts from other campuses. The following is a list of the topics that garnered the most discussion:

- Academic Advising
- Capstone Projects or Portfolios
- Citizenship Across the Curriculum
- Creating Connections between Faculty and Students
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Curriculum-Centered Education
- Improving Students’ Organizational and Planning Skills
- Increasing Graduation Rates
- Leadership
- Retention and Persistence
- Service Learning
- Student Retention and Motivation
- Using Technology in the Classroom
- Writing Across the Curriculum

These discussions became a basis for the development of preliminary proposals, which is discussed in the next section.

Call for Proposals

A call for proposals was posted in the October 9, 2009 and October 16, 2009 issues of The Intercom (see appendix for QEP Proposal template). Readers were encouraged to reference the above-mentioned data reports when drafting proposals. In addition, the QEP Update, an official NOVA blog (http://novaqep1.blogspot.com/), was created to inform the NOVA community about the QEP process. In December 2009, preliminary proposals from the campus discussion groups were posted:

- Service Learning: Integrating service projects and classroom learning.
- Learner-Centered (21st Century) Classrooms: Rethinking how we teach and changing the physical space in which we teach.
- Getting Back on Track: How can NOVA help students who are on academic warning or probation?
- Increasing College Readiness: Taking college-level classes, preparing for the future, understanding expectations, placement exam issues and more!
• Citizenship Across the Curriculum: Assuring that acquire a basic understanding of the world in which they live and the important place they occupy within it.
• Faculty-Student Collaboration: Increasing the opportunities for students and faculty to work together outside of the classroom.
• Curriculum-Centered Education: Establishing a repository for course information and being accountable for what we teach.

To reach out to the broader NOVA community, a video was posted on the “In the Spotlight” section of the NOVA homepage at the beginning of the Spring 2010 semester. The purpose of the video was to further educate the NOVA community about the QEP and to encourage participation in the topic selection process. Members of the NOVA community were encouraged to visit the QEP Update so they could read the proposals and participate in the identification of the topic. The preliminary proposals were shared with all campuses through each Provost Staff, as well as various college committees and units for feedback. It should be noted that each of the proposals was developed through a collaborative process. Feedback from committees was shared with the authors of the proposals, and were then revised and updated. This process increased the awareness of the QEP and encouraged participation in the QEP development.

The following preliminary proposals were refined and submitted to the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee (click on links to go to proposals):

- Improving College Readiness
- Getting Back on Track through Early Warning
- Enhanced Faculty-Student Collaboration
- First Year Experience
- Enhanced Academic Advising
- Citizenship Across the Curriculum
- Increasing Math and Science Literacy for Non-Majors
- Experiential Learning

**Topic Selection**

Several of the proposals had common themes. The “Enhanced Academic Advising” proposal was revised to incorporate items from both the “Improving College Readiness” and “Enhanced Faculty-Student Collaboration” proposals. The “First Year Experience” proposal was revised and renamed as “Early Academic Engagement.” The revised proposals were posted on the QEP Update blog and sent to all Reaffirmation Steering Committee members. The NOVA Reaffirmation Steering Committee reviewed the proposals carefully and selected four proposals that showed the greatest prospect of having a significant effect on student learning, and were closely tied to NOVA’s mission and strategic vision. These members were asked to rank their top three choices. The following table displays the choices of the Reaffirmation Steering Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enhanced Academic Advising</th>
<th>Early Academic Engagement</th>
<th>Increasing Math &amp; Science Literacy for Non-majors</th>
<th>Citizenship Across the Curriculum</th>
<th>Experiential Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>total “first choice” selections</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>total “third choice”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The following four proposals were presented to the Administrative Council for consideration: Citizenship Across the Curriculum, Early Academic Engagement, Enhanced Academic Advising, and Increasing Math and Science Literacy for Non-Majors. (The Reaffirmation Steering Committee decided that two of the proposals – Early Academic Engagement and Enhanced Academic Advising – had very similar objectives, and sent both proposals instead of choosing one of them.). Summaries of these proposals were published in the April 2, 2010 issue of The Intercom (http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/040210.pdf).

In April 2010, the proposals were presented to the Administrative Council. The Administrative Council concluded that Enhanced Academic Advising possessed the greatest potential for making a substantial improvement in “the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution” (SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.12). The response from the Administrative Council (see appendix) included the following recommendations:

- The QEP should include components from the proposal for Early Academic Engagement
- The QEP should deal with the span of a student’s total career at NOVA, but “particular focus should be given to the student’s early stages. During these early stages, it is critical that students, particularly recent high school graduates or those placed in developmental studies, receive guidance in setting their educational goals and understanding what is required to reach them” (Administrative Council minutes 4/13/10).

In addition, the Administrative Council recommended that the QEP should be:

- College-wide in scope
- Scalable in size
- Sustainable in terms of required financial support
- Focused on early engagement while providing coverage for the whole student career
- Directly supportive of student success (retention, persistence, graduation, successful transfer or entry into the workforce)
- Connected with student learning outcomes (particularly the General Education goal for Personal Development)

Academic advising has been shown to be a key factor in student success, and it is clearly aligned with NOVA’s general education goal for personal development, which calls for students to develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding to make informed academic, social, personal, career and interpersonal decisions. It is expected that the creation of an action plan to help students develop these abilities will have a significant impact on student learning at NOVA.

Focusing the Topic

The QEP Development Committee (see earlier chapter entitled “Process Used to Develop the QEP”) was tasked with focusing the topic and forming the plan. In order to create a plan with an appropriate focus, it was necessary to investigate the current structure of academic advising at NOVA. To guide the investigation, the QEP Development Committee referenced a report by the Loudoun Campus Advising Task Force. This Task Force made the following three recommendations:

1. Faculty advising is the best mechanism to help students move in, move through, and move on from college.
2. The relationship between the Faculty Advisor and the student advisee is one that needs development.

3. The goal of academic advising should be to assist students in clarifying, affirming, and reaching goals.

To understand the current state of faculty advising at the college, a thorough investigation was conducted at each campus. Findings showed that at the Alexandria, Annandale, Loudoun, Manassas, and Woodbridge campuses, there was a mixture of processes, with little consistency within or across campuses. Some students received preliminary and continuing advising at the Student Services Center (by Educational Support Specialists or Counselors). Others received preliminary advising through Student Services, but were sent to academic divisions to be assigned to a Faculty Advisor for long term advising.

In order to get a clearer picture of students' use of academic advising resources, an online survey called “Student Usage of Academic Advising Resources” was created. Members of the QEP Development Committee who taught classes were asked to encourage their students to participate in the anonymous survey. The survey was available from mid-November 2010 until February 2011. Some of the results were alarming: nearly 64% of respondents indicated that they determined their academic goals on their own; nearly 53% responded that they had not met with their Faculty Advisor and did not know the identity of that individual; over 35% decided on their program of study at the time of application to NOVA and over 56% made this decision on their own. When asked which resources were used when selecting courses for the Fall 2010 semester, answers were varied (respondents were allowed to choose more than one response):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a counselor in the student services center</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an advisor in the student services center</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one or more of my professors</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my friends or classmates</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the NOVA “Advising Sheet” for my program</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone in the academic department</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the NOVA Web site</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the NOVA Schedule of Classes</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some interesting comments (as directed when the respondent selected “other”) revealed that courses were selected based on opinions posted on a Web site that rates professors or information found on Web sites of four-year institutions. Some students indicated that they did not refer to any resources when choosing courses. A free response question asked for suggestions to improve academic advising. Many responses included references to needing an advisor or counselor. (For the survey instrument used, please see appendix.)

The QEP Development Committee recognized that in order for students to succeed academically, they must have improved academic planning skills. Academic advising can be an ambiguous phrase; the true purpose of advising is to help the student grow. To help better understand academic advising, a number of QEP Development Committee members attended the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Advising Summer Institute in 2010 and again in 2011. It is through participation with NACADA that NOVA has learned that advising is a teaching and learning process. Advising is not just a service that is provided; it is an opportunity to teach the student the crucial planning skills that will be invaluable beyond the student’s academic career. Thus, the QEP became the GPS for Success: Teaching and Learning through Academic Advising. The GPS metaphor
expresses the idea that advising is a tool that can be used to guide a student’s academic career. Just as a GPS requires the user to think about his or her destination, advising requires the student to make a connection between his or education and academic goal. The QEP will focus on the Goals, Plans, and Strategies that students will develop in order to reach their academic goals. The result is a well-thought-out plan that can be used, and adapted if necessary, to guide the student to success. In short, the QEP is focused on improving students’ academic planning skills. In order to make this change in the advising culture at NOVA, there are a number of issues to address:

1. What is the goal of academic advising and what do we expect the student to learn?
2. Who should provide academic advising?
3. When should the student engage in advising?
4. What kinds of resources are needed to provide quality academic advising that will result in significant learning?

These issues are addressed in the following chapters.
IV. Desired Student Learning Outcomes

The purpose of NOVA’s QEP, GPS for Success, is to improve students’ academic planning skills. A student with enhanced academic planning skills will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to make informed academic decisions. The goals of the QEP are to (1) improve the academic planning skills of first-time-to-college, curricular students who are recent high school graduates; and (2) improve the academic planning skills of continuing curricular students. Student are classified as curricular when they select a major, which is usually done at the time of application, or shortly thereafter. Each of the QEP goals has related student learning outcomes and process-related outputs. These goals are depicted in the figure below:

![Diagram of QEP goals](image)

**Figure 2:** QEP goals. This figure depicts the objective, purpose, and goals for the QEP.

The goals of the GPS for Success are in alignment with NOVA’s Strategic Vision: Gateway to the American Dream, particularly student success. NOVA’s eight strategic goals focus on student success, access, teaching and learning, excellence, leadership, partnerships, resources, and emergency preparedness and continuity of operations. NOVA’s mission and a summary of the strategic goals are found in the appendix. For the complete Strategic Vision: Gateway to the American Dream document, please visit the Web site [http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/directories--offices/administrative-offices/college-planning/planning/NOVA2015GatewayStrategicPlanrevisionNov2010.pdf](http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/directories--offices/administrative-offices/college-planning/planning/NOVA2015GatewayStrategicPlanrevisionNov2010.pdf)

The goals of the GPS for Success are based on NOVA’s personal development general education goals (see the appendix for the complete list of NOVA’s general education goals):

- Personal Development—Students will demonstrate the ability to
  a) develop and/or refine personal wellness goals, and
  b) develop and/or enhance the knowledge, skills, and understanding to make informed academic, social, personal, career, and interpersonal decisions.

Specifically, the GPS for Success is focused on the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to make informed academic decisions.

The QEP Development Committee developed the student learning outcomes by considering the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students with excellent academic planning skills should have. After discussion a number of outcomes, the Development Committee agreed that a student should be able to
• form academic goals
• make informed decisions
• understand the interrelation of academic, career and personal goals
• identify resources for and pathways towards stated goals
• appreciate the advising process
• develop self-confidence
• understand how to deal with barriers towards achieving goals
• develop a healthy and lasting relationship with the college
• develop self advocacy

Through our research, we found that in order to attain these outcomes, NOVA must see advising as more than course selection and class scheduling. Instead, it is imperative to understand the hierarchy of advising. Instead of treating advising as course selection and class scheduling, the advising process must address a hierarchy of needs:

• goal setting
• program placement verification
• course selection
• class scheduling
• reflection on performance

This hierarchy is discussed further in the next chapter (“Literature Review”).

The QEP Development Committee proposed a set of learning outcomes based on this hierarchy, with guidance from NOVA’s Coordinator of Academic Assessment. After thorough discussions with the Development Committee, the Instructional and Student Services Committee, the Deans Working Group, the Coordinator for Assessment, Student Services, the Reaffirmation Steering Committee, and the Administrative Council, the student learning outcomes were refined. Following the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee On-Site Review, the student learning outcomes were revised as follows:

1. First-time-to-college curricular students who are recent high school graduates will
   1.1. develop an academic goal
   1.2. select a program of study aligned with their academic goal
   1.3. identify their Faculty Advisor
   1.4. develop the practice of meeting with a Faculty Advisor
   1.5. develop an “academic program completion plan,” organized by semester, with guidance from an advisor

2. Continuing curricular students will
   2.1. evaluate their academic performance
   2.2. determine if the academic goal, program of study, or academic program completion plan need revision

The Student Learning Outcomes for the GPS for Success are based on the academic planning skills that a student needs in order to be successful. A student’s definition of success can vary. Often, a student comes to the community college without a defined goal. The primary objective of the GPS for Success includes the student’s development of an academic goal and determining the plans to achieve that goal. In order to clarify what is meant by “academic goal,” the Campus Implementation Task Forces, in conjunction with the Deans of Students and the QEP Development Committee, developed the following definition:

A student’s academic goal is a statement of his/her expected outcome of attending NOVA. A student’s academic goal should answer the questions “Why are you here at NOVA?” and “How will
you know when you’ve met your goal?” Students may develop a NOVA-centric goal while also keeping a long-term goal in mind. The student’s academic goal may be, but is not limited to:

- personal enrichment
- industry/job certification
- improvement of skills to be more marketable when searching for a job
- an associate’s degree
- transfer to a 4-year institution
- the discovery of interests, skills, and values that will help them choose a program of study

A student may indicate that he/she has multiple goals. Students may need to be referred to counselors (particularly transfer and career counselors) in order to develop an academic goal. A student’s academic goal is not expected to remain constant while at NOVA. It is highly recommended that students develop their academic goals with the guidance of an advisor. Students should have the opportunity to reevaluate and revise their academic goals, with guidance from an advisor.

The student will develop the “academic program completion plan” by mapping out the required courses, as soon as he/she selects a program of study. This mapping process will start prior to the student’s first semester with guidance from the Advising Specialist, and will continue with guidance from the Faculty Advisor. The intent is that the student understands that the completion of a program of study requires thoughtful planning (i.e. a GPS can only guide you if you know where you want to go). The student should map out the academic program completion plan by the end of the first semester, with the understanding that the plan will require reflection and, perhaps, revision. With the upgrade of NOVA’s Student Information System, this academic program completion plan will be recorded electronically, so it can be shared with students and advisors.

The GPS for Success goals are also directly related to a number of initiatives developed as part of NOVA’s participation in Achieving the Dream. These include a redesigned SDV 100: College Success Skills course, Student Orientation Advising and Registration (SOAR), New Student Orientation (NSO) and First Year Experience (FYE). The goals of the QEP are meant to complement those of these initiatives, concentrating on enhancing academic planning skills. In order to understand how the GPS for Success fits in with the other initiatives, a brief summary of initiative is necessary.

First semester students are encouraged to register for SDV 100: College Success Skills (or another 100-level SDV course). The four categories of outcomes for SDV 100 are

1. Knowledge of campus/college community, policies and procedures
2. Skills for academic success
3. Self-management and
4. Decision making (academic, personal and career).

First-time college students are encouraged to take SDV 100 during their first semester, and are required to take the course within their first 16 credits. As the course description reads, SDV 100 assists students to make a successful transition to college. Provides students with the academic tools for success and teaches the skills of self-management and self-responsibility that relate to being a successful student. Helps students learn how to make responsible choices about their academic, personal, and career goals. Provides information about the College and community resources, the College’s policies and procedures, and the processes of moving effectively through the educational system.
SDV 100 focuses on the knowledge about college resources and developing skills to become responsible students. The GPS for Success complements the goals of SDV 100 by focusing on the planning skills that students require to form and reach academic goals. More information about SDV 100 can be found on the NOVA Web site (http://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/teaching-support/achievingdream/studentdevelopmentorientation.html).

The purpose of the SOAR program is to provide orientation and advising sessions that assist new college students in becoming academically oriented, while introducing students to resources and technology for advising, registration, and college support services. First-time to college students are directed to sign up for SOAR to receive first semester advising, help in understanding placement test scores and creating a class schedule, guidance about payment options and help in registering for courses. Enrolling in college for the first time can be overwhelming. SOAR has provided a structured environment to get the student started on the right path, making sure that certain procedures have been accomplished so that the student can focus on their academics once classes begin. The GPS for Success takes these beginning steps even further. NOVA wants students to recognize that planning is a skill that will help them achieve their goals. Planning for the first semester of courses is a great start, but not enough. The GPS for Success will provide students with the framework to learn planning skills and help them develop those skills as they plan for their academic success.

NSO is an all-day program designed for parents and students to learn about resources that support student success, such as transfer and career resources and financial aid specialists. Attendees also receive a tour of the campus. NSO is an opportunity to remind students that NOVA has abundant resources to help them navigate their way through college. The resources that students learn through NSO will be of service as students develop their academic planning skills through the GPS for Success. More information about SOAR and NSO can be found on the NOVA Web site (http://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/teaching-support/achievingdream/nso_soar.html).

Students may elect to register for the First Year Experience (FYE) program. The purpose of the FYE is “connection, critical thinking, and connection to community.” One of the goals of FYE is to continue the relationship that students build through SOAR and NSO. Establishing and maintaining a connection between the student and NOVA allows the student to be aware of services that can help the student succeed. Students will develop critical thinking skills through activities in and outside of the classroom. Activities include a common reader and special programs. Community building and connection is made through the first year student convocation, peer mentoring, social events, and meaningful service learning opportunities. The GPS for Success complements FYE by providing the structure to learn how to reach academic goals, as well as a way to assess whether students are learning these skills. More information about FYE can be found on the NOVA Web site (http://www.nvcc.edu/current-students/services-to-students/fye/learn-about-fye/index.html). For more information about the Achieving the Dream Initiative, please visit NOVA’s Achieving the Dream Web site (http://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/teaching-support/achievingdream/index.html).

The GPS for Success is a mechanism for the student to learn the skills needed to plan for academic success. It does not occur alongside any initiative, but through all student success initiatives and support services that the college offers.
Students must navigate a number of processes in order to succeed. The GPS for Success provides a roadmap for the students, but requires thought and input from the student and the ability to interpret, evaluate, and adjust the output. The plan for the GPS for Success includes the institutional structures necessary for this journey to happen, as well as the opportunities for learning to take place. In order for these learning outcomes to be gained, a restructuring of academic advising must occur at NOVA. These procedures and plans are discussed at length in the chapter entitled “Actions to be Implemented.”
V. Literature Review and Best Practices

Today’s undergraduate institutions typically consider a student’s academic and non-academic experiences as separate entities. Pascarella and Terenzini (1995) explain that this separation dates back to 1870, when the president of Harvard appointed a student dean to handle discipline issues that resulted from increasingly rigid rules. According to Kuhn (2008), the student rebellions led to the elective system. This new offering of choices led to the need for advisors to help students pursue their goals. By the 1940s, a student-centered philosophy emerged in higher education. In 1949, the American Council on Education published the *Student Personnel Point of View*, which is the foundation of modern student services provided by “trained, sympathetic counselors.”

As described in the Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising Programs developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) (2005), “the primary purpose of Academic Advising Programs (AAP) is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans” (p. 3).

The role of academic advising in a student’s academic career cannot be understated:

Academic advising is the single most important relationship offered to students by an institution of higher education. It is through this relationship that students will engage in a critical narrative process that will give shape and meaning to their curricular and life choices and through which they come to understand the interconnections of knowledge and the curricula. (McGillan, 2003, p. 88)

Paradigm Shifts in Academic Advising

Kuhn (2008) explains that the 1970s saw a shift in the nature of academic advising. Academic advising became an “examined activity.” (Frost, 2000) The formation of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in the late seventies allowed institutions to compare (or in Frost’s word, “examine”) their advising systems. NACADA (2006) describes academic advising as

a series of intentional interactions with a curriculum, a pedagogy, and a set of student learning outcomes. Academic advising synthesizes and contextualizes students’ educational experiences within the frameworks of their aspirations, abilities and lives to extend learning beyond campus boundaries and timeframes.

Today we have come to realize, as NACADA reinforces, that advising in its broadest sense is teaching. However, this is not an entirely new concept. In his seminal article “A Developmental View of Academic Advising as Teaching,” Crookston (1972) explains that advising must be seen as a teaching experience. Advising functions become teaching functions as students learn to make decisions, solve problems, and evaluate decisions. Crookston used the phrase “developmental advising” to describe the advising experience as it promotes personal growth. King (2005) notes that “developmental academic advising is both a process and an orientation,” and that many scholars have shown that it is based on both cognitive developmental theory and psychosocial theory. Baxter-Magolda and King (2008) describe the learning as a transformation of cognitive skills, epistemological development, intrapersonal development, and interpersonal development. Traditional-age college students have not yet developed the capacities to act on their own, and “view faculty and academic advisers alike as having the formula for students’ academic and career success” (p. 8). This prescriptive view by students demonstrates the need for better communication. Reflective conversations in academic advising promote a “learning partnership” that will “enable [students] to make better informed academic decisions and learn what it means to take responsibility for their academic and life choices” (p. 11).
If advising is delivered via the traditional, prescriptive relationship between advisor and student, then student learning might not occur. Prescriptive advising results in conflicting views on responsibility: The student assumes that the advisor is the authority and the advisor assumes that the student will perform what is prescribed. When the desired results are not attained, blame is assigned to the other and the advising relationship is strained. Advising becomes an added activity to the faculty, and in an environment where faculty are asked to do more with less, it becomes a burden.

In contrast, the developmental advising relationship recognizes that the advisor and student negotiate responsibility and action. Advising is not a service that is provided, but a collaborative exercise. Expectations are clearly defined and mutually understood. Developmental advising is an extension of learning and teaching beyond the classroom.

Grites and Gordon (2000) investigate the criticism of the developmental advising movement. The main argument is that academic advising has taken the focus of student development off of the mission of higher education. Critics argue that student development and affective learning have become the purpose of developmental advising, while advising about the curriculum and academic learning have been usurped. Grites and Gordon attribute this line of thinking to the ambiguous nature of the term “developmental advising” and the temptation to focus solely on affective learning. The authors argue that Crookston’s concept is a balance of personal and intellectual development. Developmental advising takes into account that students come to higher education with “many different motivations, values, abilities, and other personal characteristics” (p. 120). The role of the academic advisor is to take “all of these personal attributes into account in an effort to help students negotiate the curriculum most productively, effectively, and intellectually, as well as to set realistic academic and personal goals” (p. 120).

Hemwall and Trachte (2005) also state that the developmental model is problematic because of the counseling focus on students’ personal growth, which is often seen as disconnected from academic learning. The authors cite Lowenstein (1999) by concluding that developmental advising is not the opposite of prescriptive advising. It is a theory about the content, not a style through which it is delivered. This realization has led to a better description of effective advising: learning through advising. This view is supported by NACADA (2005), which maintains that “effective advising requires a holistic approach”, in their Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising. Academic advising assists students in the self-authorship that Hemwall and Trachte discuss, while helping the student make the transition to responsibilities required in participation in higher education.

In his influential 1972 article “An Academic Advising Model,” O’Banion outlines the process of advising: (1) exploration of life goals, (2) exploration of vocational goals, (3) program choice, (4) course choice, and (5) scheduling. O’Banion states that academic advising is not successful because institutions often start with program choice, assuming that students have had the opportunities, conversations, and abilities to explore and set goals. Unfortunately, the process is even more abridged today: Students select a program of study with little interaction from resources available at most institutions. In the 2004 ACT Annual Report Closing the Gaps, researchers note that many institutions view advising “simply as an adjunct to course selection and scheduling” (p. 18). O’Banion (1972) states that this condensed process is “harmful…for community college students in particular” (p. 83).

O’Banion (1972) makes the point that colleges need to provide numerous opportunities for goal exploration. Students need to be made aware of these opportunities, but institutions also need to recognize which students need to take advantage of them. Some students come to college with specific goals, while others are wholly unaware of the wide range of programs. Particularly at the community college, where there is a wide array of degrees and certificates, students find that “the process of choosing a program staggers the imagination” (O’Banion, 1972, p. 84). Every student enters the academic advising continuum at a different point. For these undecided students, every effort should be made to provide opportunities for goal exploration. It is not enough to assume that students will seek this knowledge on their own.

The key questions, then, are what should the student learn, how should the learning take place, and who should be the teacher? According to the ACT 2010 Fourth Annual Survey, What Works in
Student Retention?, only 25% of community colleges have a campus-wide assessment of advising (p. i). To measure the effectiveness of advising, we must also ask “how do we know?”

Student Learning Outcomes

Terry O’Banion’s (1972) process for advising was presented in his seminal article “An Academic Advising Model.” This process has been the foundation of advising for decades. The QEP Development Committee has adapted O’Banion’s (1972) model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O’Banion</th>
<th>GPS for Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of life goals</td>
<td>Exploration of academic goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of vocational goals</td>
<td>Verification of program placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of program choice</td>
<td>Course selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of course choice</td>
<td>Class scheduling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of scheduling options</td>
<td>Reflection on performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The QEP Development Committee is cognizant of the fact that one cannot set an academic goal without a discussion of life or vocational goals. These types of exploration should occur alongside (not outside of) academic advising, by experts in the field. NOVA’s counselors, especially those whose specialties are transfer and career advising, act as resources for students who desire this type of exploration. As educators, we realize that life, vocational, and academic goals change, especially as students are exposed to new opportunities and experiences.

The last item in the GPS for Success hierarchy is critical to the success of the student and to the learning process. As stated in the CAS Standards and Guidelines (2005), academic advising programs must “evaluate and monitor student academic progress and the impact on achievement of goals” (p. 4). This is in line with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) 2006 report, College Learning for the New Global Century. The AAC&U presents seven Principles of Excellence. The advising hierarchy is supported the second principle, “Give Students a Compass,” which expresses the need to help students develop a plan to help them achieve the learning outcomes and to assess those outcomes (p. 26).

Objectives that promote student learning are also suggested by CAS (2005). These learning outcomes include items from each of the following domains:

- knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application
- cognitive complexity
- intrapersonal development
- interpersonal competence
- practical competence

The dimensions among these domains include realistic self-appraisal, identity development, pursuing goals, and communicating effectively. Schuh (2008) explains that an academic advisor could not possibly help a student develop plans to achieve all of the goals, but advisors are certainly in a position to work with students to determine strengths and areas for improvement, develop a plan to address these areas, and understand how the institution can help carry out that plan. Grites and Gordon (2009) emphasize that “the central mission of advising is to help students understand and appreciate the value of liberal learning, to acquire the capacity for critical thinking, and to make wise choices base on their goals” (p. 121).
Academic Advising Structure

Colleges have recently made a paradigm shift from access to success. However, few colleges have a formal advising program, even though quality advising can help students in their selection of programs and contribute to persistence toward graduation. As Tricoli (2009) notes, “once students are admitted, the institution is obligated to provide support to enhance their chances of success in college” (p. 1). According to CAS (2005), “when practiced with competence and dedication, academic advising can enhance retention rates” (p.2). Of course, learning is the goal, but as Tinto (1993) explains in his influential work, *Leaving College*, retention is a result of a successful and engaging college experience.

How to structure an academic advising program depends on the institution’s student population and commitment to academic advising. Pardee (2004) characterizes academic advising programs as centralized, decentralized, and shared structures. Habley (1983) classified the structures even further. The only centralized model is the Self-Contained Model, which, when put into practice, is often called an advising center. An advising center is staffed by counselors and advisors, who are responsible for advising throughout the student’s academic career. The decentralized models include the Faculty-Only Model (found mostly at private institutions) and the Satellite Model, which houses advising offices within academic units. The shared models include the Supplementary, Split, Dual, and Total Intake Models. Pardee (2004) states that there is a trend toward these “ideal shared structure [that] would take advantage of the expertise of faculty advising in their departments (decentralized), while relying on professional advisors in a central administrative unit to meet the special needs of students” (2004).

Kuhn (2008) examines these advising structures at different types of institutions of higher education. Community colleges most often use the Self-Contained, Split, and Faculty-Only models of academic advising. Kuhn notes that there is a trend away from the Faculty-Only model at community colleges, recognizing that effective undergraduate education requires academic affairs and student affairs to work together to deliver an education that reflects how the student learns. King (2008) explains that there is a need for college units to work together to provide quality academic advising:

> Given the complexity of academic advising, it is probably unrealistic to expect any one group of people to be able to know and do it all. It is also important that there be sufficient personnel available to address students’ advising needs without reasonable delay and to accomplish the mission and goals of the advising program. Sharing the advising responsibilities makes that much more feasible (p. 248).

The CAS Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising Programs (2005) promote the exploration of collaboration between teaching faculty and their student services colleagues in an effort to promote learning.

Habley (2004) also explains that the use of Shared Models is on the rise, while the Faculty-Only model is on the decline. In this sense, academic advising can be described as “the hub of the wheel” (King, 2008, p. 250). Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) is an example of an institution that has successfully transitioned from a traditional centralized model to a “hub and spokes model” (Tricoli, 2009, p. 1). As a large, multi-campus community college, GPC recognized the importance of academic advising in learning, and that “academic advising is critical to increasing retention, graduation and transfer rates” (p. 1). GPC’s commitment is reflected in its increased resources for advisor training.

King (2008) also dissects Habley’s models of academic advising. Among the several Shared Models, there are two that would work well at NOVA. Both models take into account the student’s academic preparedness and readiness to form a goal, while relying on the expertise of college personnel. The Split Model, reported as the most common at public four-year institutions, splits initial advising between an advising office and academic units. Students are assigned to a Faculty Advisor when certain criteria have been met (i.e., completing developmental level course work). In addition, trained advisors work with the higher-risk students. Another Shared Model, the Total Intake Model,
assigns students to a Faculty Advisor once specific conditions are met (i.e. after registration or after a certain number of credits are completed). However, all students participate in initial advising through one office. According to King (2008), “the key strength of this model is the ability to front load the system and to provide a strong start for students” (p. 248). While there is a need to pay attention to the transition from initial contact to Faculty Advisor, this need is not quite as dramatic as the coordination required between advisors in the Split Model, where student are typically not assigned to a Faculty Advisor until completing developmental course work or another major milestone. This difference is critical at NOVA, since (like most community colleges, many of our students require developmental course work, while still needing guidance in their particular program of study.

Habley (2004) also reports that the use of an individual responsible for the administration of advising programs is on the rise. CAS supports the need for leadership and coordination in their presentation of key elements of effective advising programs. This individual must collaborate with other college units to develop a mission statement for academic advising, set goals and objectives, promote student learning, implement ethical standards, supervise staff, and manage resources. As King (2008) notes, “effective advising is not a closed system and cannot be done in isolation” (p. 248). Academic advising programs need to be developed with consideration by those involved with admissions, orientation, placement, testing, registration, career planning, supplemental instruction, student development courses, first-year experience programs, academic units, disability services, honors programs, developmental education, and faculty advising. It is key that there is an individual responsible for the coordination of the collaboration.

**Role of Academic Advisor**

*The advisor is arguably the most important person in the student’s educational world.*

(Lowenstein, 2005, p. 69).

O’Banion (1972) recognizes that there is little agreement on who should carry out academic advising. In fact, O’Banion states that there is no single answer, since it depends on institutional resources and commitment. Crookston’s (1972) developmental model of advising recognizes the need to see the student as a whole person; O’Banion states many make the implication that advising must be provided by a single system, so the student is not fragmented into personal, academic, and vocational parts. However, no single person can successfully provide all the facets of academic advising. As O’Banion recognized many decades ago, “in larger colleges with extensive comprehensive programs it is too much to ask counselors to become specialists in all phases of all programs” (p. 86). By exploring the different components that make up advising, institutions can more accurately determine who is best to deliver those features.

O’Banion (1972) suggested the team approach for advising, as later suggested by Habley’s (1983) shared models. Each member of the student-counselor-instructor team holds different responsibilities. The student is responsible for taking advantage of available resources to help make informed choices. It is the student who ultimately makes the decision. The counselor helps the student explore goals and points the student in the direction of opportunities to encourage in discovery. The instructor helps the student develop an educational plan and encourages the student to reflect on this plan on a regular basis. It is critical that advising does not exist in silos. There is a critical need for communication and coordination in a team approach. Decades later, CAS supports these same ideas in their Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising Programs (2005): students and advisors share responsibility in the advising process, but it is the student who has the “ultimate responsibility for making decisions about educational plans and life goals” (p. 4). CAS (2005) offers a set of goals for academic advising programs, which include student ownership of the process. Specifically, an academic advising program must “reinforce student self-direction and self-sufficiency” and “direct students with educational, career, or personal concerns, or skill/learning deficiencies, to other resources and programs on the campus when necessary” (p. 5). In their Statement of Core Values of
Northern Virginia Community College

Academic Advising, NACADA (2005) supports student ownership in the description of academic advisors: “advisors encourage, respect, and assist students in establishing their goals and objectives.” This speaks to Crookston’s (1972) support of advising as a developmental process, not a prescriptive service.

Grites and Gordon (2000) explain that the role of the academic advisor is to facilitate student learning by recognizing the interactions between educational, career, and personal goals. Many will argue that teaching faculty do not have the proper education or training to act in this role. However, a lack of advising credentials does not disqualify them from becoming excellent advisors. Just as faculty professional development opportunities encourage improvement in teaching styles and strategies, so too can these occasions be used to develop faculty as better advisors.

O’Banion (1972) lists the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to deliver the different aspects of advising. Exploration of goals calls for skills in counseling and knowledge of psychology and sociology, among other requirements. These attributes are clearly those of student services staff. The other elements (program selection, course choice, and scheduling) require knowledge that is shared by many, including the teaching faculty. O’Banion supports advising by instructors, since there will then be “greater opportunity to integrate the process of advising with the program of curriculum and instruction” (p. 87). Pascarella and Terenzini (1995) cite “the frequency, purpose, and quality of students’ non-classroom interactions with faculty members” (p. 91) as important factors that contribute to educational quality. Indeed, twenty years of research point to the importance of faculty contact and its impact on student satisfaction, learning, and retention (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

In a discussion of the role of the faculty as academic advisors, Hemwall (2008) notes that faculty have a particular understanding of how a student’s learning is connected to their chosen field of study. Further, faculty involvement in the advising process helps the institution create a process that supports the educational goals of the institution. Hemwall (2008) notes that an effective faculty advising system must (1) change the language and concept of advising, making the link to learning and teaching; (2) support faculty through large-scale strategies, such as the evaluation, recognition, and rewarding of academic advising; and (3) support faculty using small-scale strategies, such as developing resources for faculty and students.

It is imperative that faculty receive support and guidance in terms of providing academic advising. Without institutional support, O’Banion (1972) claims that instructors will simply “perform this function with disinterest and in ways that may do more harm than good for students” (p. 87). In order for academic advising to truly be effective, advising must be “considered, recognized, and rewarded as a form of teaching” (Campbell & White, 2008, p. 5). Once again, this echoes the thoughts of O’Banion (1972) on the conditions for effective advising: (1) institutional recognition for the importance of academic advising; (2) a limited number of advisees; (3) required training; (4) participation only by those faculty who are capable of providing quality advising; (5) adequate staffing of counselors to handle referrals and undecided students; (6) readily available resources; (7) cooperation and coordination between academic and student affairs; (8) guarding against the influence of the faculty member on the student; and (9) assessment.

The CAS Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising Programs (2005) continue to promote these same ideas. In particular, academic advising programs should

- provide current and accurate advising information to students and academic advisors
- employ the latest technologies for delivery of advising information
- [allow academic advisors to] offer conferences in a format that is convenient to the student
- [consider that] caseloads must be consistent with the time required for the effective performance of this activity (p. 5)

Indeed, training of academic advisors is important. In the ACT 2010 Fourth Annual Survey, What Works in Student Retention?, training of academic advisors is one of the nine practices identified by at least 10% of the surveyed institutions as one of the top three practices that made the greatest contribution to
Brown (2008) explains that a lack of comprehensive advising training diminishes the importance of advising. Advisor development should be an “ongoing process that supports advisors in the acquisition of the perspectives and tools needed to expand their understanding, knowledge, and skills to enhance student learning, engagement and success” (p. 311).

From our research, we have learned that the most effective model of academic advising at NOVA would be a shared model. The skeleton of such a model is informally in place at campuses already. A restructuring of the current model to the total intake model, which emphasizes early engagement with Advising Specialists and continued engagement with program-specific advising, is an action to be implemented to improve students’ academic skills. It is a major endeavor in collaboration between students, student services, and faculty. It also requires coordination between a number of student success initiatives. The details of the actions to be implemented are explained in detail in the next chapter.
VI. Actions to be Implemented

As stated, the goal of the QEP, GPS for Success, is to improve students’ academic planning skills. The overall objective of the GPS for Success is to provide a consistent and comprehensive advising experience to curricular students who are recent high school graduates and first-time-to-college students. Through advising, students will learn planning skills in order to complete their academic program. NOVA’s Achieving the Dream Initiative has identified recent high school graduates (ages 18 to 23) as a group that is especially at risk. While this is the group that the QEP will assess, the restructured advising that the QEP puts into place will be available for all first-time-to-college, curricular students (not just those who are recent high school graduates). This will be addressed further in the Assessment Chapter. In the remainder of this document, the term “target population” refers to those curricular students who are first-time-to-college and recent high school graduates.

In order for students to learn through the advising process, advising must be thought of as teaching. In order for students to learn, there must be an expectation of attendance, a process for learning, and a mechanism to understand whether learning has taken place. In terms of advising as a learning experience, there are three major components: (1) required advising; (2) the restructuring of the advising process; and (3) the use of an electronic academic planning tool. The success each of these components depends on the implementation of a number of actions that must be taken.

(1) Required Advising

Before one can address the necessity of required advising, it is important to define what is meant by “academic advising” and what NOVA’s role is. In order to build a culture of advising as teaching and learning, it is imperative that members across the NOVA community understand the importance of academic advising. Early in the topic development phase, the QEP Development Committee crafted a proposed academic advising mission. The Loudoun Campus Advising Task Force developed a definition for academic advising, which was adopted by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). This definition is stated in the NOVA catalog:

Academic advising is a comprehensive program facilitated by counselors, teaching faculty, and student services personnel who share responsibility with advisees for student success. The advising relationship is a continuous developmental process involving open communication in an atmosphere of mutual respect and honesty. It assists students with the transition to college and the evaluation and attainment of their academic, career, and personal goals.

The committee compared this statement to NACADA’s academic mission statement

Academic advising is integral to fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of higher education. Through academic advising, students learn to become members of their higher education community, to think critically about their roles and responsibilities as students, and to prepare to be educated citizens.

The committee felt that NOVA’s statement was more of a definition of academic advising than a mission statement. A refined mission statement was developed:

Academic advising at NOVA engages students in on-going, collaborative relationships which teach students to explore, develop, and accomplish their academic, career, and personal goals.
This proposed mission statement was sent via e-mail to all NOVA faculty and staff for their feedback. Respondents were asked to evaluate the proposed advising mission statement based on criteria established by NACADA:

![Figure 4: Evaluation of proposed advising mission statement. This figure illustrates the scale on the survey instrument used to evaluate the proposed advising mission statement.](image)

More than half of the 237 respondents found the proposed mission statement to be visionary, broad, realistic, concise, and understandable. Just under half of the respondents found the proposed statement to be motivational and under a third found the statement to be memorable. (See appendix for complete survey report.) This survey informed the committee that improved communication about the importance of academic advising is critical. The development of an academic advising mission statement continues in the preparatory stages of the QEP. (The stages of implementation for the QEP will be discussed in the “Timeline” chapter.)

NOVA’s experience with advising and the QEP Development Committee’s research has provided a basis for the advising process. The advising experience can be broken up into stages: (1) establishing a relationship (prior to application); (2) early engagement (orientation through the first weeks of the first semester); and (3) continued engagement (first semester onward). Students will engage in early advising through an Advising Specialist, who will work in the student services center on each campus. The Advising Specialist will help the student develop an academic goal, verify that the student has selected an appropriate program of study, and help the student start crafting an academic program completion plan. The Advising Specialist will assist the student with registration for the first semester. The student will be assigned to a Faculty Advisor, who will meet with the student during the first semester. The Faculty Advisor will provide program-specific advising. With the Faculty Advisor, the student will reflect on academic performance and determine if the semester-by-semester plan or the academic goal needs to be adjusted.

It is clear from the literature that “students don’t do optional.” In order for students to understand the importance of advising and recognize it as an essential part of their education, advising must be required. The QEP Development Committee recognized that not all students need the same level of advising and does not want advising to become a hoop for students to jump through. Instead, required advising should be for those students who are most at risk and could benefit the most from the process. The target population for the QEP is first-time-to-college, curricular students. This group does not include those students who come to NOVA with transfer credit (from other institutions) or those students who have selected to be non-curricular. However, part of the plan must address those students who self-designate as “non-curricular,” but truly have curricular aspirations. Certainly, academic advising will be available for students who are not in the QEP target population. Student services will continue to provide advising assistance for non-curricular students and Faculty Advisors.
will continue to provide academic advising for program placed students. The QEP target population will receive a more structured approach to advising, including the requirement to receive advising guidance prior to registering. The details of this requirement are discussed below.

First-time students will be required to meet with an Advising Specialist prior to registering for their first semester. The Advising Specialist is a position that was developed as part of the QEP. Currently at NOVA, Educational Support Specialists work in conjunction with the Registrar to provide admissions and registration guidance. While these specialists provide the beginnings of an advising experience, they do not capture the entire essence of advising. Advising Specialists will provide this admissions and registration guidance for the QEP target population, through existing programs like SOAR and NSO, Academic Advising Week and one-on-one appointments. In addition, the Advising Specialist will be proactively engage students early in their academic career. Advising Specialists will provide assistance in setting an academic goal, determining an appropriate program of study, and assigning the student to a Faculty Advisor. The role of the Advising Specialist is expressed in more detail in the next section of this chapter (Restructuring of the Advising Process), and a description of responsibilities is posted in the appendix.

The purpose of a required meeting between the student and Advising Specialist is to set an academic goal and verify that the student is in the appropriate program of study. Once these objectives have been met, the student will be allowed to register for first semester classes. The Advising Specialist will continue to work with the student through the first three weeks of classes to help the student start to develop an academic program completion plan and to ensure that the student has made contact with his/her Faculty Advisor.

The student will be encouraged to meet with his/her Faculty Advisor as early as possible, but no later than the end of advising week, which typically occurs during the 11th week of the semester. By requiring the QEP target population to meet with a Faculty Advisor during the first semester, the GPS for Success is enforcing a commitment to proactive advising (often called intrusive advising in advising literature) and continued engagement with the student. To prevent large numbers of students from seeking faculty advising at the same time and at the last minute, Advising Specialists will communicate often with the students to remind them of the advising requirement. Students must meet with their Faculty Advisor before receiving permission to enroll for the second semester. Faculty advising will continue to be encouraged and available until the student completes the program of study, but will not be required beyond the first semester. The role of the Faculty Advisor is expanded upon in the next section (Restructuring of the Advising Process) and a description of the position responsibilities is in the appendix. By establishing a connection early in the advising process, the QEP Development Committee believes that students will continue to seek help from appropriate resources as academic progress is made. The requirement of advising will take coordination with the registrars and with the Office of Instructional and Information Technology.

(2) Restructuring of the Advising Process

The QEP will fundamentally change the current Student Services structure. In order for this restructuring to occur, several elements need to be in place. During the preparatory year (Fall 2011 through Spring 2012), the QEP Development Committee will work on a number of actions to make the restructuring process possible. First, there must be an understanding of each role in the advising process. Next, there must be a campus team dedicated to the implementation at the campus level. At each campus, a QEP Implementation Task Force will be established to help identify faculty training needs, refine the campus advisor assignment process, identify campus resources needed, and ensure the smooth incorporation of the Advising Specialists into student services. Third, due to the varied levels of experience with faculty advising, training needs to be developed and implemented. Next, each campus must refine the advisor-advisee process. Finally, a reward/recognition program will be created for exemplary advising.
Roles in Academic Advising

In the classroom, an individual’s role is usually clear: one is either the student or the professor. In advising, there are many players, and each has specific roles and responsibilities. These roles must be carefully articulated and communicated, so that each understands his/her own part, and how others fit into the picture.

The Role of the Student

The student is the foremost responsible person for his/her academic plan. Throughout the advising experience, students must understand its collaborative nature and that he/she must ultimately make, and accept ownership of, academic decisions. Academic advising is not a hand-holding experience, but rather an opportunity to learn the planning skills that will transfer to the classroom, career, and beyond.

The first-time-to-college, curricular student will:

1. Establish a relationship with the Advising Specialist before registering for the first semester of courses.
2. Establish a relationship with a Faculty Advisor before registering for the second semester of courses.
3. Develop an academic goal.
4. Select an appropriate program of study.
5. Develop an academic program completion plan.
6. Reflect on his/her academic performance.
7. Re-evaluate the academic plan on a regular basis.
8. Re-evaluate academic goals when necessary.
9. Change the program of study when necessary.
10. Access the appropriate NOVA resources when necessary.

The Role of the Advising Specialist

The primary role of the Advising Specialist is to get the student off to a strong start with academic planning. By engaging with students early, the Advising Specialist will help students learn the importance of planning and make a connection with an individual at NOVA. The Advising Specialist will work with high school outreach personnel to develop early relationships with prospective NOVA students. The Specialist will assist these students with the application process and provide guidance in the financial aid application process, referring prospective students to the appropriate college personnel when necessary. A position description for the Advising Specialist can be found in the appendix.

When a student meets with an Advising Specialist, that Specialist becomes the point of contact for the student. The Advising Specialist will assist the student in developing an academic goal, verify that the student has selected a program of study aligned with the academic goal, assist the student in creating an academic plan, and assign the student to a Faculty Advisor. The Advising Specialist will act as a “case manager” for the student, connecting the student with the appropriate NOVA resources and making sure those connections are productive. When appropriate, the Advising Specialist will refer students to appropriate NOVA resources, such as counselors, the testing center, or the financial aid office. This relationship is depicted in the figure below:
Figure 5: Path of the first-time-to-college curricular student. This figure depicts the path of the first-time-to-college student from the Advising Specialist to the Faculty Advisor. Referrals are made to counselors and other college offices as appropriate.

The Advising Specialist will:

1. Establish a relationship with prospective students through early engagement.
2. Assist the student in the development of an academic goal.
3. Verify the student’s program of study.
4. Assist the student in the creation of an academic program completion plan.
5. Assign the student to a Faculty Advisor.
6. Act as a resource for students.
7. Act as a resource for Faculty Advisors.

The student will be assigned to a Faculty Advisor during their first semester, and the Advising Specialist will follow up with the student to ensure contact has been made. The student will meet with the Faculty Advisor for academic guidance from that point on. It is expected that some students will still seek advising from the Advising Specialist beyond the first semester, but this will be discouraged. While it is important to provide assistance in a collegial atmosphere, it is equally important for students to understand the process of academic advising. Advising Specialists provide early assistance, helping students to start on a strong, organized, and prepared path to reach their academic goal. The Faculty Advisor provides program-specific advising to assist the student in making decisions regarding course selection and in evaluating their academic performance.

Best practices suggest a caseload of 300 students per full-time professional advisor. The QEP Development Committee used this figure to determine the number of advising specialists needed per campus (discussed further in the “Resources” chapter). It is important for the Campus Implementation Task Force to evaluate whether this figure is reasonable for the Advising Specialist caseload. Key indicators will be how many students (per Advising Specialist) we able to set an academic goal, verify their program of study, and get assigned to a Faculty Advisor. NOVA’s Pathway to the Baccalaureate program uses a similar figure, and the Pathway Advisors have had much success maintaining the caseload.

The inclusion of the Advising Specialist into the student services process will improve the consistency and effectiveness of academic advising at NOVA’s general education campuses (Alexandria, Annandale, Loudoun, Manassas, and Woodbridge). The Medical Education Campus (MEC) has different needs. Students enrolled at MEC generally fall into two categories: (1) they are taking prerequisite courses for MEC programs, or (2) are already enrolled in an allied health or nursing program at MEC. Students in the latter group are assigned to a MEC Faculty Advisor. Students who are
not yet in a MEC program, and who are in the QEP target population, will meet with an Advising Specialist, just as students at the other campuses would. However, there are students at the general education campuses who intend to apply to MEC. These students need specific guidance while they are at those campuses. Each campus will have at least one Advising Specialist who will advise students who indicate that they have the intention of attending MEC. Training of these Specialists must be carefully coordinated through MEC’s Dean of Students, as the academic programs at MEC have very specific prerequisites.

As online students, Extended Learning Institute (ELI) students have unique needs. Currently, ELI’s advising structure incorporates the use of Academic Coaches for early engagement with students. The Academic Coaches engage with ELI students early, helping them with application and registration issues. These Coaches also help students determine a program of study and help them choose courses. This Academic Coach position can be adapted to incorporate the goals of the Advising Specialist.

The use of Advising Specialists will be implemented in stages at each campus. Starting with the summer 2012 semester, the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses will start using Advising Specialists. There will be no requirement on the part of the students to meet with Advising Specialists during this pilot implementation (although this meeting will be highly encouraged). Implementation of the use of Advising Specialists at the Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas, and the Medical campuses will start during the Summer 2013 semester. During this phase, the student requirement will be in place.

A timeline of Advising Specialist actions is detailed in the next chapter.

The Role of the Faculty Advisor

The primary role of the Faculty Advisor is to assist the student with academic planning specific to the chosen program of study. A faculty advising program must include (1) a well-defined role of the Faculty Advisor, (2) an effective and accessible training system, (3) an effective and equitable assignment of advisees to advisors, and (4) a reward/recognition program for exemplary advising.

Expectations of the Faculty Advisor are clearly stated in VCCS policy (6.4.0.1):

All curricular students are assigned an academic advisor who is normally a member of the counseling staff or teaching faculty. Advisors act as academic consultants, helping students plan their programs of study. Students should consult their advisors before each registration and are encouraged to confer with them frequently regarding academic matters.

NOVA policy also specifically designates advising as a responsibility of teaching faculty (Faculty Handbook 2.4880): “As part of this primary responsibility [to provide quality instruction], the College expects each faculty member to advise students.” Further, NOVA policy describes the Faculty Advisor’s role (Faculty Handbook 3.4000):

In addition to having a counselor available to each student, a student admitted to a program will be assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will be a member of the division that is responsible for the program in which the student has been accepted and, because of the faculty advisor’s knowledge of the technical and academic requirements of the program, will become the student’s academic point of reference within the College. If the student changes to another program, the student will be assigned a new faculty advisor according to the new program.

The expectation of advising is one that is reflected with many faculty in current practice at NOVA. However, a consistent and comprehensive program will provide students, faculty, and staff with a better environment to learn the academic planning skills needed for student success.

The role of the Faculty Advisor is to provide program-specific academic advising. While the primary role of teaching faculty is instruction, the faculty member is expected to provide academic
advising to assigned advisees in a specific program of study. Program-specific advising includes assisting the student in selecting appropriate courses, scheduling classes, and reflecting on performance to determine how the academic plan is affected. While the Advising Specialist focuses on goal development, selection of program of study, and early academic planning, the Faculty Advisor concentrates on evaluation of performance, continuation of academic planning, and revision of goals and plans.

When appropriate, the Faculty Advisor will refer the student to an appropriate NOVA counselor for further guidance. Faculty will embrace advising as teaching through the use of an advising syllabus and an electronic academic planning tool to aid in the assessment of the learning that takes place.

Faculty advisors will:

1. Be proactive by establishing a relationship with the student upon assignment by the Advising Specialist.
2. Assist the student in the development of an academic program completion plan.
3. Assist the student in the evaluation of academic performance.

The Faculty Advisor will provide academic advising for those in the QEP target population, as well as for other curricular students. Following best practices, Faculty Advisors can expect a caseload of 25 program-specific advisees per semester. The QEP requires first-time-to-college curricular students to meet with their Faculty Advisor during their first semester. These students must engage with their Faculty Advisor to receive permission to register for their second semester. These students are a part of the Faculty Advisor’s caseload. Continuing curricular students will also have access to their Faculty Advisor, but will not be required to engage with this Advisor before registering for the next semester. By developing resources and tools to aid the student in making academic decisions, the students will need less guidance as they proceed along their academic careers. As students develop the academic planning skills by taking advantage of these tools and resources, they will require less contact with the Faculty Advisor.

It is important to consider faculty skills when the advisor assignment is made. Faculty have expressed the desire to provide quality advising, but need supportive resources and training to do so. Training will be developed during the preparatory year (2011 – 2012) and will be refined and improved over time. In addition, Faculty Advisors must be carefully assigned to advisees. Faculty Advisors will advise for specific programs. One of the tasks during a campus’ preparatory year is to refine the advisee assignment process. Each campus has unique programs, and a different population of faculty and students. Faculty may be assigned as an advisor for a program that is the same or closely related to their own discipline. Some programs may have a limited number of full-time faculty and a large number of curricular students. It may be the case that specific programs consider the hiring of adjunct faculty to attend to advising needs. Training, the advisor-advisee assignment, and program needs are some of the many issues that the Campus Implementation Task Force will be charged with examining during the preparatory year. The Campus Implementation Task Force is discussed in detail in the next sub-section of this chapter.

ELI has the need for Faculty Advisors, yet faculty who teach through ELI “belong” to the one of the six campuses. Due to this structure, ELI does not have a comprehensive structure for assigning Faculty Advisors. At least one faculty member in each program will be designated as the Faculty Advisor for ELI students. This Faculty Advisor must be carefully chosen, as ELI students may prefer online advising. ELI students who prefer face-to-face advising will be directed to the student’s campus of choice for advising (as long as a Faculty Advisor for the student’s program exists at that campus).

Due to the fact that many faculty serve on nine-month contracts, there is a need for advising during the summer months that is typically overlooked at colleges. Over the past two summers, NOVA has developed a Structured Advising Program to address the advising needs during the summer months. The program compensates faculty for acting as generalist advisors for walk-in students. In other words, faculty act as advisors for students regardless of the student’s program of study. These
faculty receive training during the spring and work alongside Student Services personnel during the summer months. This program provides students with the opportunity to meet with a knowledgeable advisor, even if a program-specific advisor is not on contract during the summer. When faculty elect to participate in the current “structured advising” during the summer, these faculty act as generalist advisors, in the sense that they provide general advising to any student seeking help during the summer (when nine-month program-specific Faculty Advisors are not on contract).

Some faculty who participated in the Structured Advising Program acted as virtual advisors. NOVA’s Virtual Advising Program provides students with general guidance through live online chat and rapid response email. During the Fall and Spring semesters, the Virtual Advising Program is staffed by counselors. The summer Structured Advising Program gave faculty the opportunity to sign up to work alongside these counselors as virtual advisors. Faculty expressed great satisfaction with acting as generalist advisors and with virtual advising. These select faculty could continue as virtual advisors in the Fall and Spring semesters, acting as generalist advisors for “online walk-in,” rather than as advisors for specific programs.

It should be noted that faculty advising is already in place for students enrolled in programs at MEC. Students are assigned to a Faculty Advisor when placed into an allied health or nursing program. Due to the refined structure already in place at MEC, the QEP will not address faculty advising at this campus. As previously mentioned, however, Advising Specialists will provide specific prerequisite advising for those students who indicate that they plan on applying for a MEC program.

The training, development, and responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor are delineated in the next chapter (“Timeline”).

The Role of Support Personnel

Counselors will continue their supportive relationships with students as experts in various specialties (i.e. disability, transfer, career, veterans’ affairs, retention). In addition, counselors will act as mentors for the Advising Specialists. At each campus, a counselor is a Coordinator of Student Success. The Advising Specialists will report to this individual. Due to the large number of students at NOVA, counselors are often tasked with academic advising for any student who walks into Student Services. The GPS for Success will provide a more refined process for first-time-to-college students, so that counselors will have a reduced walk-in load. This will allow counselors to focus on growing their area of expertise and teaching the SDV courses. The QEP Committee recognizes the vast advising and institutional knowledge that counselors possess, and values the work they accomplish. This type of knowledge can be put to good use by providing a carefully determined set of students with academic advising, in the same way the teaching faculty will. This set of students includes those who select a particular program, but have difficulty in articulating an academic goal.

Educational Support Specialists will continue their support of registration functions, especially for students that are non-curricular. In addition, they will work closely with Advising Specialists during the intake process to address the needs of the first-time-to-college curricular students. It is imperative that students are not shuffled from one individual to the next. The expertise of the educational support specialists is appreciated, but the precise role of each member of Student Services needs to be clarified, and perhaps reevaluated.

Academic deans will demonstrate an appreciation for and an expectation of advising. It is well known that division administrative staff members serve students in a variety of ways, including academic advising. It is key to include these front-line personnel in the restructuring process.

These integration issues exist at varying levels across the college. To understand and address the issues, each campus will form an implementation task force prior to the year of implementation. This task force is described in the next section.

Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising
The Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising is responsible for providing an updated annual report on the QEP to the Administrative Council. This Advisory Council provides guidance and recommendations to the College Implementation Task Force (discussed below) based on changes in college resources and the evaluation of the QEP. Membership of this Advisory Council will include Provosts, Deans of Students, the Special Assistant for the QEP, the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, and Academic and Student Services leadership.

**College and Campus QEP Implementation Task Forces**

The restructuring of the advising process is going to require a great deal of preparatory work on each campus. During the preparatory year for each campus, a QEP Implementation Task Force will be established at each campus to work on implementation issues. This task force will include the Special Assistant for the QEP and the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, the Dean of Students, representation from the Registrar’s Office, a Counselor, at least one Academic Dean, at least one faculty member from each academic division, at least one member of division administrative staff, and at least two students. Some of the topics that each Campus Implementation Task Force will address are

- identifying training needs for Faculty Advisors and Advising Specialists;
- the advisor-advisee assignment process;
- Faculty Advisor workload issues;
- program specific advising needs (i.e. numbers of full-time faculty vs. numbers of curricular students);
- the integration of Advising Specialists into the existing student services unit; and
- building a culture of academic advising as teaching.

The Chair of each Campus Implementation Task Force will be a member of the College Implementation Task Force, along with the Special Assistant for the QEP and the Director of Academic Planning and Advising. The college-wide task force will

- ensure the consistency of the implementation of the QEP across campuses;
- collaborate with appropriate college units in the development of advisor training;
- address issues that are common to all campuses;
- establish a reward/recognition plan for exemplary advising;
- keep the Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising informed on the progress of QEP implementation.

Details about the needs for training, the advisor assignment process, the integration of the Advising Specialists into Student Services, and a reward/recognition program are discussed below.

**Training**

During the preparatory year, the College Implementation Task Force will work with appropriate college units, including Academic and Student Services (A&SS), the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), and Web Services and Digital Media (WSDM) to

1. develop modules to deliver training in key areas;
2. work with academic deans to promote use of training; and
3. assess faculty academic advising knowledge.
Training for Advising Specialists and Faculty Advisors must be provided on a regular basis, and in a format that is readily accessible according to faculty needs. Training will be developed in coordination with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Office of Academic and Student Services, and Web Services and Digital Media. A modular system, based on the successful model at Fox Valley Technical College, will provide training in a way that is easily accessible for Faculty Advisors and Advising Specialists. In addition, completion of models can be recorded to encourage further growth. Through discussion groups with faculty, the following have been identified as areas in which faculty need training:

- Reading a degree progress report
- Interpreting placement test scores
- Making appropriate course substitutions
- Submitting a substitution request
- Selecting courses when the student intends to transfer
- Selecting appropriate humanities and social science electives
- Making referrals to appropriate counselors and other student services

Advisor Assignment

In order for Faculty Advisors to provide effective advising, there must be an appropriate assignment of advisees to advisors. At each campus, there will be Faculty Advisors for curricular students. Faculty will be assigned to students who are in programs:

1. designed for transfer (A.A. and A.S. degrees); and
2. designed to prepare students for work (A.A.A. and A.A.S. degrees and certificates).

In addition, we have recognized that different students require different levels of advising. Assignment of advisors must take into account whether the Faculty Advisor is appropriately matched to:

1. students who require developmental reading, writing or mathematics;
2. international students, who must take special considerations due to visa and other issues; and
3. students who take online courses through NOVA’s Extended Learning Institute.

Graduate surveys and other institutional research have shown that the initial assignment of the Faculty Advisor is not always appropriate. There must be a process in place to address issues that arise. The Campus Implementation Task Force will develop processes to consider circumstances when:

- the student should be assigned to a new Faculty Advisor;
- the Faculty Advisor is not immediately available for “urgent” student needs; or
- the student is unhappy with the assignment of the Faculty Advisor.

Common college processes will be developed by the College Implementation Task Forces, in coordination with the Advisory Council on Academic Planning and Advising. While each campus may have specific needs, it is important to have a common template to provide a consistent advising experience.

Integration of Advising Specialists

The QEP Development Committee recognizes that there is overlap in the responsibilities of the proposed Advising Specialists, current Educational Support Specialists, and Counselors. The early
connection that is established with students often makes a lasting impression, so it is imperative that this process be as consistent and efficient as possible. Coordination with the Registrar at each campus and with each Student Services Center will result in a process that will benefit the student and recognize the strengths of each position. The Campus Implementation Task Force will be responsible for understanding the current campus culture and ensuring that the incorporation of Advising Specialists is well thought-out.

**Reward/Recognition Program**

During the preparatory year, the College Implementation Task Force will create a reward/recognition program for exemplary advising. NOVA has traditionally recognized and rewarded exemplary teaching and service to the college. As we have recognized that advising plays a crucial role in the success of our students, we must recognize those who excel. By valuing exemplary advising, NOVA will set the tone that advising is important, and excellent advising should be strived towards. A subgroup of the QEP Development Committee attended the 2011 NACADA Advising Summer Institute and developed an action plan to reward exemplary advising (see appendix).

**(3) Electronic Academic Plan**

When students meet with an advisor, it is necessary to record the decisions that were made. Students need a tool and an opportunity to develop planning skills on their own. When students meet with an Advising Specialist, they will begin to map out their semester-by-semester plan to complete their academic program. It is essential that this plan be electronically recorded, so that the student, the Advising Specialist, the Faculty Advisor, and other personnel can refer to the plan when advising the student. The academic plan includes the student’s academic goal and the student’s course selections for each semester. In addition, the electronic tool can provide a way to communicate verification of the program of study and other advising-related notes.

An electronic academic plan will help communicate the student’s intentions and help the student prepare for program completion. Instead of being a static document, the electronic academic plan provides a way for the student to plan each semester’s courses based on the program requirements and the student’s needs. For instance, the student can plan his/her academic career based on the number of credits he/she can take each semester.

The Advising Specialist will help the student start creating their academic program completion plan. The Faculty Advisor will use the electronic academic plan and the student’s Degree Progress Report to help the student evaluate progress. The Degree Progress Report is a product of PeopleSoft, NOVA’s Student Information System. It provides a wealth of information, including placement testing scores, transfer credits, a transcript of courses taken and degree requirements that need to be met. However, it does not provide the student with a mechanism to plan out his/her academic career from the beginning. An electronic tool is necessary to help the student develop planning and evaluation skills.

The electronic academic plan must

- be in synch with catalog requirements for each program
- be available for use in the same was as a Degree Progress Report, so that when a student seeks help, it may be accessed
- respect the student’s privacy
- be easy to use by students, Advising Specialists, and Faculty Advisors
The Advising Specialist, Faculty Advisor, and student will use appropriate resources, including the College Catalog and Web site, to construct the academic program completion plan.

It is essential that the institution select the proper product. After a thorough investigation of various products, the optimal product appears to be DegreeWorks by Sungard Higher Education. Due to the complexity of acquiring the software and the implications of interfacing with PeopleSoft, it is necessary to collaborate with a number of college offices to ensure smooth implementation. In addition, since this type of product has features that can be used by a number of student success related offices, many college units have a stake in selecting the product. It should be noted that VCCS colleges will be part of a PeopleSoft upgrade in March 2012. This upgrade may include features similar to those in DegreeWorks. The college is currently investigating the features of the PeopleSoft upgrade to determine whether an additional academic planning tool will be needed. The following offices are involved with the selection and procurement of the software: Instructional and Information Technology; Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment, Web Services and Digital Media, Academic Services, Student Services (including Financial Aid), and Pathway to the Baccalaureate.
VII. Timeline

The GPS for Success will provide students with a comprehensive, consistent advising experience that will improve their academic planning skills. To undertake such an endeavor requires initial steps that will lead to a broader implementation. This chapter focuses on the timeline for the initial implementation. However, this timeline should be considered with a broader scope in mind. The target population for the initial implementation of the QEP is first-time-to-college curricular students who are recent high school graduates. As stated earlier, the services offered to these students will also be offered to all first-time-to-college students, but assessment will start with the target population. Upon successful implementation of the early stages of the QEP, the GPS for Success would be scaled up to include first-time-to-NOVA curricular students (including the population of students classified as transfer students), and select non-curricular students as well:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Year 0: Fall 2011 – Spring 2012</th>
<th>Preparatory year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Year 1: Summer 2012 – Spring 2013</td>
<td>Pilot implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Year 2: Summer 2013 – Spring 2014</td>
<td>College-wide implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Year 3: Summer 2014 – Spring 2015</td>
<td>Expanded implementation for first-time-to-NOVA students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 4: Summer 2015 – Spring 2016</td>
<td>Continued expanded implementation for first-time-to-NOVA students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 5: Summer 2016 – Summer 2017</td>
<td>Expanded implementation for select non-curricular students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to complexity of an institution as large as NOVA, the initial implementation of the GPS for Success will occur in stages. Stage 1 involves the development of key items for all campuses and preparatory work for the pilot campuses, Loudoun and Woodbridge. Stage 2 encompasses the pilot implementation at the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses and the preparatory work for the Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas, and Medical campuses. College-wide implementation at these campuses will occur during Stage 3. Stage 4 involves the expanded implementation of academic advising by extending QEP-type of advising services to first-time-to-NOVA and select non-curricular students. First-time-to-NOVA students are those curricular students who have transferred credit from another institution. These students have advising concerns that are very different than first-time-to-college students, and specific resources and training should be developed to address these needs. Some non-curricular students actually have intentions of completing a program, but have not indicated this intention by selecting a program of study. These students need to be identified, and the reasons why these students do not choose a program of study at the beginning of their academic career need to be investigated.

Stage 1: Development & Preparatory Stage

During the first stage (Fall 2011 – Spring 2012), a number of processes and products need to be developed. These include:

- procuring, implementing, and training for academic planning software
- developing and delivering of initial advisor training
- hiring Advising Specialist personnel for the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses
- identifying Faculty Advising Managers at Loudoun and Woodbridge
- establishing a Campus Implementation Task Forces (CITF) at all campuses
- establishing a College Implementation Task Force
• establishing a college Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising
• establishing of Office of Academic Advising and Planning
• hiring the Director of Academic Planning and Advising

This stage requires collaboration among Academic Services, Student Services and Enrollment Management, Instructional and Information Technology, Web Services and Digital Media, Human Resources, campus Provosts, Deans of Students, Registrars, campus Student Services Centers, academic divisions, the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Campus Implementation Task Forces.

Stage 2: Pilot & Preparatory Stage

During the second stage (Summer 2012 – Spring 2013), the processes and products that need to be developed include

• pilot implementation at the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses
• development and delivery of expanded advisor training
• hiring of Advising Specialist personnel for the Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas, and Medical campuses
• identification of Faculty Advising Managers at the Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas, and Medical campuses

This stage requires careful evaluation of the QEP, as lessons learned at Loudoun and Woodbridge will help smooth implementation at the four remaining campuses during Stage 3. Collaboration between the Loudoun and Woodbridge Campus Implementation Task Forces, the College Implementation Task Force, and the Campus Implementation Task Forces at Alexandria, Annandale, Manassas, and the Medical campuses is essential to establish a comprehensive, consistent, college-wide academic advising experience.

Stage 3: College-wide Implementation and Assessment

During the third stage (starting the Summer of 2013), implementation will take place at all campuses. It is during this stage that the QEP and the learning outcomes will be assessed (to be discussed in detail in the “Assessment” chapter). During this time, actions implemented during the first two stages will be evaluated, assessed, and improved.

A plan for pilot and college-wide implementation (Stages 1, 2, and 3) is detailed in the table that follows (please see glossary in appendix for acronym definitions). The Director of Academic Planning and Advising is responsible for the individual tasks, in collaboration with the offices listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>In collaboration with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>form Campus QEP Implementation Task Force (CITF)</td>
<td>Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>form College QEP Implementation Task Force</td>
<td>Executive VP, Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>investigate and procure academic planning software</td>
<td>IT, OIRPA, A&amp;SS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| October 2011     | develop training for faculty                                          | CITF, CETL, A&SS,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>develop training for Advising Specialists</td>
<td>CITF, Dean of Students, Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>advertise for Advising Specialist positions</td>
<td>Dean of Students, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>advertise for Director of Academic Planning and Advising</td>
<td>Executive Vice President, Academic Services AVP, Student Services and Enrollment Management AVP, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>identify faculty as Faculty Advising Managers</td>
<td>CITF, Academic Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2011</td>
<td>refine advisor-advisee assignment</td>
<td>CITF, Academic Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>hire Director of Academic Planning and Advising</td>
<td>Academic Services AVP, Student Services and Enrollment Management AVP, Executive VP, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>hire Advising Specialists</td>
<td>Dean of Students, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>deliver Faculty Advisor training</td>
<td>CETL, WSDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>deliver Advising Specialist training</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>refine intake process to include Advising Specialists</td>
<td>Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2012</td>
<td>software implementation – use by Advising Specialists and Faculty Advisors</td>
<td>Student Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of software to track the actions of students, Advising Specialists, and Faculty Advisors is essential to the success of the QEP.

The following timeline is based on discussions with Sungard Higher Education DegreeWorks staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>Investigate, select and purchase software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Software implementation. Training for Advising Specialists and Faculty Advisors at pilot campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2012</td>
<td>Use of software at pilot campuses during orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>Continue training for Faculty Advisors at all campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>Training for Advising Specialists at all campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td>Use of software at all campuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013 onward</td>
<td>Training, evaluation, and improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the upcoming PeopleSoft upgrade, this timeline may be adjusted if the acquisition of the DegreeWorks software is not necessary. The assessment chapter includes an evaluation plan for the software.
The following table outlines the timing of the advising activities that the Advising Specialist, Faculty Advisor, and student take part in. The Advising Specialist Checklist is described in the chapter on Assessment and is included in the appendix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>task</th>
<th>details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester.</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>The Advising Specialist will work with high school outreach personnel to engage potential students. During the summer, the Advising Specialist will contact potential students, as provided by OIR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester.</td>
<td>SOAR</td>
<td>The Advising Specialist will work with SOAR personnel. During SOAR, the Advising Specialist will work with students in the QEP population to address student learning outcomes 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of SOAR</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Early Engagement: SOAR attendance</td>
<td>Advising Specialist will indicate that the student has attended SOAR. After the final SOAR session has been offered, the Advising Specialist will record whether the student attended, and will contact the non-attending students to determine how to address student learning outcomes 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of NSO</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Early Engagement: NSO attendance</td>
<td>Advising Specialist will indicate that the student has attended NSO. By the end of Week 1 of the fall semester, the Advising Specialist will have recorded whether the student had attended NSO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 1.</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Academic Planning: Setting an academic goal</td>
<td>During the SOAR session, the Advising Specialist will help the student develop an academic goal. When complete, this item should be checked off on the Advising Specialist Checklist. The academic goal should be recorded using Assessment A (see below). The Advising Specialist will contact those students not attending SOAR to ensure that an academic goal has been developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 3.</td>
<td>Assessment A: Set Your Academic Goal</td>
<td>Description: Two-question survey in Blackboard. Assigned as part of SOAR, or as follow up assignment. For students who do not attend SOAR: the Advising Specialist will contact students, give instructions on how to complete the assessment, and follow up to ensure that the assessment has been completed. Within one week of the student's completion of the assessment, the Advising Specialist will evaluate the responses to the survey, ensuring that the student's stated goal is aligned with the chosen program of study (as entered in PeopleSoft).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 1.</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Academic Planning: Selecting an appropriate program of study</td>
<td>During the SOAR session, the Advising Specialist will help the student determine an appropriate program of study (aligned with the stated academic goal). When verified, this item should be checked off on the Advising Specialist Checklist. The Advising Specialist should record the program of study in PeopleSoft and record this action on the Advising Specialist checklist. The Advising Specialist will contact those students not attending SOAR to ensure that an appropriate program of study has been selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 1.</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Academic Planning: Developing an academic plan.</td>
<td>At SOAR, the student will be encouraged to use the PeopleSoft Academic Planner to map out first and second semester courses. The Advising Specialist will check PeopleSoft to determine if this has occurred and will record in the Advising Specialist Checklist. The Advising Specialist will contact those students not attending SOAR to encourage students to start the development of an academic plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 1.</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Academic Planning: Enrolling in first semester courses.</td>
<td>The Advising Specialist will monitor enrollment and record whether the student has enrolled in fall semester courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to fall semester. Completed by the end of week 1.</td>
<td>Advising Specialist Checklist: Faculty Advising: Assignment of advisor</td>
<td>During the SOAR session, the Advising Specialist will assign the student to an appropriate faculty advisor (depending on the student's program of study) and provide the student with the Faculty Advisor's contact information. When assigned, this item should be checked off on the Advising Specialist Checklist. The Advising Specialist should record the student's Faculty Advisor in PeopleSoft and record this action on the Advising Specialist checklist. The Advising Specialist will contact those students not attending SOAR to ensure that the student has been assigned to and has the contact information for a Faculty Advisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notification of Faculty Advisor Assignment</td>
<td>The Advising Specialist will notify the Faculty Advisor and the appropriate Faculty Advising manager that an assignment has been made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>Prompts to meet with Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>The Advising Specialist will prompt students weekly (by email) to meet with the Faculty Advisor prior to the end of week 11. The date of such prompts should be recorded in the Advising Specialist Checklist. Once a student has met with the Faculty Advisor, the student should no longer receive the prompts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed by the end of week 4.</td>
<td>Prompts to meet with Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>The Faculty Advising Manager will prompt Faculty Advisors to send a welcome email to advisees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 5 and 8</td>
<td>Prompts to meet with Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>The Faculty Advisor will prompt students to meet prior to the end of week 11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompts start at Week 3. Assessment to be completed by the end of Week 6.</td>
<td>Assessment B: The Importance of Advising</td>
<td>Description: Five question Blackboard quiz. The Advising Specialist will start prompting students at Week 3 to take this assessment in Blackboard. Prompts will continue weekly through Week 6. The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that students know who their Faculty Advisor is, and understand the importance of meeting with a Faculty Advisor. The Advising Specialist will grade the quizzes at the end of each week to ensure that the student has responded correctly. Students who have responded incorrectly to any items will be contacted by the Advising Specialist within two weeks of the quiz date. Students who have not completed the assessment by Week 5 will be contacted by phone by the Advising Specialist to encourage completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompts start at Week 8. Assessment to be completed by the end of Week 11.</td>
<td>Assessment C: Goal-setting and planning.</td>
<td>Description: Five question Likert scale questionnaire in Blackboard. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will select how many Advising Specialists should prompt students to take this assessment. The Advising Specialist will begin prompting students at Week 8, and continue through Week 11. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will collect and analyze the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompts start at Week 10. Assessment to be completed by the end of Week 12.</td>
<td>Assessment D: Academic Planning</td>
<td>Description: Five question Likert scale questionnaire in Blackboard. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will select how many Advising Specialists should prompt students to take this assessment. The Advising Specialist will begin prompting students at Week 10, and continue through Week 12. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will collect and analyze the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompts start at Week 5. Assessment to be completed by the end of Week 16.</td>
<td>Assessment E: Evaluation of Plans and Performance</td>
<td>Description: Three yes/no questions in a Blackboard survey. The Faculty Advisor will prompt advisees to take the assessment prior to the first advising session. The assessment should be taken prior to the session, but (when possible) can be administered at the start of the advising session. The Faculty Advisor will use the responses to help direct the advising session. Students who indicate that their academic goal needs revision (&quot;yes&quot; or &quot;I don't know&quot; to Question 3) will be directed by the Faculty Advisor to retake Assessment A (Set Your Academic Goal).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed by Week 12.</td>
<td>Meeting with Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>Once the student has met with the Faculty Advisor, the Faculty Advisor should so indicate in the Blackboard Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Starting at Week 5. Completed by Week 12.

| Advising Specialist Checklist: Faculty Advising: Meeting with Faculty Advisor | The Advising Specialist will check the Blackboard Grade Center weekly, starting at Week 5 and continuing through Week 12, to determine if students have met with their Faculty Advisor. Those students who have not met with their Faculty Advisor will continue to receive prompts from the Advising Specialist through Week 12. |

**Stage 4: Expanded implementation**

Expanded implementation refers to the stage during which the successful actions of the QEP will be extended to a larger population of students. These students fall into three categories: students whose first semester is not the fall semester; students who are not first-time-to-college, but first-time-to-NOVA; and students who are non-curricular.

The prior stages of implementation address the target population when the student’s first semester is the Fall semester. During stage four, the expanded implementation will address the needs of the target population, regardless of the timing of the student’s first semester. For instance, a student’s first semester may be the Spring (rather than the Fall) semester. Further, a student might not take classes in consecutive semesters. For instance, a student may take classes only in the Fall. The expanded implementation will address the needs of these students by following this general guideline, starting in the fall of 2014:

- Early engagement by the Advising Specialist prior to and during the early weeks of the student’s first semester.
- Continued engagement by the Faculty Advisor during the student’s first and subsequent semesters.

The Advising Specialists will act as careful case managers for these students, as the advising requirements are not meant to be hoops for the student to jump through. Rather, they are part of a strategy to encourage the student to develop the academic planning skills.

Expanded implementation includes offering QEP-type advising services to first-time-to-NOVA students and select non-curricular students. As previously discussed, these two groups of students require a different level of advising that the first-time-to-college curricular student who is a recent high school graduate.
VIII. Organizational Structure

It is essential that there is a college-wide office responsible for the structure and improvement of academic advising. With six campuses and online learning, someone must lead the collaboration to ensure a consistent, effective advising program. The establishment of an Office of Planning and Advising would be responsible for this collaboration and for the restructuring and improvement of academic advisement on each campus. Since academic advising is not solely the interest of Academic Services nor Student Services, the QEP Development Committee recommends that the Director of Academic Planning and Advising report directly to the Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Services, who serves as the college’s chief academic officer. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising must have a strong relationship with the Deans of Students and Academic Deans, as personnel under both of these jurisdictions will provide academic advising. A position description of the Director of Academic Planning and Advising can be found in the appendix. The relationship of the Director of Academic Planning and Advising is depicted in the figure below. Note that the solid line represents a supervisory connection, while the dotted line is intended to depict a collaborative relationship.

![Organizational Structure Diagram](image)

*Figure 6: Organizational structure. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising is responsible for the management and coordination of the QEP actions to be implemented. This figure depicts the reporting lines and collaborative relationships necessary for the success of the QEP.*

As depicted in the figure, the Deans of Students and Academic Deans report directly to the campus Provosts. Communication, cooperation, and collaboration among the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, the Deans of Students, and Academic Deans have been established through the development of the QEP, and it is anticipated that this relationship will continue during the implementation phase.

The Advising Specialist will work in the Student Services Center, reporting to the Coordinator of Student Success. This Coordinator, who reports to the Dean of Students, is counselor and will be responsible for the training and management of the Advising Specialists. The Coordinator will work
closely with the Director of Academic Planning and Advising. It is essential that the role of the Advising Specialist remain consistent across campuses, so the benefits of the addition of these personnel can be measured. In addition, the common role will add to the consistency of the academic advising process across the college. The Coordinator of Student Success is also responsible for new student initiatives such as SOAR, NSO, and FYE. The proposed organization of Student Services and the academic divisions is depicted in the Figure 7 below.

Currently, each academic division at NOVA handles the assignment of academic advisors differently. In addition, there is no formal structure supporting the training or management of Faculty Advisors. Just as the Coordinator of Student Success acts in this capacity in Student Services, a Faculty Advising Manager shall act in this role in the academic division. This faculty member shall be responsible for the management of the advisor-advisee process at the division level and shall be the point of contact for the division’s faculty members. Academic divisions at NOVA vary greatly in size. To make the workload of the Faculty Advising Manager equitable across academic divisions, an approximate ratio of one Faculty Advising Manager per 25 full-time faculty members will be used. The supportive structure for faculty advising is depicted in the figure below.

Figure 7: Campus organization structure. This figure depicts the collaborative relationship among the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, each campus’s Dean of Students, and each Division Dean. In addition, the Coordinator of Student Success and the Faculty Advising Manager will collaborate with the Director of Academic Planning and Advising to implement actions associated with the QEP.
IX. Resources

In order for the restructuring of academic advising to take place, a number of Advising Specialists need to be hired at each campus. The number of Advising Specialists is based on an approximate ratio of one Advising Specialist per 300 students. The table below indicates the number of Advising Specialists needed per campus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Predicted Fall 2012 headcount of first-time-to-college curricular students</th>
<th>Predicted Fall 2013 headcount of first-time-to-college curricular students</th>
<th>Number of Advising Specialists needed</th>
<th>Projected hire date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loudoun</td>
<td>1331</td>
<td>1371</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jan 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbridge</td>
<td>1448</td>
<td>1492</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jan 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>1651</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>2447</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manassas</td>
<td>1389</td>
<td>1430</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, the number of Faculty Advising Managers is determined by the number of full-time faculty per division. The Faculty Advising Manager will be compensated by three credits of release time from teaching duties. This release time will be dispensed as three credits of release time per semester for three semesters (the semester prior to campus implementation and the two semesters of the first year of implementation), and then three credits of release time per academic year (starting with the campus’s second year of implementation). Since faculty participate in the “structured advising” program in the summer, the Campus Implementation Task Force will determine whether there is a need for the Faculty Advising Manager during the summer and whether it is suitable to receive compensation during this time.

The following table depicts the number of managers needed per campus, based on a ratio of one manager per 25 full-time faculty:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus/Division</th>
<th>Number of Faculty Managers needed</th>
<th>Start date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loudoun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aug 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, Technology and Business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aug 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other resources include a college Director of Academic Planning and Advising, the license and maintenance fees for DegreeWorks, training for Advising Specialists and Faculty Advisors, and opportunities for professional development. The costs associated with all resources are summarized in the table below. A detailed budget can be found in the appendix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Budget Summarized</th>
<th>Year 0 FY 2012</th>
<th>Year 1 FY 2013</th>
<th>Year 2 FY 2014</th>
<th>Year 3 FY 2015</th>
<th>Year 4 FY 2016</th>
<th>Year 5 FY 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QEP Development</td>
<td>$15,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>$32,000</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>$163,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward / Recognition</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative costs</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preparatory year (Year 0) budget is detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Budget</th>
<th>Prep Year FY 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$428,075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Salary and Benefits for Director of Academic Planning & Advising (Start date: January 2012) = $56,135

Salary and Benefits for Advising Specialists ($70,048 per specialist)

Loudoun (5) start date January 2012 = $175,120

Woodbridge (5) start date January 2012 = $175,120

Reassigned time for Faculty Advising Manager

Loudoun - start date January 2012 - total of 4 managers = $12,400

Woodbridge - start date January 2012 - total of 3 managers = $9,300
Northern Virginia Community College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Development</th>
<th>$15,400</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty stipend for QEP editing = $4,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation to Communication Design students for logo work = $900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QEP Promotions and Marketing= $10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development</th>
<th>$32,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SACSCOC Institute for Quality Enhancement and Accreditation</td>
<td>$1,400/person x 5 persons = $7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACADA Annual and Regional Meetings</td>
<td>$1,500/person x 10 persons = $15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACADA Summer Institute $2,000/person = $10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DegreeWorks Software</th>
<th>$163,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisor Training Development</th>
<th>$10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative supplies</th>
<th>$4,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$652,975</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The budget for Year 1, which includes a full academic year of pilot implementation at the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Budget</th>
<th>Year One FY 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$1,620,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Benefits for Director of Academic Planning &amp; Advising (Start date: January 2012) = $112,270</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Benefits for Advising Specialists ($70,048 per specialist)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria (6) start date January 2013 = $210,144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annandale (8) start date January 2013 = $280,192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loudoun (5) start date January 2012 = $350,240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manassas (5) start date January 2013 = $175,120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Education (1) start date January 2013 = $35,024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbridge (5) start date January 2012 = $350,240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipend for Lead Specialist = $5,000 ($2500 per Lead Specialist; one per campus, except for MEC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reassigned time for Faculty Advising Manager

| Alexandria - start date January 2013 - total of 6 managers = $18,600 |
| Annandale - start date January 2013 - total of 8 managers = $24,800 |
| Loudoun - start date January 2012 - total of 4 managers = $24,800 |
| Manassas - start date January 2013 - total of 3 managers = $9,300 |
| Medical - start date January 2013 - total of 2 managers = $6,200 |
| Woodbridge - start date January 2012 - total of 3 managers = $18,600 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP Promotions and Marketing</th>
<th>$27,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NACADA Annual and Regional Meetings</td>
<td>$1,500/person x 10 persons = $15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACADA Summer Institute $2,000/person = $12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### QEP Budget

| Professional Development Total | $27,000 |
| DegreeWorks Software | $30,000 |
| Advisor Training Development | $10,000 |
| Recognition of Outstanding Advising | $5,000 |
| Administrative supplies | $2,000 |
| **Total** | **$1,694,530** |

By Year 2, the QEP will be fully implemented across all campuses. The budget for Year 2 follows:

#### QEP Budget Year Two FY 2014

| Personnel | $2,365,710 |
| Salary and Benefits for Director of Academic Planning & Advising (Start date: January 2012) = $112,270 |
| Salary and Benefits for Advising Specialists ($70,048 per specialist) |
| Alexandria (6) start date January 2013 = $420,288 |
| Annandale (8) start date January 2013 = $560,384 |
| Loudoun (5) start date January 2012 = $350,240 |
| Manassas (5) start date January 2013 = $350,240 |
| Medical Education (1) start date January 2013 = $70,048 |
| Woodbridge (5) start date January 2012 = $350,240 |
| Stipend for Lead Specialist = $12,500 ($2500 per Lead Specialist; one per campus, except for MEC) |
| Reassigned time for Faculty Advising Manager |
| Alexandria - start date January 2013 - total of 6 managers = $37,200 |
| Annandale - start date January 2013 - total of 8 managers = $49,600 |
| Loudoun - start date January 2012 - total of 4 managers = $12,400 |
| Manassas - start date January 2013 - total of 3 managers = $18,600 |
| Medical - start date January 2013 - total of 2 managers = $12,400 |
| Woodbridge - start date January 2012 - total of 3 managers = $9,300 |
| Professional Development | $27,000 |
| NACADA Annual and Regional Meetings $1,500/person x 10 persons = $15,000 |
| NACADA Summer Institute $2,000/person = $12,000 |
| DegreeWorks Software | $30,000 |
| Advisor Training Development | $10,000 |
| Recognition of Outstanding Advising | $5,000 |
| Administrative supplies | $2,000 |
| **Totals** | **$2,439,710** |

Years 3, 4, and 5 involve costs similar to Year 2 and are detailed in the full budget in the appendix.

**Associated programs**

There are a number of initiatives at NOVA related to student success. As described in the
“Desired Student Learning Outcomes” chapter, these initiatives must occur under the same umbrella, not as separate entities. The GPS for Success will act as the catalyst to direct students to completion. This section summarizes the initiatives and their connection to the QEP.

**Achieving the Dream** ([www.nvcc.edu/depts/atd](http://www.nvcc.edu/depts/atd))

Achieving the Dream is a national initiative to help promote success for students at community colleges. NOVA’s involvement with Achieving the Dream has spurred the creation of orientation programs (SOAR and NSO) and redesigned the student development (SDV) courses. Advising Specialists will work closely with summer orientation staff. This includes New Student Orientation (NSO) and Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR). Programs like First Year Experience (FYE) encourage students to build meaningful relationships with faculty, staff and other students, transition smoothly into college, and prepare for academic, career and personal success at NOVA and beyond. Continued institutional support of such programs is critical to the success of students and the success of NOVA’s QEP, GPS for Success.

**Academic Coaches at ELI**

Academic advising for ELI students can be provided through campus resources, when appropriate for the student. However, for those first-time-to-college curricular ELI students who desire guidance in an online format, coordination with the existing ELI advising structure is necessary. ELI students receive applications and admissions advising through ELI’s academic coaches. ELI’s counselors provide enrollment guidance and specialized counseling (i.e. veterans’ affairs, transfer). The ELI academic coaches will act in the same way as the campus Advising Specialist, in the sense that they will work with first-time-to-college curricular students to set an academic goal and verify that they have chosen an appropriate program of study. These academic coaches will assign the student an appropriate Faculty Advisor (from a campus that is convenient for the student, if appropriate).

**Structured Advising**

Like many institutions of higher learning, much of NOVA’s teaching faculty is on nine-month contracts. During the summer, students often have difficulty accessing advising, since their Faculty Advisor may not be on contract. However, advising must still take place. Students typically receive advising from faculty who do teach during the summer, or from personnel in the Student Services Center. During the summer of 2010, NOVA tried a new approach to summer advising. Teaching faculty had the option to sign up for a program called “Structured Advising.” These faculty act as generalist advisors, working alongside student services personnel to help all students who seek help. A generalist advisor helps students who seek advising, regardless of their chosen program of study. This type of advising requires a broader knowledge of programs and student services at NOVA than program-specific advising. This program was offered again during the summer of 2011. The Structured Advising Program allows more students to receive guidance and faculty to learn more about the institution. While the GPS for Success focuses on academic advising needs in the fall and spring semesters, Structured Advising addresses the needs during the summer. Coordination between services offered through the GPS for Success and Structured Advising will provide the student with a comprehensive advising experience. Summer advisors will record their actions through the academic planning software, so that when the student’s Faculty Advisor returns in the fall, that advisor is kept in the loop.

**Virtual Advising**

It is understood that students access NOVA services in a number of ways. The Virtual Advising Program provides an online environment for students to seek help. In order to capture these students and provide them with a comprehensive and consistent advising experience, support for Virtual
Advising must continue. Virtual advisors are available for online chat and 24-hour response email for all students. They provide academic advising assistance as well as guidance for a number of student service related issues. Student feedback on use of virtual advising has been very positive, and support for the Virtual Advising Program should continue to serve students who seek guidance electronically. Collaboration with the QEP and the Virtual Advising Program is necessary to ensure that first-time curricular students have their immediate needs met with the virtual advisor, but are referred to an Advising Specialist for goal setting and program verification. Continuing curricular students who contact virtual advisors will also have their immediate needs met and will be encouraged to follow up with their assigned Faculty Advisor.

Pathway to the Baccalaureate (www.nvcc.edu/academics/pathway)

The Pathway to the Baccalaureate is an award-winning program that offers a structured environment to improve the transition, retention, graduation and transfer of students from high school, through NOVA and on to a four-year institution for underrepresented students in higher education living in Northern Virginia. The program's goal is to improve college access and success for these students. Continued institutional support for the Pathway program gives this at-risk population the intensive, structured counseling and advising that these students desperately need. The GPS for Success will not replace the Pathway program for these students. The QEP Development Committee included personnel from the Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program, and many of the QEP actions to be implemented are based on successful practices of the program. Collaboration between the Director of Academic Planning and Advising and the Director of Pathway to the Baccalaureate will continue as NOVA strives to improve college access and success for all students.
X. Assessment

Use of the CCSSE, SENSE, and NOVA’s graduate survey may indirectly gauge the learning that occurs through the QEP, but since they do not use personal identifiers, it is not possible to determine how the QEP population performs. In order to get an accurate picture of the QEP population’s performance, a new assessment plan includes the use of cohorts, an electronic checklist, assessments in the Blackboard e-learning platform, and focus groups.

Use of Cohorts

NOVA’s participation in the Achieving the Dream Initiative has provided valuable data by grouping students into cohorts (by semester of first enrollment). Plans for the assessment of the student learning outcomes will incorporate the use of cohorts, as well as tracking data by campus. Goals for the cohorts and campuses are described at the end of this section.

Use of Checklist

Advising Specialists, who act as case managers for students in the QEP population, will track actions associated with student learning outcomes. This tracking will be performed with a checklist, which will be housed in a database. The checklist (at the end of this chapter) includes a number of items, categorized as follows:

- Early Engagement
- Academic Planning
- Faculty Advising
- Financial Aid
- Placement Testing
- Assessment

The Advising Specialists will be responsible for entering dates and other data into the database, which will be analyzed by the Director of Academic Planning and Advising. This Director will share reports based on this data with the Advisory Council on Academic Planning and Advising.

During the summer of 2012, the pilot campuses (Loudoun and Woodbridge) will engage in proactive advising by reaching out to students in the QEP population to ensure that checklist items are met. Many of the items are addressed in NOVA’s SOAR (Student Orientation Advising and Registration) and NSO (New Student Orientation) programs, which target the same population of students. It is anticipated that these programs will be mandatory starting the summer of 2013, at the time of full implementation of the QEP. At the time of full implementation, NOVA plans to require students in the QEP population to meet with their faculty advisor in the fall, before being allowed to register for the spring semester.

The following table maps the checklist items to their associated student learning outcomes and states goals for the pilot implementation (2012 cohort) and the for full implementation (2013+ cohorts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist item</th>
<th>Associated SLO</th>
<th>Goal(s)</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Did the student attend SOAR?&quot;</td>
<td>Indirect measure of 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3</td>
<td>2012 cohort: 50% 2013+ cohorts: 95%</td>
<td>The 50% goal for 2012 is based on past voluntary participation in SOAR. The goal for 2013+ is much higher, and is based on the premise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Measure Type</td>
<td>2012 Cohort</td>
<td>2013+ Cohorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Has the student developed an academic goal?”</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>50% by week 3 of the first semester; 90% by the end of the first semester</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Has the student’s program of study been verified that it is aligned with the student’s goal?”</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>99% of those who have set an academic goal by week 3; by end of first semester</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Is the student able to identify a program of study?”</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>84% by week 3; 90% by end of first semester</td>
<td>85% by week 3; 90% by end of first semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>2012 Cohort</td>
<td>2013+ Cohorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Has the student been assigned a faculty advisor?”</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>99% of program placed students by week 3; by week 8</td>
<td>99 by week 3%; by week 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Has the student started an academic program completion plan?”</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>80% of those who are program placed by week 3; 80% of those who are program placed by the end of the first semester</td>
<td>80% of those who are program placed by week 3; 80% of those who are program placed by the end of the first semester (for AL, AN, MA) 5% increase for LO and WO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Use of Blackboard**

Blackboard has proven to be an effective tool in instruction. Faculty, staff, and students are familiar with the Blackboard platform, and it provides assessment tools (such as quizzes and surveys). Assessments will be administered through Blackboard to measure learning associated with the student learning outcomes.

Each spring and summer, each campus’ Dean of Students receives data on potential incoming students from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment. These students are invited to attend SOAR and NSO during the summer. When a student attends SOAR, the Advising
Specialist will enroll the student in a Blackboard Organization, according to the student’s verified program of study. The Blackboard Organization is a portal for students, Student Services staff, and teaching faculty to provide the student with advising information and to assess student learning regarding advising. Each academic division will have one Blackboard Organization, which will be segmented by that division’s programs of study. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising is responsible for maintaining the content of the Blackboard Organizations. Faculty Advisors and Advising Specialists will have “Assistant Instructor” permissions, so that they are able to access assessment data, if needed.

The use of five Blackboard assessments (described below) will include items addressing the skills and abilities that are related to the student learning outcomes. Specifically, we will be able to measure to what extent students understand the importance of

- forming academic goals
- making informed decisions
- identifying resources for and pathways towards stated goals
- understanding how to deal with barriers towards achieving goals

Advising Specialists will prompt students in the QEP population to take assessments A, B, C, and D. Faculty Advisors will prompt students to take assessment E. Each Advising Specialist will prompt his/her caseload of students. Assessments A, B and E will be made available to all students. In order to not “over-assess” the same group of students (and make them less-amenable to future assessments), assessments C and D will be assigned to randomly selected Advising Specialists’ caseloads.

A copy of each assessment is at the end of this chapter. The following is a summary of each assessment:

**Assessment A: Set Your Academic Goal**

**Purpose:**
This assessment records the student’s academic goal, and reinforces the importance of goal setting. Direct assessment of Student Learning Outcome 1.1 and supports 1.2.

**Design:**
This assessment is a two-question survey to help the student identify his/her academic goal. The first question asks students “Why are you here at NOVA?” and gives the students a number of items to chose from. The second question is a free response item, asking the student to further explain academic goals and aspirations.

**Administration:**
This assessment will be administered to first-time-to-college recent high school graduates who intend to start classes at NOVA at Loudoun or Woodbridge in the fall 2012 semester. The remaining campuses will follow with full implementation (those students starting in the fall 2013 semester). Students will be expected to participate in this assessment at SOAR during the summer prior to their fall enrollment. Those students who do not attend SOAR will be contacted directly by Advising Specialists and prompted to complete the assessment. This assessment should be completed no later than week 3 of the fall semester.

**Evaluation:**
Advising Specialists will ensure that the students’ selected program of study is aligned with the stated program of study. In the case that it is not, the Advising Specialist will contact the
student to set up an appointment to discuss program options or a clarification of the academic goal.

Since the assessment may be taken multiple times, the student may change his/her goal by retaking the survey. The Faculty Advisor will have access to the survey results, and can discuss the goal with the student. The Faculty Advisor will encourage the student to retake the survey when the student indicates that his/her goals have changed.

Goals:
For those students who attend SOAR and NSO at the Loudoun or Woodbridge campus during the summer of 2012, it is expected that 100% of the students in the QEP population at each campus will be prompted to take the assessment, and 90% of these students at each campus will do so (by week 3 of the fall semester). (Note: approximately 10.6% of students at LO and 8.4% of students at WO attended SOAR in summer 2010, but did not enroll in the fall of 2010.) Using the checklist described earlier, Advising Specialists will record when the student was prompted to take the assessment, and when (or whether) it was completed.

Since SOAR and NSO are not yet mandatory, it is difficult to set a goal for those students who do not attend. These students will be contacted individually by Advising Specialists and prompted to complete the assessment. Using the checklist described earlier, Advising Specialists will record when the student was prompted to take the assessment, and when (or whether) it was completed. It is anticipated that SOAR and NSO will be mandatory by summer 2013, which will coincide with full implementation of the QEP. Therefore, the goal for the remaining campuses are as follows: 100% of students in the QEP population at each campus will be prompted to take the assessment, and 90% of these students at each campus will do so (by week 3 of the fall semester).

Assessment B: The Importance of Advising

Purpose:
This assessment ensures that a student can name his/her Faculty Advisor and understand the importance of establishing contact with the Faculty Advisor. Direct assessment of Student Learning Outcome 1.3 and indirect assessment of 1.4.

Design:
This assessment is a five-question Blackboard quiz. The first question asks the student to name his/her Faculty Advisor. Three of the questions are multiple choice and have “right” and “wrong” answers. The remaining question asks the student to identify potential barriers to success.

Administration:
This assessment will be administered to first-time-to-college recent high school graduates who intend to start classes at NOVA at Loudoun or Woodbridge in the fall 2012 semester. The remaining campuses will follow with full implementation (those students starting in the fall 2013 semester).

The Advising Specialist will prompt the student to take the assessment starting at Week 3. Prompts will continue weekly through Week 6.

Evaluation:
Three of the questions have “right” and “wrong” answers, and students will receive immediate feedback when they take the quiz. Advising Specialists will also ask students who respond incorrectly to these questions if they need to set up a meeting (with the Advising Specialist) to better understand the purpose of advising. One of the two remaining questions (“What is your faculty advisor’s last name?”) will be “graded” by the Advising Specialist for accuracy. Advising Specialists will contact students who provide incorrect (or misspelled) responses. The remaining question asks student’s to identify potential barriers to success. Faculty Advisors can use this information to help the student make informed decisions when developing the academic program completion plan.

Goals:
Advising Specialists will prompt 100% of students in the QEP population at each campus. For pilot implementation, the requirement for students to meet with a Faculty Advisor will not yet be in place, although students will be encouraged to do so (anticipated requirement is with full implementation in the fall of 2013). Typical response rates for an optional survey are very low, often reported to be less than 20%. To increase the participation, students can be expected to take the assessment prior to meeting with the Faculty Advisor (or at the beginning of the advising session). Once the requirement for a student to participate in faculty advising is in place, more students will complete the assessment. Therefore, it is expected that 80% of students in the QEP population (per campus) who meet with their Faculty Advisor will complete the assessment.

Goals for each question:
#1: “What is the last name of your Faculty Advisor?”
80% of students will correctly name their Faculty Advisor. 100% of those students with incorrect responses will be contacted to communicate the correct information.

#2: “When should you FIRST contact your Faculty Advisor?”
80% of students will answer this question correctly.

#3: “If you cannot contact your faculty advisor or do not know who it is, which of the following can you do?”
80% of students will answer this question correctly.

#4: The student is prompted to identify potential barriers to academic success. This item is not graded.

#5: “What are some reasons that you should meet with your faculty advisor?”
80% of students will answer this question correctly.

Assessment C: Goal Setting and Planning

Purpose:
This assessment measures students’ perception of the importance of goal-setting, planning, and identifying barriers. Indirect measures of Student Learning Outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, and 1.5.

Design:
This assessment is a five-question Likert-scale questionnaire. Students are asked to rate their agreement with questions regarding their behavior and the importance of actions related to advising: goal-setting, selecting an appropriate program of study, academic planning, recognizing barriers, and understanding the importance of meeting with a Faculty Advisor.
Administration:
This assessment will be administered to first-time-to-college recent high school graduates who intend to start classes at NOVA at Loudoun or Woodbridge in the fall 2012 semester. The remaining campuses will follow with full implementation (those students starting in the fall 2013 semester).

The Advising Specialist will prompt the student to take the assessment starting at Week 8. Prompts will continue weekly through Week 11.

Evaluation:
Advising Specialists will use the responses to determine if students need further follow-up advising. Advising specialist will contact students who respond “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to any of the five items to determine if students need assistance with advising or with setting up a meeting with the Faculty Advisor, or if a referral is needed to a counselor or other NOVA unit. Advising Specialists will encourage advising meetings with students who do not select “strongly agree” or “agree” to items #1 or #2. Advising Specialists will follow up with students who select “strongly agree” or “agree” to question #5.

Goals:
Selected Advising Specialists will prompt 100% of their students in their caseload. The Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program has experienced response rates from 20 – 30% for voluntary surveys. Therefore, the goal for the response rate for this assessment is 25% of the students contacted.

Goals for each question:
#1: “I understand the importance of setting an academic goal.”
90% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#2: “I have selected a major / program of study that is aligned with my academic goal.”
90% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#3: “I understand the importance of meeting with my faculty advisor before I register before my second semester.”
80% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#4: “I have started to develop an academic program completion plan, which maps out the courses I need to take, semester by semester.”
80% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#5: “I have identified barriers that could prevent me from reaching my academic goal.”
There is no particular goal for this question. It is used to determine if follow-up with the student is needed.

Assessment D: Academic Planning

Purpose:
This assessment measures students' perception of the importance of advising once the student has settled in to his/her first semester classes, and is starting to think about classes for the
upcoming semester. It focuses on academic planning and need for self-evaluation. Indirect assessment of Student Learning Outcomes 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, and 2.2.

Design:
This assessment is a five-question Likert-scale questionnaire. Students are asked to rate their agreement with questions regarding their behavior and the importance of actions related to advising: identifying barriers to success and the NOVA resources that can provide assistance, developing an academic program completion plan, evaluating academic performance, and understanding the importance of meeting with a Faculty Advisor.

Administration:
This assessment will be administered to first-time-to-college recent high school graduates who intend to start classes at NOVA at Loudoun or Woodbridge in the fall 2012 semester. The remaining campuses will follow with full implementation (those students starting in the fall 2013 semester).

The Advising Specialist will prompt the student to take the assessment starting at Week 10. Prompts will continue weekly through Week 12.

Evaluation:
Advising Specialists will use the responses to determine if students need further follow-up advising. Advising specialist will contact students who respond “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to any of the five items to determine if students need assistance with advising or with setting up a meeting with the Faculty Advisor, or if a referral is needed to a counselor or other NOVA unit. In particular, Advising Specialists will contact those students who select “strongly agree” or “agree” for question #1, but “neither agree nor disagree,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree” for question #5.

Goals:
Selected Advising Specialists will prompt 100% of students in their caseload. The Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program has experienced response rates from 20 – 30% for voluntary surveys. Therefore, the goal for the response rate for this assessment is 25% of the students contacted.

Goals for each question:
#1: “I have identified barriers that could prevent me from reaching my academic goal.”
There is no particular goal for this question. It is used, in conjunction with question #5, to help determine if follow-up with the student is needed.

#2: “I have started to develop an academic program completion plan, which maps out the courses I need to take, semester by semester.”
80% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#3: “I understand the importance of meeting with my faculty advisor before I register before my second semester.”
During pilot implementation, students will not be required to meet with the faculty advisor before registering for the spring semester. Therefore, the goal for the 2012 cohort is that 80% will respond “strongly agree” or “agree.” During full implementation, students in the QEP population will be required to meet with their Faculty Advisor during the fall semester before registering for the spring semester. Therefore, the goal for the 2013 (and beyond) is that 90% will respond “strongly agree” or “agree.”
#4: “I considered my performance in my classes this semester before choosing courses for next semester.”
80% of students will select “strongly agree” or “agree.”

#5: I am able to identify the NOVA resources that can help me overcome barriers to my success.
80% of students will select “strongly agree,” “agree,” or “neither agree nor disagree.”

Assessment E: Evaluation of Plans and Performance

Purpose:
This assessment will be used to determine if a student needs to revise his/her goals or program of study. It will also be used to inform the Faculty Advisor and help guide the advising session. Direct assessment of Student Learning Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2.

Design:
This assessment is a three-question “yes/no” survey. The questions pertain to adjustments in schedule, or the need to revise one’s program of study or academic goal.

Administration:
The Faculty Advisor will prompt the student to take the assessment at the time the advising appointment is made. In the event that the student has not taken the assessment by the time of the advising appointment, the Faculty Advisor will encourage the student to take the assessment at the time of the advising appointment, if possible, or assign the student the assessment as “homework.”

Evaluation:
The Faculty Advisor will use the responses of the survey to help guide the advising session.

Goals:
During the pilot implementation, students will not be required to meet with their Faculty Advisor before registering for the spring semester. Therefore, it is difficult to set a goal for the entire 2012 cohort QEP population, even by campus. However, for those students who meet with a Faculty Advisor (as recorded on the checklist addressed earlier), 90% will have taken the assessment.

Once the requirement for meeting with the Faculty Advisor is in place with full implementation (starting with the 2013 cohort), the goal is that 90% of students in the QEP population on each campus will take the assessment.

Use of Focus Groups

As stated in the QEP, the use of focus groups was fundamental to the development of the QEP. Student Learning Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 are particularly difficult to assess with checklists or other instruments. Focus groups, however, provide an opportunity for students to inform NOVA about their actions and their needs. Less formal, but equally informative, discussion groups of faculty and staff helped inform the QEP. The continued use of these discussion groups will be used to evaluate the use of Advising Specialists, Faculty Advising Managers, and the experiences of Faculty Advisors.
Students
As part of the Achieving the Dream initiative, NOVA hired a focus group consultant, who trained faculty members to facilitate focus groups of NOVA students to learn about their experiences in developmental level courses and learning communities. In a similar fashion, an expert will be hired to train faculty members to moderate focus groups to learn about the academic reflection behavior of continuing students.

The purpose of these focus groups is to
a) learn whether students feel they have the skills to reflect on academic performance and make informed decisions regarding their academic goals and plans, and
b) determine the extent to which students feel they have started to develop the practice of meeting with their Faculty Advisor.

During pilot implementation, focus groups will be formed on each of the Loudoun and Woodbridge campuses during the spring 2013 semester. With full implementation starting the summer of 2013, all campuses will be involved with the facilitation of focus group in the spring of 2014. Focus groups will continue every spring, to help refine the advising process and improve student learning. The findings from the focus groups will be analyzed by the Director of Academic Planning and Advising, in collaboration with the Advisory Council for Academic Planning and Advising.

Advising Specialists
The Advising Specialist is a new role in Student Services. As students in the QEP population come to NOVA, they are assigned to an Advising Specialist. The anticipated caseload of first-time-to-college recent high school graduates is 350. Each campus Coordinator of Student Success will monitor the caseload of the Advising Specialist to ensure equitable workload among the Advising Specialists. The caseload of the Advising Specialist is well within the figure suggested by best practices supported by research (as stated in the QEP document), but requires evaluation to determine if the caseload should be increased or decreased. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will work with the each campus Coordinator of Student Success and hold discussion groups with the Advising Specialists (by campus) to determine if the caseload quantity should be adjusted.

Faculty Advising Managers
The Faculty Advising Manager acts as a mentor and resource for faculty advisors. As stated in the QEP, the number of Faculty Advising Managers per division is based on the number of full-time faculty per division. The role of the Faculty Advising Manager is being refined as NOVA implements the QEP. The Director of Academic Planning and Advising will meet with the Faculty Advising Managers at least once a semester to determine how the role is developing, and how it should be refined. In addition, the Faculty Advising Manager receives release time from teaching duties, and the amount of release time needs to be commensurate with work duties. Finally, the number of Faculty Advising Managers per academic division may need to be increased or reduced. This evaluation will be done through discussions with the Faculty Advising Managers and Academic Deans.

Faculty Advisors
Faculty Advisors play a large part in the potential success of the QEP. In order for students to take part in effective and comprehensive advising, Faculty Advisors need to be knowledgeable about the advising process and NOVA resources, and need to understand how advising is a component of the teaching and learning process. Conversations with faculty have enabled the QEP Development Committee to create a list of topics that need to be addressed through training. As training is developed and delivered, conversations between the Director of Academic Planning and Advising will continue, to ensure that the training is effective and worthwhile. This development of training is in line with NOVA’s Strategic Vision 2015: Gateway to the American Dream. Specifically, in an effort to improve teaching and learning, NOVA will “increase professional development opportunities for faculty
Northern Virginia Community College

and staff that result in enhanced teaching, increased productivity, and improved services to students.” (Gateway to the American Dream, p. 4)

The appropriate Faculty Advising Manager will monitor the caseload of Faculty Advisors. When the caseload approaches the recommended number of 25 advisees per Faculty Advisor, the Academic Deans, Campus Implementation Task Forces, and Director of Academic Planning and Advising will work together to determine how advising assignments can be reconfigured and how alternative advising (i.e. group advising) can be incorporated into programs with large numbers of students.

**Related Outputs**

NOVA recognizes that retention, while not a direct measure of learning, is certainly a measure of student success and the success of the QEP. NOVA’s Strategic Vision 2015: Gateway to the American Dream calls for the following measures of student success by 2015:

- to increase the fall-to-fall retention rate of first-time, full-time students to 70%
- to increase the fall-to-fall retention rate of all students to 51%

Preliminary data from the Achieving the Dream Initiative shows that first-time-to-college, full-time students who attended SOAR have higher fall-to-fall and fall-to-spring retention rates than the population of all first-time-to-college, full-time students. However, not all students in the QEP population are full-time students, so the goals need to be set carefully. Students in the QEP population will be required to attend SOAR and NSO starting in the summer of 2013, so the goals for the pilot campuses (LO and WO) and new to implementation campuses (AL, AN, MA) are the same starting with the fall of 2013. After a careful analysis of college and campus retention data (of all students and of first-time-to-college, full-time students), the following goals have been set:

**Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2012 to Fall 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2013 to Fall 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2014 to Fall 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QEP population at LO and WO</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time students in QEP population at LO and WO</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QEP population at AL, AN and MA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time students in QEP population at AL, AN and MA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fall-to-Spring Retention Rates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2012 to Spring 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2012 to Spring 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2012 to Spring 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QEP population at LO and WO</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time students in QEP population at LO and WO</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2013 to Spring 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2013 to Spring 2015</th>
<th>Fall 2013 to Spring 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QEP population at AL, AN and MA</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above demonstrates the fall-to-spring retention rates for the Fall 2012 cohort for LO and WO and for the Fall 2013 cohort for AL, AN, and MA. Similar goals are set for each new cohort (each fall) per campus. Goals beyond 2015 will be aligned with NOVA’s Strategic Vision at that time.
Assessment A: Set Your Academic Goal

Instructions
Name: Set Your Academic Goal

Instructions
Multiple Attempts: This Survey allows multiple attempts.
Force Completion: This Survey can be saved and resumed later.

Question 1
Why are you here at NOVA? (Select all that apply.)
- personal enrichment
- industry/job certification
- an associate’s degree (AA, AS, AAA, or AAS)
- transfer to a 4-year institution
- the discovery of interests, skills, and values that will help me choose a program of study
- improvement of skills to be more marketable when searching for a job
- none of the above

Save Answer

Question 2
Briefly state your academic goal. You may include items such as your major / program of study, why you chose major / program of study, and what your intentions are beyond NOVA. Help us understand why you are here at NOVA.

Save Answer

Save and Submit
Assessment B: The Importance of Advising

Instructions

Name: The Importance of Advising

Instructions: There are 5 questions. You will receive feedback after most questions. Thank you for your participation!

Multiple Attempts: Not allowed. This Test can only be taken once.

Force Completion: This Test can be saved and resumed later.

Question 1

What is the last name of your faculty advisor?

1 points

Question 2

When should you FIRST contact your faculty advisor?

- only when I have questions about my schedule
- during the first semester, preferably before the middle of the semester
- before starting fall courses
- when I am ready to graduate

1 points

Question 3

If you cannot contact your faculty advisor or do not know who it is, which of the following can you do? (Select all that apply.)

- contact a Student Services advisor
- contact the appropriate academic division

1 points
Assessment B (continued):

**Question 4**

What are some barriers that could prevent you from meeting your goals? Check all that apply. There are no right or wrong answers here...we just want to understand the challenges that you may face.

- [ ] work schedule
- [ ] academic schedule
- [ ] difficulty level of courses
- [ ] transportation issues
- [ ] financial aid issues
- [ ] family responsibilities
- [ ] other

**Question 5**

What are some reasons that you should meet with your faculty advisor? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] to develop or organize my academic program completion plan, which maps out what courses I want to take, semester by semester
- [ ] to select an appropriate major /program of study
- [ ] to change my major / program of study
- [ ] to discuss my academic performance
- [ ] to determine appropriate courses to take
- [ ] to resolve financial aid issues
- [ ] to revise my academic goal

Save and Submit

[Save All Answers] [Close Window] [Save and Submit]
Assessment C: Goal Setting and Planning

Instructions

Name Goal Setting and Planning

Instructions

There are 5 questions. Please answer each question by indicating if you strongly agree, agree, feel neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. Thank you for participating!

Multiple Attempts Not allowed. This Survey can only be taken once.

Force Completion This Survey can be saved and resumed later.

Question 1

I understand the importance of setting an academic goal (a statement that answers the question "Why am I here at NOVA?")

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 2

I have selected a major / program of study that is aligned with my academic goal.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 3

I understand the importance of meeting with my faculty advisor before I register before my second semester.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 4

I have started to develop an academic program completion plan, which maps out the courses I need to take, semester by semester.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Question 5

I have identified barriers that could prevent me from reaching my academic goal.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Save and Submit
Assessment D: Academic Planning

**Instructions**

**Name**  
Academic Planning

**Instructions**  
There are 5 questions. You will select from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

**Multiple Attempts**  
Not allowed. This Survey can only be taken once.

**Force Completion**  
This Survey can be saved and resumed later.

**Test/Survey Status**

---

**Question 1**

I have identified barriers that could prevent me from reaching my academic goal.

- [ ] Strongly Agree  
- [ ] Agree  
- [ ] Neutral  
- [ ] Disagree  
- [ ] Strongly Disagree

**Question 2**

I have started to develop an academic program completion plan, which maps out the courses I need to take, semester by semester.

- [ ] Strongly Agree  
- [ ] Agree  
- [ ] Neutral  
- [ ] Disagree  
- [ ] Strongly Disagree

**Question 3**

I understand the importance of meeting with my faculty advisor before I register before my second semester.

- [ ] Strongly Agree  
- [ ] Agree  
- [ ] Neutral  
- [ ] Disagree  
- [ ] Strongly Disagree

**Question 4**

I considered my performance in my classes this semester before choosing courses for next semester.

- [ ] Strongly Agree  
- [ ] Agree  
- [ ] Neutral  
- [ ] Disagree  
- [ ] Strongly Disagree

**Question 5**

I am able to identify the NOVA resources that can help me overcome barriers to my success.

- [ ] Strongly Agree  
- [ ] Agree  
- [ ] Neither Agree nor Disagree  
- [ ] Disagree  
- [ ] Strongly Disagree  
- [ ] Not Applicable

Save and Submit
Assessment E: Evaluation of Plans and Performance

Instructions
Name: Evaluation of Plans and Performance
Instructions: There are 3 "yes/no" questions to answer.
Multiple Attempts: Not allowed. This Survey can only be taken once.
Force Completion: This Survey can be saved and resumed later.

Question 1
Did you need to adjust your schedule this semester? For instance, did you add, drop, or withdraw from any courses?
- Yes
- No

Question 2
Do you think you need to change your major / program of study?
- Yes
- No

Question 3
Do you think you need to revise your academic goal?
- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

Save and Submit
XI. References


XII. Appendices

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Appendix A: Steering Committee Membership

*Note: This list includes current and former members of the committee.*

Charlotte Calobrisi, Co-Chair
Alison Thimblin, Co-Chair
Ed Banas
Myrtho Blanchard
Edward Creppy
John Dever
Ina Dimkova
Lisa Donaldson
George Gabriel
Miguel Garcia
William Gary
Hortense Hinton
Tanya Ingram
Shelli Jarvis
Julie Leidig
Jennifer Lerner
Molly Lynch
Jim McClellan
Diane Mucci
Kevin Reed
Joshua Richey
Al Ross
Ruth Stanton
Anthony Tardd
Michael Turner
Cynthia Williams
Appendix B: President’s Charge to the SACSCOC Reaffirmation Steering Committee

September 28, 2009

The Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing and guiding the comprehensive processes that NOVA will go through in seeking reaffirmation of its accreditation from the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Specifically, the Steering Committee will oversee and ensure the successful production of the two major documents to be submitted to COC SACS: the Compliance Certification Report and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Through these documents, the college demonstrates its adherence to the Principle of Integrity, the Core Requirements, the Comprehensive Standards, and the Federal Requirements as set forth in the Principles of Accreditation.

Through the efforts of the Special Assistant for Compliance Certification and other college units, substantial progress has already been made with some portions of the Compliance Certification Report. A document management system (Compliance Assist) has been procured, and sample narratives and documentation for selected standards have already been drafted. The Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment has been working on those critical standards related to institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. The Office of Human Resources has been conducting a systematic audit of faculty credentials and has been working on the production of the required faculty rosters. The Steering Committee should review and approve all of this preliminary work, as well as develop a plan and schedule to ensure that all parts of the Compliance Certification Report are completed, thoroughly reviewed, and approved in advance of the specified date for submission (anticipated to be March 2011). If the committee identifies any issue that places the institution in questionable compliance or non-compliance with a core requirement, comprehensive standard, or federal requirement, that matter should immediately be brought to the attention of the President.

In conjunction with the Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan, the committee is asked to engage the college community in a broad-based consideration of possible topics for the QEP (CS 2.12). I would appreciate a preliminary report from the Steering Committee by January 29, 2010, identifying the major topics under consideration followed by a recommendation of the top two or three topics by March 31, 2010. The topics should be ones that significantly advance the institution in accord with the goals of its strategic plan.

The final approval for the topic will be made by the President and Administrative Council. The QEP must be completed and ready for submission to COC SACS by the beginning of the Fall 2011 semester.

In conjunction with the college’s liaison with the Commission (the Executive Vice President), the committee will coordinate all matters related to communications with COC SACS about reaffirmation. The committee is also asked to work with the President’s Office to make all arrangements for hosting the on-site review committee.

Throughout its work, the Steering Committee will need to have the support and active contributions from many across the college. All NOVA offices and personnel are expected to respond promptly and thoroughly to the committee’s requests for assistance. It is also expected that the Steering Committee will need to form various subcommittees, with membership drawn from the larger college community, to carry out specific parts of the charge.

All in all, the Steering Committee will ensure the completion of a smooth and successful process that culminates in the reaffirmation of accreditation for Northern Virginia Community College and in significant advancement for the quality of the college’s programs and operations.

The Steering Committee is expected to continue in operation through the time that the college receives official notification of its accreditation status from the Commission (expected in summer 2012).

Robert G. Templin, Jr
President
Appendix C: Campus Committee Members

* denotes membership on the SACSCOC Reaffirmation Steering Committee

Alison Thimblin*, Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan

**Alexandria Sub-Committee**
- Narmeen Badrah (Counselor)
- Kristy Balbuena (Counselor and English adjunct)
- Joan Blankmann (ESL Faculty)
- Teri Blier (Professor of Law)
- Michael Donnelly (Counselor)
- Pat Gordon (Student Activities)
- Jimmie McClellan* (Dean, Liberal Arts)
- Mariela Ossio (Admin Asst to Dean of Students)
- Kevin Reed* (IST faculty)
- Joshua Richey* (Counselor)
- Bill Schran (Art faculty)
- Frances Villagran-Glover (Admin. Asst. Dean’s Office)
- David Williams (Director LRS)

**Annandale Sub-Committee**
- Gerry Boyd (Dean, Languages & Literature)
- Charlotte Calobrisi* (SA for Compliance)
- Marilyn Deppe (Coordinator of Student Support Services)
- Alicia Falzon (Foreign Languages faculty)
- Don Goral (Math faculty)
- Florine Greenberg (Psychology Professor)
- Rima Gulshan (English Professor)
- Paul Headley (Energy and Engineering Lab Coordinator)
- Christine Holt (Dean of Campus Operations)
- Liz Lieberman (Math faculty)
- Margaret Roberts (Math faculty)
- Jacquelyn Shanahan (Student)
- Art Schuhart (English faculty)
- Richard Wilan (English faculty)

**Loudoun Sub-Committee**
- Mohammad Wasim Ahmad (Student)
- Suzy Aller (Vet Tech faculty)
- Tregel Cockburn (Vet Tech faculty)
- Edward Creppy* (Economics faculty)
- Tim Crump (Student)
- Frank DeLeon (Student Services)
- Ramezan Dowlati (Psychology)
- Hajirah Ishaq (Student leader)
- Asim Khattak (Student leader)
- Nelson Kofie (Sociology)
- Tiffney Laing (Student Activities Coordinator)

**Titus Lane** (Transfer and International Counselor)
**Mary McElhinny** (Student Services Counselor)
**Jonathan Morataya** (Student leader)
**Shivaji Prasad** (Communication & Human Studies)
**Suleman Siddiqui** (Student)
**Tony Tardd*** (Provost)
**Kevin Trissell** (Student)

**Manassas Sub-Committee**
- Gay Fuerst (Business faculty)
- Patricia Gary* (Math faculty, Chair of College Senate)
- Betsy Higgins (Student, President PTK)
- Hortense Hinton* (Provost)
- Kathleen Ludlow (Program Head, Early Childhood Development)
- Bill Muirhead (ESL)
- Greg Perrier (Biology faculty)
- Cynthia Rathjen (Math adjunct)
- Libby Sears (Counselor)
- Nancy Wyatt (Business manager)

**Medical Sub-Committee**
- Ruth Stanton* (Dean of Educational Support Services)
- Cynthia Williams* (Exec. Asst.)

**Woodbridge Sub-Committee**
- Maria Anderson (Spanish faculty)
- Cathy Behan (Bus. Mgmt. faculty)
- Mark Bumgarner (Counselor)
- Kelly Cochran (English adjunct)
- Julie Combs (Librarian)
- Lisa Donaldson* (Dean, Business & Social Sciences)
- Tatyana Kravchuk (Math faculty)
- Tanya Ludutsky (Counselor)
- Frederick Markham (Humanities faculty)
- Norman Meres (Biology adjunct)
- Miriam St. Clair (Natural Science & Math faculty)
- Chuck Taylor (Contract Management adjunct)
- Susan Thompson (History faculty)
- Eduardo Torres (LRS IT specialist)
- Michael Turner* (Dean of Students)
Appendix D: QEP Student Club / Organization Participation Request
Quality Enhancement Plan
Student Club/Organization Participation Request

NOVA was initially accredited by Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in 1968. NOVA was last reaffirmed in 2002 and is scheduled for its next reaffirmation review in 2012.

Part of the reaffirmation process is to develop a strategy that looks towards the future. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a strategy that NOVA will develop to improve student learning. There are many ways to enhance student learning, which is defined as knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values.

During this past fall semester, students, staff, and faculty from across NOVA discussed different ways to enhance student learning. Several QEP proposals have been developed, each describing how NOVA could enhance student learning.

In March, the top QEP proposals will be presented to the college’s administrative council, which will decide which strategy is the best for NOVA. In order to develop the best QEP proposals possible, feedback from students is necessary.

Below are summaries for the proposals that have been submitted. Please share these with your club/organization. For more details on individual proposals, please visit the QEP Update at http://novaqep1.blogspot.com.

Each club/organization is asked to provide a brief write-up of their thoughts regarding the proposals. Please submit your write-up to QEP@nvcc.edu by March 1. You may consider the following:
• Is there a particular proposal that your club/organization would like to see as NOVA’s QEP?
• Some of the proposals are closely related. Which elements do you see as most important?

Thank you for your input. The QEP process counts on student participation. If you have a proposal of your own that you would like to submit, please send it to QEP@nvcc.edu. Your voice counts!

If you would like further information, please contact Alison Thimblin, Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan, at 703 323-3117.
Appendix E: Members of the QEP Development Committee
* denotes Member of Operational Group

Alison Thimblin, Chair
Joe Agnich*, LO, TF
Kristy Balbuena, AL, CL
Emanuel Bartolotta*, ELI, PF
Cathy Behan, WO, TF
Julia Brown, CS, PF
Kim Burkle, ELI, PF
Allison Butler, MA, PF
Michael Carrington*, MA, TF
Julie Carvalho, LO, Adjunct Faculty
Dr. Rashmi Chilka, AN, TF
Dr. JoAnn Credle, AN, PF
Dr. Paul Fitzgerald, AN, TF
Glenn Flodstrom, MEC, TF
Dr. Laura Franklin, AL/ELI, TF
Pat Gary, MA, TF
Kerin Hilk-Balkissoon, CS, AF
Dr. Sam Hill, WO, AF
Adrienne Hinds*, AN, AF
Tanya Ingram, WO, PF
Don Johnson*, MEC, PF
Susan Johnson, LO, TF
Dr. Nelson Kofie, LO, TF
Dr. Jim Reynolds, AL, Professor Emeritus; PF 1983-2004
Doug Rhoney*, WO, PF
Josh Richey*, AL, PF
Al Ross, WO, TF, Chair of College Senate
MaryAnn Schmitt, MA, TF
Deborah Shaffer, AN, TF
Fran Troy, AN, PF
Frances Villagran-Glover*, AL, AF
Dr. Beatrice Veney, MEC, PF

In addition to the committee membership, the following individuals are identified as resource persons who will be available to provide further consultation to the committee as needed:

- Charlotte Calobrisi, Special Assistant for Compliance Certification
- Dr. George Gabriel, Vice President for Research, Planning, and Assessment
- Miguel Garcia, Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Dr. Elizabeth Harper, Associate Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management
- Kathy Lloyd, Special Assistant for Achieving the Dream
- Nan Peck, Acting Coordinator, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Sharon Robertson, Associate Vice President for Academic Services
- Dr. Steven Sachs, Vice President for Instructional and Information Technology
Appendix F: Charge to QEP Development Committee

September 3, 2010

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral part of the reaffirmation of accreditation process, as outlined in the Principles of Accreditation, CR 2.12 and CS 3.3.2. As an action plan that is designed to have a significant impact on student learning, the QEP requires broad-based institutional input. During the past year, Alison Thimblin, in her capacity as Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan, has worked closely with NOVA’s six campuses, including discussions with faculty, staff, and students, to listen to their ideas and examine data from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment. These included results from graduate surveys and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. In addition, several QEP proposals were developed by various groups. These proposals were discussed with the Instructional and Student Services Committee, the Deans Working Group, the core team of the Achieving the Dream Initiative, and other constituencies to receive feedback. After careful consideration by the Reaffirmation Steering Committee, four proposals were sent to the Administrative Council for their review.

Enhanced Academic Advising was selected by Administrative Council as the topic for the QEP. Academic advising has been shown to be a key factor in student success, and it is clearly aligned with NOVA’s general education goal for personal development, which calls for students to develop the knowledge, skills, and understanding to make informed academic, social, personal, career and interpersonal decisions. The creation of an action plan to help students develop these abilities will have a significant impact on student learning at NOVA.

The membership of the QEP Development Committee represents NOVA’s diverse constituencies. Certain individuals will serve as the operational group of the effort, while the full committee will serve in an active consultative role, with members representing their campus or college unit.

The QEP Development Committee will be responsible for the following steps, as outlined in the Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation:

- Define the student learning outcomes
- Research the topic
- Identify the actions to be implemented
- Establish the timeline for implementation
- Organize for success
- Identify necessary resources
- Assess the success of the QEP
- Prepare the QEP for submission to the COC

In addition, the QEP Development Committee will work closely with the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee, the Administrative Council, and other college units and initiatives in order to foster faculty, staff, and student support for the project.

As requested by the Administrative Council, the QEP Development Committee will provide a detailed status report by early December and will complete the document by August 2011 for formal sharing with the college community and review by the SACSCOC on-site review team in November 2011.

Robert Templin, Jr.
President
Appendix G: Minutes of the Administrative Council
(portion regarding the QEP)

September 13, 2011

- Ms. Thimblin presented an updated version of the QEP, reflecting input from the August 12th meeting of the Administrative Council.
- The Administrative Council noted the job description of the Campus Coordinators of Student Success will need to be revised to include overseeing the advising specialist positions.
- The Administrative Council agreed that the pay for advising specialists will stay within the advertised range, regardless of the credentials the person may possess.
- All advising specialists will be hired at same level, and then one will be selected to be the lead. Once the lead is identified, this person may reasonably expect a slightly higher salary.
- Dr. Templin cautioned that consistency across the college regarding faculty advising load will be important.
- The Administrative Council decided campus-level implementation task forces should be established, and that these groups will work collaboratively to create the processes and identify implementation issues.
- Dr. Sachs recommended that the QEP report use language that does not commit NOVA to exclusively using DegreeWorks software.
- The Administrative Council approved starting the recruitment process for the advising specialists.
- Dr. Hill and Mr. Chamberlin will provide Dr. Templin with an estimate for the temporary space needed at the Woodbridge Campus to accommodate the five advising specialists.
- Dr. Templin recommends that the advising specialists be faculty-ranked employees, using provisions of the VCCS-29. This may require a special request to the VCCS.
- The Administrative Council requested that a statement be added to the report regarding how changes will be made to the QEP, and who will make any changes and modifications.
- Key dates:
  - September 14, 2011 – Last date for feedback.
  - September 23 – QEP done and sent to printing.
  - September 30 – QEP sent to on-site review committee.
- The Administrative Council approved moving ahead with the submission of the QEP to SACSCOC, with the revisions listed above.
Appendix H: Institutional Research Used to Help Determine the QEP Topic

Research Report 24-08: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Summary of 2008 Survey Results (http://www.nvcc.edu/oir/REPORTS/CCSSEsummaryof2008surveyresults.pdf)
Research Report No. 25-08: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Results of 2008 Survey (http://www.nvcc.edu/oir/REPORTS/Rept2508CCSSEResultsof2008Survey011609vs.pdf)


Research Report No. 06-09: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Demographic Comparison – Spring 2008 (http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/directories--offices/administrative-offices/oir/docs/rept0609CCSSEDemoCompSq08.pdf)

Research Report No. 10-09: Comments from NOVA Graduates by Campus, Class of 2008 (http://www.nvcc.edu/about-nova/directories--offices/administrative-offices/oir/bulletins/docs/Rept10092008gradsurvey.pdf)


Appendix J: Graduate Survey
# Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Proposal

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is part of the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC). The QEP involves developing and assessing a strategy that NOVA will use to enhance the quality of student learning. According to SACS COC, student learning addresses knowledge, skills, behavior, and values. The QEP should complement NOVA’s mission and the Strategic Vision 2015. The topic should be creative, specific, and significantly impact the greater student body’s learning experience. NOVA must be able to implement and assess the QEP.

Proposals are due by November 30, 2009. Please submit your proposal by e-mail to QEP@nvcc.edu or directly to Akson Thimblin, Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan (AN Campus, CM 308).

**Title of proposed QEP:**

**Description:** How is the proposed topic transformative in terms of student learning? What student learning outcomes are addressed?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method:</th>
<th>How do you envision NOVA carrying out your proposal?</th>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Plan:</th>
<th>Address the expected outcomes and how they can be measured.</th>
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**Resources:** What kind of resources (personnel, training, technology, etc.) do you anticipate will be needed?

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**Convergence with Mission and Strategic Vision 2015:**

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**References (if applicable):**

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**Names of those involved in the preparations of this proposal.**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
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Appendix L: Response from the Administrative Council

From: Templin, Robert G. (Jr)  
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2010 1:58 PM  
To: Thimblin, Alison  
Cc: Admin Council; Gary, Patricia K.; Hurst, Corinne C.  
Subject: QEP Topic Selection

Alison:

Thank you for the four proposals for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that you forwarded to me on behalf of the SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation Steering Committee. I appreciate very much the leadership that you and the committee have provided to ensure the broad-based involvement of the college community in soliciting ideas for this major component of the reaffirmation process. As the Commission notes, extensive communication and genuine connection with constituent groups across the institution about the QEP "can result in significant, even transforming, improvements in the quality of student learning."

The Administrative Council has carefully reviewed the four proposals and, in accord with the ranking of the Steering Committee, concluded that the one for Enhanced Academic Advising has the greatest potential for making a substantial advancement in "the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution" (CR 2.12). It is clear that students, faculty, and staff have also concluded that academic advising is an area of NOVA that needs substantial improvement. At the same time, the Administrative Council recognizes that the proposal for Early Academic Engagement has substantial merit and a some what similar intent. It therefore requests that while the proposal to be developed for Enhanced Academic Advising deal with the span of a student's total career at NOVA, particular focus be given to the early stages where it is so critical to ensure that the student, particularly the recent high school graduate or one placed in developmental studies, is helpfully informed and encouragingly guided about setting his or her educational goals. In fact, we urge that consideration be given to seeing that the advising process for targeted groups of students begin even before they enter the college.

As the planning process begins, we ask that particular attention be given to ensuring the project is:

- College-wide in scope  
- Scalable in size  
- Sustainable in term of required financial support  
- Focused on early engagement while providing coverage for the whole student career  
- Directly supportive of student success (retention, persistence, graduation, successful transfer or entry into the workforce)  
- Connected with student learning outcomes (particularly the General Education goal for Personal Development)

Please develop specific outcomes and associated metrics that will clearly indicate the extent to which these key components of the plan are realized over at least a five-year period. The guidelines for the QEP set forth in the Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation should, of course, be followed.

The Administrative Council further encourages that efforts be made to identify benchmark institutions in the area of academic advising for community college students and that we learn
as much as we can from them in developing the NOVA plan. Please ensure that institutions chosen for benchmark status have proven models for academic advising that have demonstrated and measurable outcomes of student success. Council members also ask that you keep us informed on a regular basis about how the plan is proceeding. We would also like to provide feedback throughout what we anticipate to be an iterative process. In particular, we would like to use college-wide and campus occasions, such as fall convocation, to help disseminate information and demonstrate support for the QEP process. Therefore, by early August please provide me with the overall outline for development of the plan. Also, by early December, please provide a status report that gives particular attention to the scalability of the QEP, its estimated cost, and the proposed outcomes for student success and student learning.

The other proposals that you sent forward, Citizenship Across the Curriculum and Increasing Math and Science Literacy for Non-Majors, also have great merit and will be referred to the college group being formed to provide oversight for the college's General Education program.

Again, thank you for the good proposals. We look forward to the project for Enhanced Academic Advising making a real difference in the quality of student learning and success at NOVA.

Bob
Appendix M: Survey of Student Usage of Academic Advising Resources

Northern Virginia Community College

Student Usage of Academic Advising Resources Survey

Northern Virginia Community College is currently working on a plan to improve student learning through academic advising. This survey focuses on student usage of academic advising resources.

1. How long have you been a student at NOVA?
   ○ This is my first semester.
   ○ This is my second semester.
   ○ More than 2 semesters, but less than 2 years.
   ○ More than 2 years.

2. I am currently a
   ○ full-time student (taking 12 or more credits this semester)
   ○ part-time student (taking less than 12 credits this semester)

3. I take my classes at (check all that apply)
   ○ Alexandria
   ○ Annandale
   ○ Extended Learning Institute (ELI)
   ○ Loudoun
   ○ Manassas
   ○ Medical Education
   ○ Woodbridge

4. Did you take any of the following courses this semester? MTH 1, MTH 2, MTH 3, MTH 4
   ○ yes
   ○ no

5. Did you take any of the following courses this semester? ENG 1, ENG 2, ENG 3, ENG 4, ENG 5, ENG 9
   ○ yes
   ○ no

6. If you participate in any of the following programs, please indicate (check all that apply)
   ○ Dual enrollment
   ○ Pathways to the Baccalaureate
   ○ None of the above

7. As a NOVA student, my academic goal is:
   ○ graduate from NOVA with an associate's degree and transfer to a four year school
   ○ graduate from NOVA with an associate's degree with no intent to transfer to a four year school
   ○ graduate from NOVA with a certificate
   ○ transfer to a four year school without graduating from NOVA
   ○ take some courses with no intent of graduating or transferring
   ○ other, please explain:

8. The following resources have helped me determine my academic goals (check all that apply)
   ○ a counselor in the student services center
   ○ an advisor in the student services center
   ○ summer orientation (NSO or SOAR)
   ○ an SDV course
   ○ my faculty advisor
   ○ one or more of my professors
   ○ friends or classmates
   ○ someone else at NOVA, please specify:
   ○ on my own
   ○ I do not have specific academic goals
   ○ other, please explain:

9. Since coming to NOVA, I have met one-on-one, or had phone or electronic exchanges with a counselor or advisor in the Student Services Center
   ○ yes
   ○ no

10. I have met with my faculty advisor (an instructor outside of the student services center)
    ○ yes
    ○ no, but I know who it is
    ○ no, and I don't know who it is

11. I decided on my current major / program of study (check all that apply)
    ○ at the time I applied to NOVA
    ○ after meeting with a counselor in the student services center
    ○ after meeting with an advisor in the student services center
    ○ through participation in an SDV course
    ○ after meeting with my faculty advisor
    ○ by discussing it with one or more of my professors
    ○ by discussing it with an advisor outside of NOVA (i.e. high school counselor, parent, etc.)
    ○ by discussing it with friends
    ○ using the NOVA Catalog
    ○ using the NOVA Schedule of Classes
    ○ using resources on the NOVA website
    ○ on my own
    ○ I am currently "undeclared" or have not selected a major or program of study

12. Think about how you completed your schedule for the Fall 2010 semester. Then, check as many of the informational resources listed below that you consulted (check all that apply)
    ○ a counselor in the student services center
    ○ an advisor in the student services center
    ○ my faculty advisor
    ○ one or more of my professors
    ○ my friends or classmates
    ○ the NOVA "Advising Sheet" for my program
    ○ someone in the academic department
    ○ the NOVA website
    ○ the NOVA Schedule of Classes
    ○ other, please explain:

13. In what way(s) do you believe academic advising could be improved at NOVA?
    Academic advising typically includes goal setting, creating an educational plan, course selection, and a discussion of resources available. Please be as specific as possible and share as many ideas as you have.

14. Anything else you would like to share about your experience with advising at NOVA:
Appendix N: NOVA’s Mission and Strategic Goals

NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

College Mission

With commitment to the values of access, opportunity, student success, and excellence, the mission of Northern Virginia Community College is to deliver world-class in-person and online post-secondary teaching, learning, and workforce development to ensure our region and the Commonwealth of Virginia have an educated population and globally competitive workforce.


I. STUDENT SUCCESS - Northern Virginia Community College will move into the top tier of community colleges with respect to the key indicators of student success: college readiness, developmental course completion, retention, graduation, transfer, and career placement of its students.

II. ACCESS - Northern Virginia Community College will increase the number and diversity of students being served to mirror the population growth of the region.

III. TEACHING AND LEARNING - Northern Virginia Community College will focus on student success by creating an environment of world-class teaching and learning.

IV. EXCELLENCE - Northern Virginia Community College will develop ten focal points of excellence in its educational programs and services that will be benchmarked to the best in the nation and strategic to building the College's overall reputation for quality.

V. LEADERSHIP - Northern Virginia Community College will serve as a catalyst and a leader in developing educational and economic opportunities for all Northern Virginians and in maintaining the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the region.

VI. PARTNERSHIPS - Northern Virginia Community College will develop strategic partnerships to create gateways of opportunity and an integrated educational system for Northern Virginians who are pursuing the American Dream.

VII. RESOURCES - Northern Virginia Community College will increase its annual funding by $150 million and expand its physical facilities by more than one million square feet in new and renovated space. This includes the establishment of two additional campuses at epicenters of the region’s population growth, as well as additional education and training facilities in or near established population centers.

VIII. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS - Northern Virginia Community College will be recognized as a leader among institutions of higher education in Virginia for its development and testing of emergency response and continuity of operation plans.
Appendix P: NOVA’s General Education Goals


The College has established goals for each degree program to enhance student learning experiences beyond the major area of study. The following are the College’s general education goals, approved by the Administration Council in 2007:

**Communication:** Students will demonstrate the ability to interact with others, resulting in understanding and being understood.

**Critical Thinking:** Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate evidence carefully and apply reasoning to decide what to believe and how to act.

**Cultural and Social Understanding:** Students will demonstrate an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of the social and cultural dimensions within and across local, regional, state, national and global communities.

**Information Literacy:** Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize when information is needed and will have the ability to locate, evaluate and use it effectively.

**Personal Development:** Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and/or refine personal wellness goals. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and/or enhance the knowledge, skills, and understanding to make informed academic, social, personal, career and interpersonal decisions.

**Quantitative Reasoning:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use numerical, geometric, and measurement data and concepts, mathematical skills, and principles of mathematical reasoning to draw logical conclusions and to make well-reasoned decisions and possess the skills and knowledge necessary to apply the use of logic, numbers and mathematics to deal effectively with common problems and issues.

**Scientific Reasoning:** Students will demonstrate the ability to adhere to a self-correcting system of inquiry (the scientific method) and rely on empirical evidence to describe, understand, predict and control natural phenomena.
Appendix Q: Report on Survey on Academic Advising Mission Statement

1. Please select your campus:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annandale</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Learning Institute</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loudoun</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manassas</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbridge</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College staff</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
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</tbody>
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2. Which of the following describes your position at NOVA?

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<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct faculty</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative faculty</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified staff</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional faculty</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching faculty</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
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3. Please evaluate the following proposed academic advising mission statement on each of the listed characteristics. Academic advising at NOVA engages students in on-going, collaborative relationships which teach students to explore, develop, and accomplish their academic, career, and personal goals.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>19.7% (46)</td>
<td>38.6% (90)</td>
<td>27.5% (64)</td>
<td>11.2% (26)</td>
<td>3.0% (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>33.6% (77)</td>
<td>40.6% (93)</td>
<td>19.7% (45)</td>
<td>4.8% (11)</td>
<td>1.3% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>17.9% (41)</td>
<td>40.2% (92)</td>
<td>19.2% (44)</td>
<td>14.4% (33)</td>
<td>8.3% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational</td>
<td>19.7% (46)</td>
<td>29.6% (69)</td>
<td>26.6% (62)</td>
<td>18.0% (42)</td>
<td>6.0% (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short/concise</td>
<td>32.5% (75)</td>
<td>37.2% (86)</td>
<td>15.2% (35)</td>
<td>10.4% (24)</td>
<td>4.8% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understandable</td>
<td>25.4% (59)</td>
<td>40.9% (95)</td>
<td>18.5% (43)</td>
<td>11.2% (26)</td>
<td>3.9% (9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorable</td>
<td>7.9% (18)</td>
<td>23.6% (54)</td>
<td>33.6% (77)</td>
<td>23.1% (53)</td>
<td>11.8% (27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix R: Advising Specialist Responsibilities

The Advising Specialist will
1. Establish a relationship with prospective students through early engagement.
   1.1. Work with high school outreach personnel to identify prospective students.
   1.2. Assist incoming students with the enrollment process by providing a point of contact for
       1.2.1. Application
       1.2.2. Placement testing
       1.2.3. Financial aid application
   1.3. Work with summer orientation staff to identify first time, recent high school graduates.

2. Assist the student in the development of an academic goal.
   2.1. Discuss the student’s immediate and future academic aspirations.
   2.2. Assist the student in developing an academic goal.

3. Verify the student’s program of study.
   3.1. Review NOVA’s degree and certificate options with the student.
   3.2. Electronically record the student’s program of study.
   3.3. Introduce the student to the process for changing a program of study.

4. Assist the student in the creation of an academic plan.
   4.1. Review requirements for selected program with the student.
   4.2. Introduce the student to the use of the electronic academic planning tool.
   4.3. Assist the student in mapping out program requirements semester by semester.
       4.3.1. Assist student in selecting first semester courses.
       4.3.2. Assist student in planning second semester courses.
   4.4. Assist the student in registration for the first semester of courses.

5. Assign the student to a Faculty Advisor.
   5.1. Work with appropriate academic division staff to assign a Faculty Advisor.
   5.2. Electronically record the student’s advisor assignment.
   5.3. Ensure that the student has the Faculty Advisor’s contact information.
   5.4. Follow up with student to ensure that contact has been made by the end of Advising Week.

6. Act as a resource for students.
   6.1. Refer students to appropriate counselors when necessary and ensure that contact has
       been made.
   6.2. Act as a liaison for the student and Faculty Advisor.
   6.3. If a student requests a change in program of study, assist student in making contact
       with new Faculty Advisor.

7. Act as a resource for Faculty Advisors.
   7.1. Act as a liaison for the Faculty Advisor and student services.
       7.1.1. Help Faculty Advisor make referrals to counselors when necessary.
   7.2. Act as a resource for an assigned academic division.
Appendix S: Faculty Advisor Responsibilities

The Faculty Advisor will
1. Be proactive by establishing a relationship with the student upon assignment by the Advising Specialist.
   1.1. Faculty advisors will use an advising syllabus to
       1.1.1. Provide contact information
       1.1.2. Provide advising deadlines
       1.1.3. Outline responsibilities of the advisor and advisee
       1.1.4. Detail expectations

2. Assist the student in the development of an academic plan by
   2.1. Reviewing the initial plan made with the Advising Specialist, and revise if necessary.
   2.2. Using the electronic academic planning tool.
   2.3. Making referrals to transfer counselors, career counselors, and other resources when appropriate.
   2.4. Assisting the student in selecting appropriate courses for each semester of the academic plan.

3. Assist the student in the evaluation of academic performance.
   3.1. Discuss past academic performance
       3.1.1. Assist the student in determining the impact on semester-by-semester academic plan.
       3.1.2. Assist the student in determining the impact on the academic goal.
   3.2. Assist the student in making adjustments to academic plan when necessary.
   3.3. Assist the student in making changes to the academic goal when necessary.
   3.4. Assist the student in making changes to the program of study when necessary
Appendix T: Advising Specialist Position Description

Purpose:
The purpose of the Advising Specialist is to provide early academic advising for first-time-to-college NOVA students by helping them determine an academic goal, verify their program of study, and start their academic plan. The Advising Specialist works within the Student Services Center, reporting to the Coordinator of Student Success. The Advising Specialist will

- act as a case manager for a group of students, ensuring that new students have completed established checklist items (i.e. set an academic goal, verified their program of study, started their academic plan, met with their Faculty Advisor)
- work with high school outreach personnel to establish an early connection with prospective students.
- work with summer orientation staff to advise first-time-to-college curricular students.
- make referrals (as needed) to the appropriate NOVA office.
- act as a resource for Faculty Advisors from an assigned division.
- work with academic division staff to assign Faculty Advisors to students.
- track students to determine if they have met with their Faculty Advisor by established deadlines.
- communicate with students to encourage them to meet with their Faculty Advisor

Competencies:

- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing with strong customer service skills.
- Ability to establish goals and priorities and make decisions based on program and institutional policies.
- Knowledge of college academic programs.
- Knowledge of college student services, including (but not limited to) financial aid, services for international students, admissions, testing, parking.
- Familiarity with People Soft Student Administration System.
- Flexibility and motivation to learn new systems.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment with a diverse student population.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.

Education/Experience Required:
A bachelor’s degree in an appropriate discipline, or demonstrated institutional expertise. At least one year of experience in advising, preferably in a community college setting.
Appendix U: Academic Advising Excellence Award Action Plan

I. Eligibility Criteria:
   A. Two categories
      1. New faculty: Completed 1-3 years in current position
      2. Distinguished faculty: Three or more years in current position
   B. Academic Advising Excellence Award for both faculty and professional advisors
   C. Nominations are submitted by way of:
      1. Self nomination
      2. Student nomination
      3. Peer nomination

II. Submission Process:
   A. Use current Education Foundation Model:
      1. Nominator responsible for collecting and submitting packet
   B. Submission Packet should include the following information (QEP Team should decide if all or a combination should be used):
      1. Include NACADA Standards of faculty advising
      2. Review based on QEP position description
   C. EWP evaluations
   D. Supervisor’s letter of support
   E. List of accomplishments related to advising
   F. Each nominee submits an Academic Advising Philosophy statement
   G. Student evaluations (Important for QEP to develop an evaluation for each semester)
   H. EWP evaluations
   I. Supervisor’s letter of support
   J. List of accomplishments related to advising
   K. Each nominee submits an Academic Advising Philosophy statement
   L. Student evaluations

III. Selection Process
   A. Use The Education Foundation’s current process for reviewing candidates and selecting winners.
      1. Contact Education Foundation for their current model.

IV. Incentives: Possibilities
   A. $500-2000 award given during Convocation
   B. NACADA Scholarship
   C. Professional Development registration coverage
   D. Lunch or dinner with Academic Dean and Director of Academic Advising
   E. Reserved parking for 1 month
   F. Work-study or P14 for the semester
   G. iPad
Appendix V: Position Description for Director of Academic Planning and Advising

The Director of Academic Planning and Advising provides leadership for academic advising on a college-wide basis. The Director is charged with putting the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan into operation in coordination with the Council on Academic Advising. The Director reports to the Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Services. Specific responsibilities include:

• Implementing early engagement for new and prospective students, in coordination with orientation
• Managing the early advising process, as carried out by the Advising Specialists
• Managing faculty advising during the fall and spring semesters, which engages the teaching faculty as program-specific advisors
• Developing, coordinating, and delivering training for Advising Specialists and Faculty Advisors
• Managing the development of robust web-based advising resources for students and faculty
• Collaborating with Deans of Students to ensure the existence of a consistent role of Advising Specialists on each campus
• Collaborating with Academic and Student Services to ensure that advising information disseminated is current and accurate
• Collecting and analyzing data in relation to the outputs and outcomes detailed in the QEP
• Developing and managing academic advising budgets
• Supervising program and staff
• Ongoing collaboration with college leaders and offices
• Regular participation in college committees and the reaffirmation of accreditation

Competencies Required:

• Skill in organizational leadership and effective team-building
• Skill in project and budget development and management
• Ability to develop, disseminate, and interpret campus and program policies and regulations
• Ability to independently plan and manage a variety of programs and projects
• Ability to respond creatively and flexibly to rapidly changing needs and conditions
• Knowledge of academic advising theory and best practices
• Ability to plan and conduct effective training
• Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the development of letters, memos, presentations, and course materials
• Knowledge of assessment techniques, especially those related to student learning and the assessment of advising services
• Knowledge of effective case management models, including tracking of student caseload
• Ability to collect and report on data
• Ability to travel regularly to NOVA Campuses
• Ability to collaborate effectively with college personnel, including administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff
• Ability to work in a fast-paced environment with a diverse student population and diverse faculty and staff

Education/Experience Required:
Master’s degree in an appropriate field; a minimum of five years of experience as a faculty member with advising responsibilities in a post-secondary educational institution, preferably at a community college. Must pass a criminal background check and travel regularly to NOVA campuses.
## QEP Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Prep Year FY 2012</th>
<th>Year One FY 2013</th>
<th>Year Two FY 2014</th>
<th>Year Three FY 2015</th>
<th>Year Four FY 2016</th>
<th>Year Five FY 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Benefits for Director of Academic Planning &amp; Advising</td>
<td>$56,135</td>
<td>$112,270</td>
<td>$112,270</td>
<td>$112,270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salary and Benefits for Advising Specialists ($70,048 per specialist)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexandria (6) start date January 2013</td>
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<td>Annandale (8) start date January 2013</td>
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<td>Loudoun (5) start date January 2012</td>
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<td>$350,240</td>
<td>$350,240</td>
<td>$350,240</td>
<td>$350,240</td>
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<td>$175,120</td>
<td>$350,240</td>
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<td>Woodbridge (5) start date January 2012</td>
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<td>$350,240</td>
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<td>Stipend for Lead Specialist ($2500 per Lead Specialist; one per campus, except for MEC)</td>
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<td>Reassigned time for Faculty Advising Manager (based on $3100 for 3 credits of reassigned time/stipend)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 credits reassigned time per semester during campus's prep and first implementation year; 3 credits reassigned time per academic year thereafter one manager per 25 full-time faculty members</td>
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<td>Alexandria - start date January 2013 - total of 6 managers</td>
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<td>Annandale - start date January 2013 - total of 8 managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodbridge - start date January 2012 - total of 3 managers</td>
<td>$9,300</td>
<td>$18,600</td>
<td>$9,300</td>
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<td><strong>Personnel total</strong></td>
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## QEP Development

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<td>Faculty stipend for QEP editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compensation to Communication Design students for logo</td>
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<tr>
<td>QEP Promotions and Marketing</td>
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<td><strong>QEP Development Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,400</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>SACSCOC Institute for Quality Enhancement and Accreditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NACADA Annual and Regional Meetings $1,500/person x 10 persons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NACADA Summer Institute $2,000/person</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Development Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DegreeWorks Software</td>
<td>License = $163,000</td>
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<td>Maintenance fee = $30,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisor Training Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition of Outstanding Advising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative supplies</td>
<td>Office supplies (Office of Academic Planning &amp; Advising)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>$652,975</td>
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</table>
Appendix X: Glossary

A&SS: Academic and Student Services

Administrative Council: The Administrative Council consists of the President's immediate professional staff. Matters concerning the College policy and administrative procedure are reviewed by the Council and appropriate recommendations are made to the President. The Administrative Council consists of the following standing members:

- President, Chair
- Executive Vice President, Academic and Student Services
- Vice President of Finance and Administration
- Vice President of Information and Instructional Technology
- Vice President of Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment
- Vice President of Workforce Development
- Provost (each campus)

AF: Administrative Faculty
AL: Alexandria Campus
AN: Annandale Campus
AVP: Associate Vice President
CETL: Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
CITL: Campus Implementation Task Force
curricular student: a student who is placed in a program of study
CL: Classified staff
CS: College staff
ELI: Extended Learning Institute
FYE: First Year Experience
HR: Human Resources
IT: Information Technology
LO: Loudoun Campus
MA: Manassas Campus
MEC: Medical Education Campus
NACADA: National Academic Advising Association
NSO: New Student Orientation
OIRPA: Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment
PF: Professional faculty
SOAR: Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration
TF: Teaching faculty
WO: Woodbridge Campus
WSDM: Web Services and Digital Media
Appendix Y: Advising Specialist Checklist

Student name:  
NOVA ID:  
NOVA email:  

EARLY ENGAGEMENT

Did the student attend SOAR?  Yes / No  If yes, date attended:  
Did the student attend NSO?  Yes / No  If yes, date attended:  
Did the student have additional session(s) with the Advising Specialist?  Yes / No  
If yes, date(s) of advisement:  purpose of advisement:  

ACADEMIC PLANNING

Has the student developed an academic goal?  Yes / No  If yes, state goal:  
Has the academic goal been recorded in Blackboard?  Yes / No  date recorded:  
If no:  Has the student been prompted to develop an academic goal?  
Yes / No  date of prompt  
Have you followed up with the student to ensure that an academic goal has been developed?  Yes / No  date of contact:  Result:  
Is the student able to identify a program of study?  Yes / No  
Student’s program of study:  Curriculum code:  
Has the student’s program of study been verified that it is aligned with the student’s goal?  Yes / No  
If no, have you followed up with the student to ensure program of study verification?  
Yes / No  date of contact:  
Has the student’s program of study been entered into PeopleSoft?  Yes / No  
Has the student started to develop an academic plan?  Yes / No  
Has the student enrolled in courses for the first semester?  Yes / No  date of enrollment:  
If no, explain:  
If no, have you followed up with the student to ensure enrollment?  
Yes / No  date of contact:  
Follow up:  date of enrollment/notes:  

FACULTY ADVISING

Has the student been assigned a faculty advisor?  Yes / No  date of assignment:  name of faculty advisor:  
Has the name of the faculty advisor been recorded in PeopleSoft?  Yes / No  date recorded:  
Has the student received name and contact information for the faculty advisor?  Yes / No  date received:  
The student should receive a prompt during weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 to meet with the faculty advisor by week 11.  (Once the student has met with the faculty advisor, no further prompts need to be sent.)  
Date of prompt(s):  
Has the student met with the faculty advisor?  Yes / No  date of meeting:  

100
Appendix Y (continued)

**FINANCIAL AID**

Has the student been prompted to apply for financial aid?  
Yes / No  date of prompt:

Has the student indicated a need for guidance with financial aid issues?  
Yes / No  date:

If yes, Has the student been referred to the Financial Aid office?  
Yes / No  date of referral:

If yes: Have you followed up with the student to determine if issues have been resolved?  Yes / No  date of contact:  Result:

**PLACEMENT TESTING**

You will prompt students to take the placement exams.  Students should take the placement exams prior to enrolling their first semester.

Has the student been prompted to take placement tests?  
Yes / No  date of prompt:

Does the student need to take the ESL placement test?  Yes / No  
If yes: Is the student is required to take an ESL course?  Yes / No  
If yes: Has that student been advised to register in the ESL course the first semester?  Yes / No  date of advisement:

Has the student taken the English placement test?  Yes / No  
If yes: Is the student required to take a developmental ENG class?  Yes / No  
If yes: Has the student been advised to register for developmental ENG during the first semester?  Yes / No  date of advisement:

Has the student taken the math placement test?  Yes / No  
If yes: Is the student required to take developmental math?  Yes / No  
If yes: Has the student been advised to register for developmental math during the first semester?  Yes / No  date of advisement:

**ASSESSMENT**

For each of the following assessments, Advising Specialists will

- send out a prompt at dates to be specified
- record when the assessment was taken

Assessment A: Set Your Academic Goal  
Assessment B: The Importance of Advising  
Assessment C: Goal Setting and Planning  
Assessment D: Academic Planning  
Assessment E: Evaluation of Plans and Performance