
Howard College
Quality Enhancement Plan

Critical Thinking...
for Learning,
for Earning,
for Life!

**Submitted to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern
Association of Colleges and Schools**

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary		1
Chapter One	Introduction to Howard College	3
	Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Strategies	3
	History	4
	Student Demographics	7
Chapter Two	Focus of the Plan	11
	Critical Issue to be Addressed	11
	Critical Thinking and Student Learning	16
	Goals and Objectives	18
	Improving the Learning Environment	19
	Benefits to be Derived from the QEP	20
Chapter Three	Institutional Capability for the Initiation and Continuation of the Plan	23
	QEP Implementation Overview	24
	QEP Preparation Year	25
	QEP Training Year	25
	QEP Implementation Years	26
	QEP Leadership	38
	Financial and Physical Resources	30
	Academic Resources and Systems	31
	Maintaining Progress	35
Chapter Four	Assessment of the Plan	37
	Evaluation of the Overall QEP	38
	Evaluation of Individual Activities and Projects	38
	Standardized Critical Thinking Test	42
	Supplementary Forms of Assessment	43
	QEP Assessment Cycle	45
Chapter Five	Broad-based Involvement of the Community	47
	QEP Planning Phase	51
References		59
Appendices		
	A. Critical Thinking Rubric	61
	B. QEP Leadership	63
	C. Detailed QEP Budget	67
	D. Critical Thinking Resources	71
	E. Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation	75
	F. Program Review Form	77

Executive Summary

The goal of the Howard College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is to improve student learning by fostering critical thinking. In order for this goal to be attained, English, math, and science faculty will first be provided opportunities for intensive training in critical thinking teaching strategies, and they will use the information gleaned from the training as they develop critical thinking activities and projects for implementation in their classes.

The development and implementation of this QEP fits well within Howard College's culture of continuous improvement and its vision to be a beacon of education and life-long learning. The college defines critical thinking as thinking with purpose, skill, and confidence. Based on this definition, students demonstrate critical thinking when they

- ask vital questions
- collect and measure relevant information
- arrive at well-reasoned conclusions
- consider alternative systems of thought
- communicate effectively with others

The definition of critical thinking and the student learning outcomes serve as the foundation of this QEP.

Implementation will begin with the formation of Critical Thinking Teams that will participate in workshops and trainings and will then develop critical thinking activities and projects to be implemented in their classes. Faculty will vote to approve an institution-wide standardized critical thinking assessment rubric to assess student critical thinking activities and projects. The California Critical Thinking Test will also be used to assess critical thinking. Supplementary forms of assessment include integration of critical thinking

questions in objective exams, administering the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) every two years, and roundtable discussions.

This plan utilizes the college's existing infrastructure and strategic planning cycle to implement and assess the QEP. Critical thinking will become an integral part of all strategic planning activities. Program reviews and employee evaluation instruments will include critical thinking performance measures. A QEP Progress Report will be submitted annually to the Board of Trustees. This report will detail critical thinking strategies, data, outcomes, and improvement plans of departments across the college district. A detailed budget has been developed, and the college leadership is committed to providing the necessary resources to implement and sustain the plan.

The development of the QEP has involved representatives from all areas of the college community. It is data and research driven in that the institution reviewed the results of data and research while considering critical thinking as the focus of its QEP. As this document illustrates, the planning process has been highly participative, drawing on the perspectives and experiences of a large number of employees, and it is widely supported by the campus community and the Howard College Board of Trustees.

Chapter One

Introduction to Howard College

Howard College, a public community college serving communities in rural West Texas, has been committed to student learning for over 60 years. In 1945, the founding leaders of Howard College envisioned an institution of higher learning that would bring improved opportunity to the community and would contribute to the economy by supplying a quality workforce. Howard College continues to welcome this responsibility by offering high quality programs and services, characterized by integrity and responsibility. In keeping with its motto, *Education...for Learning, for Earning, for Life*, Howard College embraces the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as an initiative that will promote student success and encourage continuous improvement in the learning environment. The Howard College vision, mission, objectives, and strategies establish a foundation for student success and provide direction for all Howard College programs and services.

Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Strategies

Vision

Howard College is a beacon of education and life-long learning.

Mission

We are a progressive public community college dedicated to providing students with dynamic centers of learning and promoting economic and community development while being resourceful and fiscally responsible.

Objectives and Strategies

1. Be a beacon.
 - Ensure all have a common vision.

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- Achieve recognition as a beacon.
 - Communicate accomplishments to the college and community.
 - Provide early intervention for student success.
 - Increase enrollment.
2. Be a dynamic center of education and life-long learning.
 - Focus on student success.
 - Broker educational opportunities.
 - Encourage uniqueness in programs.
 3. Be a partner in support of economic and community development.
 - Identify and focus on workforce needs.
 - Foster individual enrichment, community involvement, and cultural opportunities.
 4. Be resourceful and fiscally responsible.
 - Improve efficiency.
 - Identify and secure sources of revenue.
 - Evaluate current and new programs for value and priority.

History

Howard County Junior College District was created by a county-wide vote on November 17, 1945. Seven representative citizens of Howard County were elected on that same ballot to serve as a Board of Trustees. The college was first housed in the hospital area of the former Army Air Force Bombardier School, two and one-half miles west of the center of downtown Big Spring, and began its first session on September 30, 1946.

On September 12, 1951, the college was moved to a 120-acre campus located in southeast Big Spring. The physical facilities constructed through the ensuing years include an administration-classroom building, a coliseum, a library building, a science building, an auditorium, a gymnasium, a student union building, a practical arts building, an occupational building, a greenhouse, a music building, an applied sciences center, dormitories for men and women, a baseball field, and a football stadium. Additionally, the college houses a rodeo arena and livestock pens on 20 acres three miles east of Big Spring. In 1990, the original dorms were enlarged. In 2002, a softball field was constructed, and the original auditorium was demolished. A new Visual and Performing Arts Center has been under construction and opened in fall 2006. In 2004, the original greenhouse building was renovated and converted into a campus child care center. A new greenhouse was constructed at another location. A long-range master landscape and campus beautification plan was initiated in 1977 and updated in 1992. The master plan is currently being updated for completion in 2006.

The Lamesa campus of Howard College, 45 miles north of Big Spring in Dawson County, was established in 1972. A variety of learning opportunities are available, including academic transfer and workforce education courses. The building, owned by Dawson County, includes three large classrooms, a computer lab, office space, and a distance learning classroom with interactive video equipment for receiving courses from the Big Spring and San Angelo campuses. High school students are also able to take courses at Lamesa High School for dual credit.

The San Angelo campus of Howard College, 87 miles south of Big Spring, held its first class in 1973 at Goodfellow Air Force Base. In 1981, Howard College San Angelo assumed operation of a vocational nursing program from the San Angelo Independent School

District. At that time the college also offered a limited selection of courses in real estate and law enforcement. In February 1986, Howard College assigned a full-time campus director to oversee the campus and supervise four personnel. At that point the entire operation occupied 2,500 square feet of converted office space. Currently, the San Angelo campus offers technical/vocational programs and support courses in two sites with the addition of space at the West Texas Training Center in 2001.

In the spring of 1979, steps were initiated to study the feasibility of establishing a self-contained post-secondary program uniquely designed for deaf and hard of hearing students as a part of the Howard County Junior College District. Property and buildings at the site of the former Webb Air Force Base were deeded to the Howard County Junior College District. This campus, named the SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf (SWCID), began offering classes on August 25, 1980. This campus located on approximately 57 acres contains buildings and improvements, including the 66,000 square foot administration/classroom complex, residential complex for men and women, a student union building, activity center, diagnostic center, building trades facility, and a softball field. Current plans include the construction of a workforce training center on campus.

The Bureau of Prisons provides classroom and laboratory facilities at the Big Spring Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) for a variety of non-credit courses in the vocational trades. Presently, computer, ESL, masonry, plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning, carpentry, drafting, horticulture, pre-industry, high-tech soldering and executive housekeeping non-credit courses are offered through workforce training. Additionally, the Howard College Big Spring Campus offers inmate students at the FCI the opportunity to pursue a Certificate Level I or an Associate degree in business. Cornell

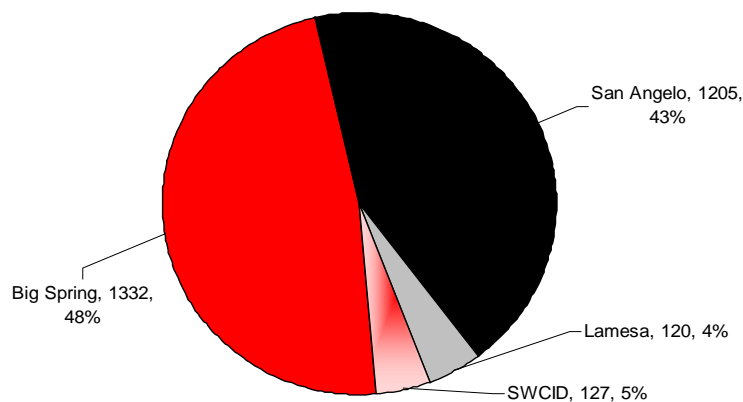
Corrections, a private contractor with the Bureau of Prisons, provides classroom facilities and instructional equipment at four locations to offer a variety of workforce training non-credit courses to inmates. In addition, non-credit courses are offered at the Eden Detention Center, also a private contractor with the Bureau of Prisons, in Eden, Texas.

Senate Bill 397, passed by the Texas Legislature in 1993, established service areas for Texas Community Colleges. The Howard College service area includes 13 counties and covers 13,000 square miles. The service area hosts 29 independent school districts. Howard College courses for which students receive both high school and college credit are offered at most of these school districts.

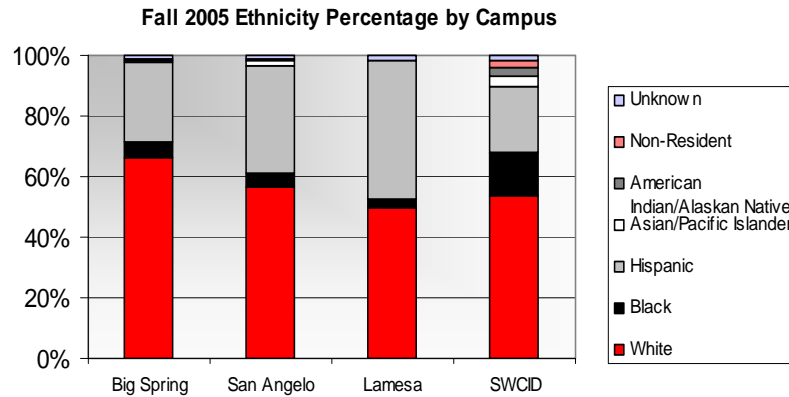
Student Demographics

The diverse student population and socioeconomic level of students is reflective of the Howard College service area. Howard College enrolled 2,784 students in Fall 2005: 1,332 at the main campus in Big Spring; 1,205 in San Angelo; 127 at SWCID; and 120 in Lamesa.

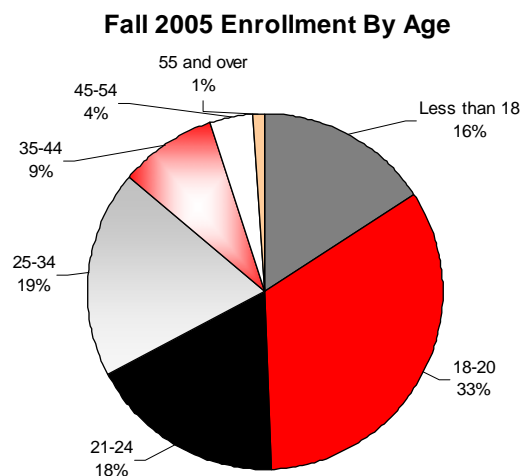
Fall 2005 - Enrollment By Campus



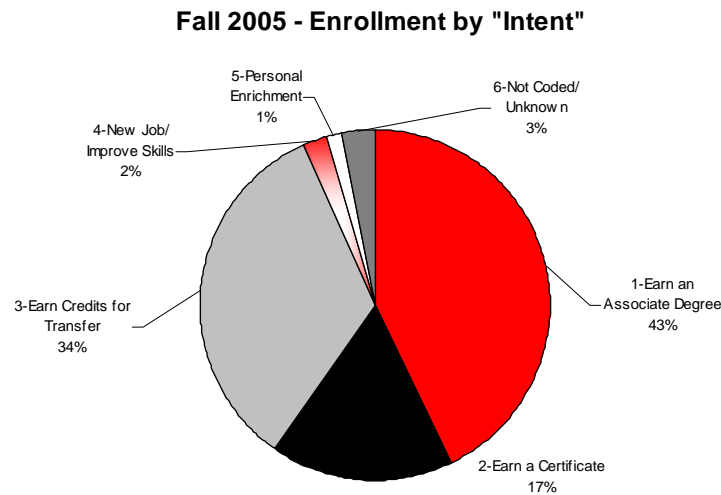
The ethnic composition includes 61% White, 31% Hispanic, 5% Black, and 3% from other ethnic backgrounds.



Sixty two percent (62%) of the students are women and 38% male. Sixteen percent (16%) of the students are under 18 years of age; 33% range in age from 18-20; 37% from 21-34 years of age; and 14% over 35 years of age. Fifty six percent (56%) of the students attend part-time and 44% are in full-time attendance.



Howard College offers courses during the day, evening, weekend, online, and via interactive television. Forty-three percent (43%) of students attend Howard College to earn an associate degree; 34% intend to earn credits for transfer; 17% intend to earn a certificate; 2% are taking courses to improve job skills; and 1% attend for personal enrichment.



Howard College students are heavily dependent on financial aid programs. Eighty-five percent (85%) of students receive some form of financial aid (Fall 2005). Forty percent (40%) receive Pell Grants, and \$2,188,061 in financial aid was distributed during the Fall 2005 term.

The above demographics describe a diverse student population with economic challenges in a rural setting. This combination of factors contributes to an ever-increasing demand for higher education. Howard College has a responsibility and a commitment to offer comprehensive educational programs and support services with a continued focus on quality improvement.



Chapter Two

Focus of the Plan

The Howard College Administrative Cabinet began the QEP process by appointing the Vice President as the cabinet member tasked with primary responsibility for the QEP. The goal of the Vice President during this early period was to communicate information and to gather feedback from all college constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and the Board of Trustees, and then to ultimately establish the topic and focus of the QEP.

Employees were first educated about the QEP during employee meetings conducted on each campus at the beginning of the Spring 2005 term. Information was further disseminated to all district employees via email correspondence, and a call for suggested topics was requested at that time. While all employees were given the opportunity to suggest topics, it was always understood that the faculty would be the driving force in the topic selection. After debates, discussions, and voting on various topic suggestions, critical thinking emerged as the obvious choice for the focus of this QEP. A more thorough discussion of broad based involvement, including details of the entire process, can be found in chapter five.

Critical Issue to be Addressed

During open forums and through email communications, faculty consistently voiced concerns that students are not prepared for class, are not motivated to learn, do not want to engage in classroom discussions, and can not think critically. The opinion was that students are passive learners wanting the answers given to them as opposed to finding solutions independently. This prompted consideration of what Howard College is doing to reinforce this type of learning. Are classes designed and structured to produce active learning and

critical thinking, or is lecture only the predominant mode of teaching? There is often a contradiction between what is expected of students and what is taught and modeled by faculty (Barr & Tagge, 1995). The focus and purpose of *delivering instruction* must be replaced with the purpose of *producing learning*. To meet this end, the faculty selected critical thinking as the topic for the Howard College QEP.

Student input supports the faculty choice of critical thinking as the focus for this QEP. In 2004, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered on the Howard College Campus. An analysis of the CCSSE data revealed that the perceptions of Howard College students regarding the level at which critical thinking is being fostered in the classroom is lower than that of their counterparts at community colleges across the nation (see table below). The 2006 CCSSE has been administered, but the data has not yet been released. Once received, results will be compared and analyzed against the 2004 data.

Selected Questions Taken From 2004 CCSSE

Question: “In the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?” Percentages below indicate the combined total of those students who responded “quite a bit” or “very much” on the survey.	Howard College	Comparison Group of Similar Size Colleges	All CCSSE Colleges
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory?	56.9%	64.8%	65.5%
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences in new way?	51.7%	57.6%	57.9%
Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods?	46.6%	51.7%	51.4%
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations?	51.3%	53.4%	54.7%

In reviewing the literature, it is apparent that critical thinking is not a new concern. After the 1948 Convention of the American Psychology Association, Benjamin Bloom developed goals for the educational process (Schneider, 2002). These goals included knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Since that time, critical thinking has been widely studied and debated. Twenty years ago, Chet Meyers (1986) wrote

In recent years, educators nationwide have expressed concern over the inadequacy of students' ability to think critically. The development of thinking skills has always been a problematic aspect of teaching; but it is particularly acute today, when our culture's output of information far exceeds our ability to think critically about that information. Despite a growing body of literature on the subject, college teachers have found few suggestions for ways to improve the critical thinking of their students. Most of this literature has been highly theoretical, far removed from the practical concerns that constantly confront teachers and their students (pg. xi).

Meyers (1986) believes the real fruits of education are the thought processes that result from the study of a discipline, not the information accumulated. According to Meyers, when quoting educator Alfred North Whitehead from 1929, "Your learning is useless to you till you have lost your texts, burnt your lecture notes, and forgotten the minutia you have learnt by heart for the examination."

In 1972, the American Council on Education surveyed over 40,000 faculty members across the country and found that 97 percent of faculty respondents believed the most

important goal of undergraduate education is to foster students' ability to think critically (Paul, 2004). In 1991, almost twenty years later, Deborah Gough wrote

Perhaps most importantly in today's information age, thinking skills are viewed as crucial for educated persons to cope with a rapidly changing world. Many educators believe that specific knowledge will not be as important to tomorrow's workers and citizens as the ability to learn and make sense of new information (Cotton, 2006, pg. 1).

Colleges still cite critical thinking as a key objective, but practicing the concept is not common. On college campuses today, students are still asked to memorize answers for tests, take notes, observe, do drills, and later try to use or apply the knowledge to other situations and settings (Smilkstein, 2003). This appears to be a concern in college courses nationwide. Studies show that with a few exceptions, critical thinking is not being effectively taught or being correctly understood (McMahon, 2005). Colleges often struggle with how to implement critical thinking concepts in their classes. Institutions of higher learning frequently approach critical thinking by offering a course in critical thinking that is taught like all other courses: an excess of lecture and little time for practice (Barr and Tagg, 1995).

Howard College's concern with the lack of critical thinking skills among students is also being echoed at governing agencies. There is an increase in expectations for colleges to closely examine how student learning can be improved. Accrediting bodies are placing more emphasis on higher order thinking skills, and colleges are being held accountable. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) now requires colleges to evaluate student learning outcomes within the core curriculum. THECB identifies critical thinking as a basic core competency essential to student learning. According to the THECB (1998),

The core curriculum guidelines...are predicated on the judgment that a series of basic intellectual competencies – reading, writing, speaking, listening, *critical thinking* [italics added], and computer literacy – are essential to the learning process in any discipline and thus should inform any core curriculum (pg. 211).

The document further states that

Although students can be expected to come to college with some experience in exercising these competencies, they often need further instruction and practice to meet college standards and, later, to succeed in both their chosen field of academic study and their chosen profession (pg. 211).

The literature review also indicated that the definition of critical thinking has changed over the years. Ennis (1992) defines critical thinking as “reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do.” Students will need the ability to solve problems the rest of their lives. The need to provide effective solutions to complex problems has remained a common thread among the descriptions of critical thinking (Schneider, 2002). In addition, students who think critically must have the ability to adequately solve problems. Chance (1986) defines critical thinking as “the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments, and solve problems.”

According to the Paul and Elder model, which was selected by Howard College as the basis for this QEP, critical thinking is defined as “that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them” (Paul and Elder, 2005). They point out that critical thinking is

“increasingly important due to four trends: accelerating change, intensifying complexity, escalating interdependence, and increasing danger.” Further, they stress that “a significant barrier to the development of student thinking is the fact that few teachers understand the concept or importance of intellectual engagement in learning.” This model provides the framework within which Howard College will improve the quality of student learning by integrating critical thinking skills across the college community.

Critical Thinking and Student Learning

In an effort to personalize the definition of critical thinking and to tie the elements of critical thinking and student learning together, Howard College adopted the following focus statement, learning outcomes, and definitions to be the foundation for QEP development.

Focus Statement

Howard College students will demonstrate critical thinking skills.

Critical Thinking Student Learning Outcomes

Howard College students will demonstrate critical thinking skills by:

- asking vital questions
- collecting and measuring relevant information
- arriving at well-reasoned conclusions
- considering alternative systems of thought
- communicating effectively with others

Howard College Definition of Critical Thinking

Thinking with purpose, skill, and confidence.

Howard College Definition of Student Learning (based on SACS/COC definition, 2004)

Students demonstrate knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values attributable to the collegiate experience.

The overall goal of this QEP is to improve student learning by fostering critical thinking in the classroom. Critical thinking can significantly improve the learning experience. For years educators have researched and documented the importance that critical thinking plays in learning (Cotton, 1991). As important as it is reported to be, why is it often overlooked and even avoided at times? Anne Buchanan (2005) states that “critical thinking is intimidating! It is often perceived as an esoteric exercise of the mind, an intangible pursuit, reserved for the likes of Socrates, Aristotle, and Einstein.” Critical thinking requires thinking about thinking.

If students are to be successful, learning must occur. Barriers of apprehension and intimidation must be replaced with a determination for finding new ways of improving student learning. According to Paul and Elder (2005), “The only capacity we can use to learn is human thinking. If we think well while learning, we learn well. If we think poorly while learning, we learn poorly.” Students will become internally motivated to learn if they see the value in what they are learning (Paul and Elder, 2003). Critical thinking is a tool for achieving this level of motivation and learning.

A broad finding from research is that improved critical thinking skills promote a positive difference in the achievement levels of students. Gains in learning have been noted in response to providing instruction in critical thinking (Cotton, 1991). Without a doubt critical thinking skills can improve the quality of one’s life inside and outside the classroom. By applying critical thinking skills, such as decision making, problem solving, fluency, observation, and exploration, students have a better opportunity to learn and a more positive learning experience (Cotton, 1991). To be successful in learning and living, students must be able to think critically and make wise decisions when faced with choices and problems. In

adopting critical thinking as its QEP topic, Howard College is actively taking responsibility for promoting critical thinking among students.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been established to assist Howard College in achieving the student learning outcomes listed above as well as in planning, implementing, and assessing the QEP. In alignment with the vision statement to be a “beacon of education and life-long learning,” the purpose of the Howard College QEP is to produce students who demonstrate critical thinking skills that will prepare them for success in the classroom, in an occupation, and in everyday life.

Goals	Objectives
1. Design, implement, and sustain the QEP.	1. Determine responsibility for QEP leadership. 2. Select and narrow the focus. 3. Analyze student learning data and literature to establish and support potential topics. 4. Develop student learning outcomes. 5. Develop a timeline. 6. Develop a process for assessment. 7. Develop a QEP budget. 8. Write the plan. 9. Implement the plan. 10. Write annual reports. 11. Create impact report and submit to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2011.
2. Provide professional development opportunities.	1. Critical thinking expert presents training fall 2006. 2. Faculty attend critical thinking workshops each year. 3. Assessment expert presents training during the preparation year. 4. Faculty attend specific and in-depth training each year. 5. Critical thinking resource section established in the library.

<p>3. Implement critical thinking teaching strategies in English, math, and science courses.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty develop activities and projects that encourage students to ask vital questions. 2. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students strategies to collect and measure relevant information. 3. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students strategies for arriving at well-reasoned conclusions. 4. Faculty develop activities and projects that include components that encourage students to consider alternative systems of thought. 5. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students to communicate effectively with others.
<p>4. Assess effectiveness of the QEP and make improvements as needed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievement of critical thinking student learning outcomes will be assessed by administering the Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric (see Appendix A) in each class taught by faculty members of the Critical Thinking Team (CTT) each year. 2. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) will be administered each spring semester to students in English, math, and science classes. 3. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) will be administered every two years as a supplemental form of assessment and compared against 2004 baseline data and results shared. 4. Feedback obtained from faculty in roundtable sessions. 5. Assessment findings will be communicated to the college community. 6. Assessment results analyzed and used to make necessary improvements and adjustments.

Improving the Learning Environment

Critical thinking will be integrated into college-level English, math, and science courses. These courses impact many students as they are an integral part of the general studies core curriculum and are required courses for all AAS degrees. In Fall 2006, the number of English, math, and science courses taught included 51 English courses, 37 math

courses, and 44 science courses. English courses include freshman composition and sophomore literature classes, and science courses include biology, chemistry, and physics. As critical thinking techniques are modeled and fostered in these courses students will be able to apply critical thinking skills in other disciplines. The impact on student learning will be assessed and monitored to ensure ongoing improvements. This initiative will help promote a greater emphasis on learning outcomes rather than strictly on teaching inputs.

The professional development opportunities that accompany this initiative will bring new and fresh outlooks on learning, new energy levels to the classroom, and increased collaboration and networking as faculty are working together to improve the learning environment. There will be an obvious change in the campus culture once critical thinking is taught and modeled in the classroom. Students will become more confident with their learning and more comfortable with asking questions, measuring relevant information, arriving at well-reasoned conclusions, considering alternative systems of thought, and communicating effectively with others. The image of a student absorbing information like a sponge from instructors and spilling the information back out simply for a test will be an image of the past.

Benefits to be Derived from the QEP

The Howard College motto is *Education...for Learning, for Earning, for Life*. Howard College believes in critical thinking ...for learning, for earning, for life. Students, faculty, and staff will benefit from implementation of this initiative.

Students will obviously benefit through improved learning strategies in the classroom. They will have the opportunity to learn and practice critical thinking skills that will stay with them throughout their lives. These skills will prepare them for success in their

professional and personal endeavors and relationships. Higher program placement rates, higher retention rates, and improved grade distributions are expected as a result of teaching critical thinking skills. Increased employment opportunities are also anticipated as students will be better prepared to compete in the job market.

Faculty will benefit by gaining new and enhanced teaching skills. In addition, they will be invigorated when teaching students who think critically and engage in the learning process. The end result will be an exciting new classroom environment.

Part of the mission of Howard College is to be a dynamic center of education and life-long learning. This QEP supports and will help accomplish that objective. By promoting and creating a dynamic learning environment that produces students with critical thinking skills, students' lives will be enhanced and learning will be improved as a direct result of their experience at Howard College.



Chapter Three

Institutional Capability for Initiation and Continuation of the Plan

Howard College is committed to achieving the overall QEP goals by providing adequate personnel, financial, academic, and physical resources. Existing systems and structures will be the primary avenue for implementation. This will facilitate infusion of the QEP in the overall infrastructure of Howard College.

The primary goal of the QEP is to improve student learning by incorporating critical thinking strategies in English, math, and science courses. The timeline is organized to ensure that all English, math, and science faculty are trained by 2011. This will allow adequate time for assessing the plan in order for findings to be included in the Five Year Impact Statement due to SACS/COC in 2011. Each academic year a Critical Thinking Team (CTT) will be selected and will consist of 13-15 faculty members from the disciplines of English, math, and science. Faculty from each campus will be represented.

A broad overview of QEP planning and implementation in addition to a detailed timeline of the preparation year, training year, and implementation years is included on the following pages. A detailed timeline of the initial planning phase (2004-2006) is included in chapter five.

QEP Implementation Overview

Planning Phase: November 2004 – August 2006

- Determine QEP focus through research and community input.
- Establish QEP leadership.
- Develop timeline for implementation.
- Develop QEP Budget.
- Begin professional development.
- Begin promoting QEP to students.

Preparation Year: September 2006 – August 2007

- Continue professional development.
- Select first CTT.
- Select pilot courses for implementation.
- Finalize specific training/workshops for CTT 2008.
- Develop critical thinking assessment rubric.
- Implement Building Critical Thinkers 101 Online Learning Resource Tool.
- Promote QEP to students: QEP video shown in all classes, student clubs/organizations informed about critical thinking, and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) provides seminars that address critical thinking.

Training Year: September 2007 – August 2008

- CTT 2008 finalizes Critical Thinking Rubric with input from all faculty.
- Critical Thinking Rubric and California Critical Thinking Skills Test both administered in order to obtain baseline data.
- Professional development activities for CTT 2008.

Implementation Years: September 2008– August 2011

Each year the following activities will be accomplished.

- Implement critical thinking activities in selected English, math, and science courses taught by current CTT.
- Conduct assessment activities and analyze results.
- Select next year's CTT.
- Develop QEP budget for next year.
- Continue professional development activities.
- Continue developing resource library.
- Continue attendance in Building Critical Thinkers 101.
- QEP Oversight Committee develops annual report.
- QEP Oversight Committee develops and submits SACS/COC Five-Year Impact Report (2011).

Detailed QEP Timeline

QEP Preparation Year September 2006 – August 2007

- Fall 2006** October 2006: On-site Peer Review Team evaluates QEP.
- Develop draft of an institution-wide standardized critical thinking assessment rubric with input from all faculty (these activities continue in Spring semester). Adjunct faculty invited to participate.
- December 2006: QEP Advisory Committee and Task Force disbanded.
- December 2006: QEP Oversight Committee established.
- Spring 2007** First draft of an institution-wide standardized Critical Thinking Assessment rubric developed.
- CTT 2008 selected.
- Critical thinking assessment training offered on-site to all faculty.
- QEP Oversight Committee investigates trainings, conferences, and workshops for the upcoming academic year and includes in budget requests.

QEP Training Year September 2007 – August 2008

- Fall 2007** CTT 2008 attend specific trainings and workshops and begin developing projects and activities to be included in selected English, math, and science courses starting Fall 2008.
- Each CTT faculty selects at least one course in which to implement critical thinking activities.
- The institution-wide standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric is reviewed, edited, and voted on by the entire faculty. Once approved, it will then be implemented in order to obtain baseline data.
- California Critical Thinking Assessment Skills Test administered in order to obtain baseline data.
- QEP Oversight Committee meets monthly.
- Spring 2008** CTT continue professional development activities and trainings and finalize

course activities.

Summer 2008 CTT 2008 completes Building Critical Thinkers 101 and other professional development activities.

QEP Oversight Committee reports training progress to Administrative Cabinet (Annual Report).

QEP Implementation Years September 2008 – August 2011

**Fall
Semester of
Each Year
Beginning
2008-2009
Academic
Year**

QEP update presented at all orientations: new employees, new students, faculty (full-time and adjunct), and staff.

Current CTT instructors, beginning with CTT 2008 (English, math, and science), implement activities and projects in selected courses.

Next year's CTT selected (beginning with CTT 2009) at Fall Professional Development Day Activities.

Next year's CTT participates in professional development activities and trainings.

Next year's CTT begins development of activities and projects to be implemented in upcoming academic year.

Monthly meetings of the QEP Oversight Committee continue.

Previous CTT instructors continue implementation of critical thinking activities in new courses using assessment results to make improvements.

Adjunct faculty meeting includes QEP update.

The Director of Institutional Effectiveness administers the California Critical Thinking Skills Test to students in English, math, and science courses.

English, math and science adjunct faculty are encouraged to attend on campus critical thinking and assessment trainings.

QEP update to Board of Trustees.

**Spring
Semester of
Each Year**

QEP Oversight Committee investigates trainings, conferences, and workshops for the upcoming academic year and includes in budget requests.

Adjunct faculty meeting includes QEP update.

English, math and science adjunct faculty attend on-campus critical thinking and assessment trainings.

Each previous and current CTT continues to implement critical thinking activities in courses, and evaluates the previous fall's activities/projects using the standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric, and compiles data.

Each current CTT member provides an effectiveness report to QEP Oversight Committee and instructional leaders; improvements are made as determined by findings.

Next year's CTT continues development of activities and projects to be implemented in upcoming academic year.

Next year's CTT continues to attend trainings and workshops.

CCSSE administered every other year and a summary of the data analysis submitted to the QEP Oversight Committee.

Faculty roundtables conducted on each campus to discuss progress of the QEP and share ideas. A QEP Oversight Committee member records minutes from each roundtable discussion.

Strategic planning activities such as instructional program reviews, and strategic action plans will include information, updates, and results from QEP initiatives.

QEP budget developed and submitted for approval.

Summer of Each Year

Next year's CTT completes Building Critical Thinkers 101 and attends conferences and trainings both on and off campus.

QEP Oversight Committee compiles and analyzes overall assessment results from the standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric. Grade distributions, retention rates, program placement rates, core evaluation, results from the California Critical Thinking Skills Test, feedback from faculty roundtables, and the CCSSE report are also examined. Results and recommendations for improvement are reported to college community.

QEP Oversight Committee develops Annual QEP Report to be presented to Administrative Cabinet and Board of Trustees.

2011: Annual reports used as basis for five-year impact report.

QEP Leadership

Selection of leadership for the QEP began by first identifying those internal positions that were crucial not only to the development of the plan but also to the long-term success of the QEP. Consideration was also given to those with experience and/or training in the reaccreditation process. Placing added responsibilities on faculty and staff was a concern, and an additional challenge was selecting leadership that would be effective across a college district with four diverse campuses. It was crucial that QEP leaders effectively create an atmosphere of collaboration and communication among campuses.

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team assumes ultimate responsibility for implementing and incorporating the QEP into the infrastructure at Howard College. The team is comprised of administrative cabinet members responsible for overseeing the entire reaffirmation process (Appendix B). The team ensures that appropriate administrative and academic support is available for the QEP and provides feedback and suggestions on a monthly basis to the QEP Co-Chairs.

QEP Co-Chairs

The Howard College Vice President and the San Angelo Campus Dean of Instruction serve as the QEP Co-Chairs (see Appendix B). Their function is to oversee the day-to-day operations of the QEP and to develop, write, and submit the QEP with input from the Leadership Team, the Task Force, and the Advisory Committee. They also serve as the leaders of the QEP Task Force.

QEP Task Force

The QEP Task Force is the core group of QEP leaders, consisting of a mixture of seven faculty and staff from across the district (see Appendix B). Their function is to gather information, develop and proof documents before they are submitted to the Advisory Committee, and provide input and feedback to the QEP Co-Chairs. In addition, the Task Force communicates with Advisory Committee members, shares information with campus employees, chairs roundtables, and conducts research. This team will disband at the end of the fall 2006 semester. The QEP Oversight Committee, as described below, will assume direct leadership of the QEP beginning in spring 2007.

QEP Advisory Committee

The QEP Advisory Committee serves in a leadership role for QEP development during the Planning Phase (2005-2006) and will remain an active group until the on-site visit is complete. This decision-making group represents faculty and staff from across the district as well as a student representative (see Appendix B). The committee provides feedback and direction to the QEP Task Force through regular meetings and email communication. This

team will disband at the end of the fall 2006 semester, and QEP leadership will shift to the QEP Oversight Committee in spring 2007.

QEP Oversight Committee

Once the on-site review is completed and implementation begins, the QEP Task Force and the QEP Advisory Committee will both be disbanded. At that time a QEP Oversight Committee will be formed to serve as the primary steering committee of the QEP (see Appendix B). The QEP Oversight Committee will oversee implementation of the QEP, direct changes in the plan as dictated by evaluation and assessment, document the yearly progression of the QEP, develop and maintain the QEP budget, and report progress to the SACS Leadership Team.

Financial and Physical Resources

The QEP will become an integral part of all systems throughout the district. Howard College is committed to providing financial and physical resources to support its implementation and continued success. The table below provides an outline of the QEP budget beginning with the planning phase (2005-2006). This budget was developed with a goal of training all English, math, and science faculty by 2011. The detailed budget for each year can be found in Appendix C. This budget will be reviewed and evaluated annually with adjustments made as needed.

QEP Budget Summary

Description	Planning Phase 2005-2006	Preparation Year 2006-2007	Training Year 2007-2008	Implementation Years 2008-2011 Yearly Totals
Administrative Stipends		\$10,250	\$10,250	\$10,250
Faculty Stipends		\$28,500	\$28,500	\$28,500
Official Functions	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Consultant	\$4,750		\$1,000	
Advertising/Marketing	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,500
Employee Travel	\$1,400	\$11,300	\$11,300	\$12,300
Professional Development	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Periodicals	\$1,200	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500
Supplies	\$300	\$3000	\$3000	\$700
Miscellaneous	\$400	\$700	\$700	\$700
TOTAL	\$27,050	\$68,750	\$69,750	\$65,450

As a federally designated Hispanic Serving Institution, Howard College applied for Title V grant funding in April 2006. In anticipation of QEP implementation, the focus of the grant proposal submitted was critical thinking. Howard College received notification in August 2006 that the grant proposal was not funded. The current QEP budget is adequate to support this initiative, but future grant requests, if awarded, will provide a more substantial level of funding.

Academic Resources and Systems

The QEP will be integrated into academic resources and systems already in place. The intent is to provide the foundation for a QEP that is substantive but attainable. Current procedures and systems will be monitored and evaluated closely to ensure appropriate support continues to promote QEP progress.

Administrative Resources

Administrative resources to sustain QEP progress are structured to allow leaders the time and support necessary to carry out the duties required for successful QEP

implementation. Beginning in September 2006, the Vice President's role was restructured to provide increased time and support for QEP leadership. The Vice President's title was changed to Executive Dean for Instructional Support, and this position will continue to report directly to the President. Some of the previous duties of the Vice President were shifted to other administrators, and this position will receive a stipend for the additional QEP duties.

The Executive Dean for Instructional Support will serve as the chair of the QEP Oversight Committee. As chair, the Executive Dean for Instructional Support will report committee progress to the Administrative Cabinet and will submit annual reports to the college president who will then share the reports with the Howard College Board of Trustees. This position, along with the Oversight Committee, will oversee QEP implementation, design and schedule professional development activities, oversee the assessment of the effectiveness of the QEP, and direct changes as necessary.

The San Angelo Campus Dean of Instruction will serve as the Vice-chair of the Oversight Committee. In addition, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the Director of Information, and two clerical support staff have been assigned to assist with QEP duties. The San Angelo Campus Dean of Instruction, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and the Director of Information will receive stipends for their additional QEP duties. This approach of implementing QEP administrative processes into existing structures provides a strong foundation for the QEP.

Professional Development

Faculty will be provided the necessary training for successful QEP implementation. The initial focus of professional development activities will be to create a culture of awareness and understanding of critical thinking concepts. The next emphasis will be placed

on providing applied strategies for incorporating critical thinking into courses. ~~and services.~~ Distance learning and on-line courses will be treated no differently than face-to-face courses and will also incorporate the critical thinking activities and projects.

Workshops and trainings will be designed to continually build the knowledge base of instructors and will improve their teaching strategies with the overall goal of increasing the level of student engagement in critical thinking. The activities and projects incorporated in the classes will be determined by the faculty members after they have completed critical thinking training and have researched and studied best practices in the field of critical thinking.

During the preparation Year (2006-2007), the first CTT (CTT 2008) will be selected. Each year, the CTT faculty will attend in-depth critical thinking training both on and off campus and will be required to share information gleaned from the trainings with other faculty in their departments. All faculty will be invited to participate in professional development and trainings conducted on campus several times each year, often times led by the CTT who have returned from off-campus workshops.

This commitment to professional development is already being implemented. Dr. Linda Elder from the Foundation for Critical Thinking provided three days of professional development in August 2006. Two days included all full-time faculty, and the third day included all Howard College employees. Early in the spring 2007 term, an assessment and rubric development workshop was conducted for all Howard College faculty.

Professional Development Day in August of every year is the only event at which all Howard College employees are together at the same time. To remain committed to this initiative, there will be a critical thinking component added to each year's professional

development day activities. The QEP Oversight Committee will be responsible for researching and planning professional development activities each year, which will vary as new workshops and/or speakers are discovered.

Building Critical Thinkers 101, developed by a QEP Co-Chair, which will be implemented Fall 2008, is an online learning resource tool using the WebCT platform that models other Howard College online WebCT courses. The tool contains modules with the latest information and research on critical thinking, including links to websites, assessment tools, projects, developing rubrics, examples of course-specific activities, and also links to sites that discuss the work of Linda Elder, Peter Facione, and Richard Paul, all acknowledged experts in the field of critical thinking. The tool will be updated each year with the most recent information and research. A discussion component has been added where participants will be able to post questions and discuss findings and best practices with others.

While all employees are encouraged to participate each year in Building Critical Thinkers 101, the CTT are required to complete each of the modules during the summer term before they implement their critical thinking activities and projects in the upcoming fall term. WebCT has a component where student participation can be tracked. For documentation purposes, individual CTT time and participation in the class will be recorded, and the data will be included in the QEP annual report. Use the following link, login, and password to view the tool:

http://webct.howardcollege.edu:8900/webct/ticket/ticketLogin?action=print_login&request_uri=/webct/homearea/homearea%3F

Login: criticalthinker

Password: online

Learning Resource Centers

The Learning Resource Centers on each of the Howard College campuses are committed to the goals of the QEP and will support and reinforce professional development. A critical thinking section in each of the Howard College libraries will house literature on critical thinking, website information, and examples of best practices. Critical thinking library resources will be updated as new information is published. In addition, copies of all QEP documentation will be located in each of these locations. In anticipation of the QEP preparation year, books and videos have been ordered for each campus (see Appendix D). This collection will continue to grow each year.

Maintaining Progress

QEP progress and effectiveness will be incorporated into the established components and procedures of the Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation (see Appendix E). Program review forms have been revised to ensure that critical thinking strategies and data are included as a part of every program review cycle (see Appendix F). Critical thinking will also become an integral component of Action Plans and Institutional Effectiveness Plans as departments and divisions begin applying critical thinking principles and practices in courses. Integrating QEP components into the existing planning and evaluation cycle will help ensure that sufficient resources and systems are in place to sustain the outcomes of the QEP.

Chapter four describes in detail how critical thinking activities in individual courses will be measured and monitored. In addition to course evaluations, each year the QEP Oversight Committee will develop a QEP Progress Report. This report will include a thorough review of all QEP strategies. Data from assessment measures in courses, faculty reports, Action Plan Updates, results from CCSSE and CCTST, and informal feedback from

roundtable discussions will be included. This annual QEP Progress Report will provide a means of keeping the college community focused and on track in meeting the goals of the QEP. Each summer this report will be submitted to the Board of Trustees. Howard College will maintain QEP progress through the systematic and on-going planning and evaluation cycles that guide decisions and focus on continuous improvement.

Chapter Four

Assessment of the Plan

Howard College recognizes that assessment is an integral part of the QEP. This evaluation stage involves both direct and indirect measures and includes three major components. One deals with an ongoing evaluation of the QEP itself, one is an evaluation of the specific activities and projects that will be planned and implemented by Critical Thinking Teams (CTT) of English, math, and science faculty, and the last is a standardized critical thinking assessment test that will be administered to English, math, and science students who are in classes that are also implementing the specific activities and projects. The three components will be guided by the overall QEP Goals as discussed in chapter two of the QEP document:

- Design, implement, and sustain the QEP
- Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff
- Implement critical thinking teaching strategies in courses
- Assess effectiveness of the QEP and make improvements as needed

Evaluation of the Overall QEP

Howard College will utilize its existing institutional infrastructure to assess the QEP, including the Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation, action plans and updates, the budgeting process, program reviews, advisory committees, campus committees, and surveys. At the end of each academic year, the QEP Oversight Committee will conduct a formative evaluation of the overall QEP. The results will be included in an annual QEP Progress Report that will be compiled by the QEP Oversight Committee Chairperson and submitted to the college president who will then share the information with the Howard College Board of Trustees. The report will also be used as the foundation for the five-year impact report.

The formative evaluation will include a review of the overall administration of the QEP and an overview of all activities, projects, faculty round tables, etc. In addition, the report will include grade distribution data, retention rate data, and placement rate data, which will all serve as indicators of achievement and as a supplemental form of assessment. Changes are expected and will be made to the plan based on the results of the annual evaluations.

Evaluation of Individual Activities and Projects

During the spring semester of the preparation year (2006-2007), the QEP Advisory Committee developed a draft of an institution-wide standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric to assess student critical thinking activities and projects (see draft of rubric in Appendix A). During early fall of the training year (2007-2008), the 2008 CTT will share the draft with the English, Math, and Science faculty to obtain input, and after necessary changes are made based on the input, the entire Howard College faculty will vote to approve the rubric, no later than mid-semester fall 2008 term. Once approved, the rubric will first be used at the end of the fall term of the training year (2007-2008) in order to acquire baseline data. The rubric will then be used during the spring term of each implementation year, beginning spring 2009. While developing the final version of the rubric, the CTT will draw on what they have learned from their critical thinking training and on information gleaned from previous workshops they have attended as well as on the experience they already have from developing rubrics in prior classes. The foundation for developing the rubric has been the QEP Focus Statement, *Howard College students will demonstrate critical thinking skills*, and the QEP Student Learning Outcomes: *Howard College students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through*

-
- *Asking vital questions*
 - *Collecting and measuring relevant information*
 - *Arriving at well-reasoned conclusions*
 - *Considering alternative systems of thought*
 - *Communicating effectively with others*

Every fall beginning with the implementation year (2008-2009), the Critical Thinking Team (CTT) will incorporate in their classes critical thinking activities and projects that they developed during the previous spring and/or summer. Specifics about the roles and function of the Critical Thinking Teams and the timetable for development and implementation of team activities/projects, etc., are explained in detail in chapter three of this document.

During the fall term of each implementation year, the CTT will introduce activities/projects in their classrooms that foster critical thinking skills. Early in the spring term, the CTT will assess the students' demonstration of critical thinking skills by using the institution-wide standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric to evaluate the students' activities/projects that were implemented in CTT courses during the previous fall term. Once done, the CTT will compile the data.

By week eight of the spring term, each CTT will complete an evaluative report and submit it to the QEP Oversight Committee and the instructional divisions (CTT faculty, Division Directors, and the Instructional Deans), that includes the following:

- Brief description of the activity or project implemented during the fall semester.
- Statement of Learning Objectives to be met by the activity/project.
- Results of the data compiled using the Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric.
- Discussion of what worked, what did not work, and what could be improved.
- Discussion of the feasibility of incorporating the activity/project in additional courses in the discipline.

The QEP Oversight Committee will review the reports by late April and will evaluate how each activity/project met the overall QEP goals and if students demonstrated critical

thinking. The QEP Oversight Committee will then meet with the appropriate Deans, Division Directors by the last week of classes, to determine the changes to be made before activities/projects are developed in the summer and incorporated in upcoming courses. Once done, the Oversight Committee will develop a QEP Progress Report that will be submitted to the college president by June 15 of each year. The college president will then share the Progress Report with the Howard College Board of Trustees. In addition, the annual reports will be the foundation for the five-year impact report.

The following table details the cycle for assessing the individual activities and projects.

Evaluation Cycle for Assessing Individual Activities and Projects

Preparation Year 2006-2007	QEP Oversight Committee develops draft of standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric. CTT 2008 Selected
Training Year (2007-2008)	CTT 2008 attends trainings, workshops, and conferences.
Early fall term	CTT 2008 share draft of rubric with faculty for input and discussion, and rubric revised based on feedback.
Mid fall term	Faculty vote to approve rubric.
End of fall term	California Critical Thinking Skills test administered to English, math, and science students to obtain baseline data. Rubric used in English, math, and science classes to obtain baseline data.

Implementation begins 2008-2009	CTT 2008 incorporates activities and projects in classes mid to late fall.
Beginning of each fall term	Next year's CTT selected and begins training and attends workshops both on and off campus.
End of each fall term	California Critical Thinking Skills Test administered to English, math, and science students.
Early spring each term	CTT evaluates activities/projects using standardized Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric, and compiles data.
Week eight of the spring term	CTT provide evaluative reports to QEP Oversight Committee, Division Directors, and Deans.
Late spring	Next year's CTT begins development of activities and projects to be implemented in upcoming academic year and continues to attend trainings and workshops both on and off campus.
By late April	QEP Oversight Committee reviews evaluative reports to evaluate if activities/projects met overall QEP goals and if students demonstrated critical thinking.
Last week of spring term	QEP Oversight Committee meets with Deans, Division Directors, and upcoming CTT to determine changes to be made before activities are developed in summer and incorporated in upcoming courses.
No later than June 15 of each year	Oversight Committee develops QEP Progress Report and submits report to college president.
August Board Meeting	Progress report shared with Howard College Board of Trustees.

Summer of each year	Next year's CTT complete Building Critical Thinkers 101, continue to attend conferences and trainings both on and off campus, and continue to develop activities and projects to be implemented in upcoming fall semester.
2009-2010	Cycle begins again with second implementation year.
2010-2011	Cycle begins again with third and final implementation year.
2011	Annual reports used as foundation for five-year impact report.

Standardized Critical Thinking Test

The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) is designed for college students and adults. It has been most widely used with traditional aged college and university undergraduate students, with students in professional masters degree programs, and with community college students to gather data on individual and group critical thinking skill levels as compared to locally developed or Insight Assessment developed national norms. It has been used nationally and internationally for learning outcomes assessment, performance funding, program evaluation, professional development, training, and as an element in application, admissions, and personnel evaluation processes (Facione, 2000).

The test will first be administered to all English, math, and science students at the end of the fall semester of the training year (2007-2008), in order to acquire baseline data. It will then be administered at the end of each fall term during the implementation years (2008-2011), to students in English, math, and science classes that are implementing the specific activities and projects, and using the critical thinking rubric. The students' scores on the test

will be compiled and shared with the QEP Oversight Committee, and the data will be included in the annual QEP progress report.

Supplementary Forms of Assessment

While the critical thinking rubric and the standardized test are both direct measures, the following indirect measures will serve as auxiliary tools to help validate and support these two assessment components of the QEP.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement. According to The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) website (<http://www.ccsse.org/>), the CCSSE “provides a much-needed tool for assessing quality in community college education. CCSSE results help colleges focus on good educational practice — defined as practice that promotes high levels of student learning and retention — and identify areas in which community colleges can improve their programs and services for students.” While not specifically measuring students’ critical thinking skills, the assessment measures students’ perceptions of critical thinking.

The CCSSE was first administered to a random selection of Howard College classes in 2004 and will continue to be administered to a random selection of Howard College classes and faculty every two years. The 2004 data, which has already been shared with the Instructional Deans, Division Directors, and faculty, will be used as baseline information for future surveys. Once the data from upcoming surveys is received, the Institutional Effectiveness Office will communicate the results with the appropriate Deans and Division Directors, who will then share the data with faculty in their areas. A summary of CCSSE data will also be submitted to the QEP Oversight Committee every two years when the

survey is administered, and the information will be included in the annual QEP Progress Report.

Roundtable Discussions. Each spring the Chair of the QEP Oversight Committee with the assistance of the committee membership will engage faculty (district-wide) in roundtable discussions in an effort to gather information from all perspectives about the implementation and progress of the Howard College QEP. Minutes of the roundtable discussions will be submitted to the QEP Oversight Committee who will include the information in the annual QEP Progress Report.

The preparation year began with training facilitated by Dr. Linda Elder, and a workshop focusing on student learning outcomes and assessment was conducted in February. To ensure the college has a thorough understanding of the assessment process, the college will later contract an outside expert to provide a training workshop during the planning year. Two potential consultants are Dr. Mimi Steadman and Dr. Peter Facione, both experts in the field of critical thinking and assessment.

The table on the following page details the assessment cycle for the overall QEP. It will change as modifications are made to the plan.

QEP Assessment Cycle

Goals	Objectives	Assessment
<p>1. Design, implement, and sustain the QEP.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine responsibility for QEP leadership. 2. Select and narrow the focus. 3. Analyze student learning data and literature to establish and support potential topics. 4. Develop student learning outcomes. 5. Develop a timeline. 6. Develop a process for assessment. 7. Develop a QEP budget. 8. Write the Plan. 9. Implement the plan. 10. Revise and then implement employee evaluation instruments to include critical thinking component. 11. Write annual reports. 12. Create impact report and submit to COC/SACS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publication of Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation. 2. Revised Action Plans and Updates. 3. Approved Budget. 4. Results of Program Reviews. 5. Advisory Committee Minutes. 6. Minutes of Division and Departmental Meetings. 7. Critical thinking component included in HC course syllabi. 8. Results of rubric data.
<p>2. Provide professional development opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critical thinking expert presents training fall 2006. 2. Faculty attend critical thinking workshops each year. 3. Assessment expert presents training during planning year. 4. Faculty attend specific and in-depth training each year. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of training. 2. Development of activities and projects. 3. Development of Building Critical Thinkers 101 Resource Tool.

<p>3. Implement critical thinking teaching strategies in English, math, and Science courses.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty develop activities and projects that encourage students to ask vital questions. 2. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students strategies to collect and measure relevant information. 3. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students strategies for arriving at well-reasoned conclusions. 4. Faculty develop activities and projects that include components that encourage students to consider alternative systems of thought. 5. Faculty develop activities and projects that teach students to communicate effectively with others. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Results of CCSSE. 2. Data gathered from rubric analysis of activities and projects. 3. Course evaluations.
<p>4. Assess effectiveness of the QEP and make improvements as needed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement will be administered every two years and compared against 2004 baseline data and results shared. 2. Critical Thinking Assessment Rubric developed by faculty. 3. Feedback obtained from faculty. 4. Assessment findings will be communicated to the college community. 5. Assessment results analyzed and used to make necessary improvements and adjustments. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data from CCSSE. 2. Results of Roundtable Discussions. 3. Data from CCTST. 4. Results from Annual Reports and five-year impact report.

Chapter Five

Broad Based Involvement of the Community

The Leadership Team has invited broad participation from faculty, students, staff, advisory board members, Foundation Board members, Howard College Trustees, and other community leaders in the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan. The planning phase of the QEP began during the fall semester of 2004 when the initial QEP Chair attended an accreditation/QEP workshop at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in Austin, Texas. During the spring semester of 2005, four members of the Leadership Team attended an orientation session in Atlanta. At the March 2005 Howard College Board of Trustees meeting, the Trustees approved a new vision, mission statement, objectives, strategies, and the 2005-2008 Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation. At that same meeting, the SACS Liaison presented an update to the board on the reaffirmation process, which included information about the QEP. During that same month, QEP information was disseminated and input was requested first in on-campus meetings and then electronically to all employees. It was at this time that the planning phase officially began. This phase focused on professional development, planning and research, and generating college-wide awareness. Faculty leadership and involvement were always encouraged, and the faculty were the driving force.

Two challenges marked the planning phase. The first came in establishing consensus among faculty on a QEP topic. Bringing faculty together from different campuses and different disciplines took longer than anticipated. The timeline found on page 57 details the journey. Once consensus was established, the faculty took an active leadership role in determining the direction of the QEP. Apprehension was replaced with a building of

excitement and a climate of interest and anticipation about the possibilities for improving student learning with the QEP.

The second challenge was found in explaining the highly complex topic of critical thinking to the college community. Critical thinking has numerous components, and in many instances faculty and staff were hesitant to ask clarifying questions due to the complexity of the issue. Trying to explain a new process, such as the QEP, coupled with an abstract topic like critical thinking, required numerous approaches. A wide and varied range of understanding existed. Some faculty believed critical thinking was already being fostered in many courses, while others were perplexed as to how such a lofty goal could be accomplished. As a result, ambiguity was prevalent in the beginning stages.

Howard College began the process of selecting the QEP topic by identifying areas of weakness related to student learning. Initial requests for topic suggestions were sent to all employees, and the following is a summary of the topics submitted for consideration:

1. **Reading:** Combining reading/study skills with science class
2. **Writing:** Writing centers and/or writing across the curriculum
3. **Preparatory Courses:**
 - Strengthen and expand educational support services in the areas of assessment, tutoring and technology for students with limited basic skills in reading, writing, and math
 - Close the gap between top level of Preparatory English and English 1301
4. **Study Skills**
 - Freshman Orientation
 - Help Our Students to Succeed (HOSTS) course

5. Science Courses

- Introductory Algebra-based Physics Course (laboratory based); emphasis on critical thinking skills
- Required research project for Chemistry classes
- Provide students access to interactive multimedia programs that parallel subject matter in chemistry

The proposed topics were presented to faculty on all campuses via a distance learning QEP meeting. Information was presented at the meeting that supported or excluded certain topics. Considering the diverse student demographics and the differences among program and course offerings at each campus, it was not surprising that faculty opinions were mixed.

During this meeting while discussing a focus on science courses as a possible QEP topic, a discussion of the Socratic Teaching Method emerged. Although this method was not totally understood by some in attendance, a request for a vote was put forward, and the Socratic Teaching Method as the QEP topic was chosen.

The QEP chair brought the topic forward and concerns emerged that this topic, while a teaching method, did not necessarily focus on learning outcomes. In addition, some faculty felt the vote was premature and requested additional time to research and review the Socratic Teaching Method and to make suggestions for other topics.

After continued debate and discussion at faculty meetings on each campus over a three month period, it was determined that a broader approach for this QEP was needed. Everyone agreed that the Socratic Teaching Method could be part of that approach but not the primary focus. It was at that point that the faculty came together and began to seriously

discuss student learning and relevant issues in an effort to determine the best direction in which to proceed.

Faculty responses began to change when asked, “What skills should students have when they leave Howard College?” Skill sets that would better prepare students for successful futures began to emerge. Seriously examining the product that Howard College is producing prompted self-assessment of the flaws that might be in the product. “Are we producing a quality product that is prepared for further education or for the workforce?” This self-critique of weaknesses produced valuable results that led to the selection of the QEP topic. It was at this time that critical thinking became the primary focus of discussion among the college community.

Student input based on their CCSSE responses, as discussed in chapter two, supported the topic of critical thinking. Students were also included and their input encouraged at various meetings, such as the President’s Administrative Council, planning committee meetings, meetings of official college clubs and organizations, and advisory committee meetings.

Employers and community members attending advisory board meetings were asked for their input about weaknesses found in employees who were graduating from Howard College programs and entering the workforce. The responses overwhelmingly focused on graduates’ inability to reason and their lack of critical thinking skills.

As a result of input from these outside sources and from the faculty during meetings, critical thinking became the favored topic for the QEP. All district employees were sent an email requesting input about the choice of critical thinking as the QEP topic. Although some were unsure about this abstract concept, the overall decision was to move forward with

critical thinking as the approved topic for the Howard College QEP. This decision was supported by the Leadership Team.

While the development of the QEP has been faculty driven, a carefully planned effort to involve support staff has also been implemented. Announcements and updates about the projected QEP have been broadcast at regular staff meetings, and open forums have been held on all campuses to answer questions and to clarify the progress of the QEP. In addition, the QEP has been on the agendas for many Advisory Board meetings, Board of Trustee meetings, and Foundation Board meetings.

The following detailed timeline describes how Howard College came together for the common cause of finding new and better ways of preparing students for a successful future.

QEP Planning Phase November 2004 – August 2006

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| November 2004 | QEP Chair attended an accreditation/QEP workshop at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in Austin, TX. |
| January 2005 | Four members of the Leadership Team attended an orientation session in Atlanta, GA. |
| February 2005 | <p>A college-wide taskforce was established to review the college's overall vision, mission, objectives, and strategies.</p> <p>QEP Chair and Director of Institutional Effectiveness began gathering and researching institutional data for use in QEP development.</p> <p>QEP information presented at President's Council meeting (membership consists of student government leaders and campus deans and directors).</p> |
| March 2005 | <p>The Board of Trustees approved new vision, mission, objectives, and strategies and the 2005-2008 Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation.</p> <p>The SACS Liaison presented information on the reaffirmation process to all district employees and to the Board of Trustees; QEP information was included.</p> |

QEP information was disseminated electronically to all employees, and discussion on topics was generated.

April 2005

An open forum via interactive television was held for all faculty. QEP Chair presented QEP information, internal data, and feedback from employees. Faculty agreed that a lack of critical thinking skills among students was a long-term and growing problem. Faculty voted to pursue the Socratic Teaching Method as a potential QEP topic.

May 2005

Individual faculty meetings were held at each campus. Discussions centered on the need to identify specific critical thinking learning outcomes before identifying specific teaching inputs, such as the Socratic Teaching Method. QEP Task Force membership was sought.

QEP progress was presented to the Leadership Team. Initial QEP Task Force members were approved, and critical thinking was approved as the broad topic for the QEP.

June-July 2005

QEP Chair and Director of Institutional Effectiveness further analyzed data from student outcomes and from planning and evaluation activities. The data analysis narrowed and centered on critical thinking.

QEP Chair and Director of Institutional Effectiveness attended the Institutional Effectiveness Workshop in New Orleans, LA. Specific sessions were held on developing the QEP, including assessing and measuring student learning outcomes.

August 2005

The QEP Task Force met. Discussion centered on developing specific learning outcomes. QEP Chair and Director of Institutional Effectiveness presented information learned at the Institutional Effectiveness Workshop.

QEP Chair made a presentation at Professional Development Day for all employees.

QEP update presented to the Board of Trustees.

September 2005

QEP Task Force meeting: expanded membership to include more faculty (better representation from all disciplines); the specific objectives/outcomes were narrowed even more.

The recommendations for specific objectives were presented to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team offered suggestions for revising the objectives. These objectives were completely revamped after careful analysis combined with input from the Leadership Team

and the Advisory Committee.

QEP Co-Chair from instruction was added.

October 2005

October 14: QEP Task Force meeting

- Three campus leaders were selected to assist with the detail work involved with QEP development.
- This smaller working group was labeled as the Task Force. The larger group would become the QEP Advisory Committee.
- Student services staff added to the committee.

An e-mail updating all employees on QEP progress was distributed.

QEP fliers were placed throughout campuses.

QEP Progress was reported to Leadership Team.

Co-Chair (Instruction) enrolled in an on-line course titled Socrates Qualified On-line Instructor.

Co-Chair (Cabinet) participated as an observer with an on-site SACS review team.

November 2005

QEP Advisory Committee meeting:

- Discussed the restructuring of the “Task Force” and how the smaller group would be more effective in accomplishing the many daily activities involved.
 - Co-Chairs (1 Faculty, 1 Administrator)
 - Director of Institutional Effectiveness (data)
 - Executive Vice President (resources)
 - Campus faculty leaders (3)
- Continued narrowing topic to include specific outcomes and measures.

Dr. Donna Wilkinson, SACS Representative, met with QEP Advisory Committee to give feedback and suggestions.

San Angelo campus leader attended a workshop in South Padre, Texas, to learn more about learning communities as a tool for developing critical thinking.

Developed Action Plans for the QEP as part of the District’s overall planning and evaluation process.

December 2005

December 2: QEP Task Force Meeting.

December 8: QEP information shared with San Angelo General Studies Faculty.

December 9: QEP Advisory Committee Retreat at Sterling City

- Agreed to follow the critical thinking model of Dr. Linda Elder and Dr. Richard Paul: Foundation for Critical Thinking.
- Narrowed the definition of critical thinking.
- The initial decision was to begin implementation with three of the standards outlined in the Foundation for Critical Thinking (This approach was changed based on consultants' recommendations in May 2006).
- Planned marketing strategies.

QEP progress reported to Leadership Team.

January 2006

QEP Presentations at faculty and department meetings.

QEP Task Force continued detailed work on initiatives.

February 2006

Report to Leadership Team.

February 6: QEP information presented at San Angelo student roundtable meeting.

February 15: Task Force meeting.

- Discussed upcoming meetings in Sterling City.
- Discussed marketing strategies.
- Discussed importance of faculty engagement.

February 21: Presented QEP update to Administrative Services Council

February 24: QEP Advisory Committee Meeting

- Agreed to move forward with implementing the three learning standards as selected by faculty.
- Approved the QEP Goals and Objectives.
- Approved to contract with a consultant to review the QEP and possibly come to Howard College to interview the committee.
- Proposed to use Anatomy and Physiology I (Biol 2401), College Algebra (Math 1314), and Freshman Composition (Engl 1301) as the pilot courses for the implementation phase; this was later changed to the disciplines of Math, Science, and English. This entire course-specific approach was changed based on consultants' recommendations in May 2006.

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- Proposed to use the critical thinking test of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) as an assessment tool, in addition to the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and individual course rubrics. (The CAAP was not recommended by consultants in May 2006).
 - Agreed that it was important to hold faculty QEP discussions on each campus with all departments.

Title V grant proposal was submitted with critical thinking as the focus.

March 2006

March 1: Presented QEP update to the Correctional Studies Council.

March 3: Presented QEP update to the President's Council (membership consists of student government leaders and campus deans and directors).

March 3: Met with Division Directors from all campuses to discuss members for the first Critical Thinking Team (CTT 2006). Expectations, training, implementation, and assessment tools were discussed. Every year for five years a critical thinking team (CTT) will be formed until all courses in every discipline have incorporated strategies to foster critical thinking in all classes (This approach was modified based on consultants' recommendations in May 2006).

March 10: QEP Update to San Angelo faculty and staff.

March 15: QEP Update to SWCID faculty and staff.

March 17: QEP update to General Studies faculty, Big Spring.

March 27: QEP update to Board of Trustees.

March 31: Faculty in proposed pilot courses (Math, Science, and English) met to discuss faculty compensation, scheduling, training, etc. (course selection changed based on consultants' recommendations in May 2006).

March 31: QEP Advisory Committee Meeting:

- Made initial suggestions for compensating faculty involved in training and implementation.
- Made decisions on QEP marketing items and strategies.
- Made suggestions for the implementation phase.
- Approved the on-line critical thinking course developed by Pam Callan-Stewart, Co-Chair.
- Critical thinking workshop for all faculty and staff will take place in August with Dr. Linda Elder.

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- Reviewed QEP goals and objectives.

March 31: QEP update to Correctional Studies Council.

April 2006

QEP Co-Chairs continued working on rough draft of QEP document with periodic feedback from Task Force, Advisory Committee, and Leadership Team.

April 17 – 21: Conducted CCSSE

April 21: QEP update to Workforce Development faculty in Big Spring.

May 2006

May 1: QEP update presented to San Angelo employees.

May 3: QEP update presented to Big Spring and SWCID employees.

May 15-16: Consultants on-site visit and review of rough draft.

Overview of recommendations:

- Include a cross-section of faculty from all disciplines in training each year.
- Increase the planning/training phase to include an entire year devoted to training; do not go too fast.
- Must develop more specific focus statement and definitions.
- Revise student learning outcomes to more specific critical thinking outcomes that can be used with all of the standards in the Foundation for Critical Thinking model.
- Edit document and send out for review.

May 17: QEP update presented to student services staff in Big Spring.

May 28: CCSSE workshop in Austin, TX. Three faculty and Vice President attended.

June – July 2006

June 1: QEP Advisory Committee Meeting:

- Agreed to follow consultants' recommendations.
- Narrowed and finalized specific focus statement, outcomes, and definitions.
- Finalized assessment procedures.

Marketing/promotion plans finalized:

- QEP video being produced.
- Posters printed.
- Prizes and giveaways purchased.

Support staff meetings held on all district campuses to update all

employees on QEP progress and plan departmental strategies.

July 12 and 18: QEP Coffee Talks held on San Angelo Campus.

July 11,18, 20, and 25: QEP Coffee Talks held on Big Spring Campus.

July 22, 24, and August 5, 21: QEP information shared at New Student Orientations.

July 24: QEP Coffee Talks held on SWCID Campus.

August 2006

Initial version of Building Critical Thinkers 101 Resource Tool completed. This learning resource will be updated on an ongoing basis to include new data, research, tools, assessments, etc.

August 8: On-campus visit by Dr. Karen Bowyer, SACS On-Site Committee Chair.

August 15 – 16: Critical thinking training for faculty with Dr. Linda Elder, Foundation for Critical Thinking. Faculty from neighboring colleges invited.

August 17: Training with Dr. Linda Elder on Professional Development Day for all Howard College employees.

QEP website ready for review.

Select CTT 2007: one faculty from each discipline.

Notification received that the Title V Grant was not funded.

The development of the QEP has involved representatives from across all areas of the college community. A QEP video was produced and was first shown to all Howard College students in Fall 2006 and will continue to be shown each semester thereafter, and the QEP Co-Chairs will continue to visit and update student leaders on each campus.

The Howard College faculty have shown support for the QEP and are prepared to begin training and implementation. The QEP Co-Chairs have led the daily operations of the QEP; the Task Force members have served as liaisons between the Co-Chairs and the

Advisory Committee members; and the Advisory Committee has represented the entire college community. The Howard College staff has been involved in QEP development and the Leadership Team has provided adequate resources, support, and encouragement throughout the process. The Howard College Board of Trustees has been informed about the QEP progress and wholly supports the college's QEP.

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**Appendix A
Critical Thinking Rubric**

Critical Thinking Rubric
Approved by Faculty on March 28, 2007

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES Howard College students will demonstrate critical thinking skills by	Skillful Critical Thinking	Emergent Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking Not Demonstrated
<p>1. Asking vital questions.</p> <p>Definition: Creating and using vital questions. The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the facts, concepts or themes of a subject. • Identify biases and illogical assumptions in thinking. • Clearly and logically pose a hypothesis for a study or the solution to a problem. • Reflect or uncover diverse view points. • Reflect the difference between relevant and irrelevant data. 			
<p>2. Collecting and measuring relevant information.</p> <p>Definition: Gathering and interpreting relevant information. The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select data not based entirely on their own personal views. • Identify sources of relevant data. • Identify authors' biases and how that impacts their work. • Identify their own biases in the selection and use of information. • Correctly categorize data according to its significance, relevance, and importance to the study. • Prioritize information and utilize that data which impacts their study most directly. • Identify salient arguments. 			

<p>3. Arriving at well reasoned conclusions.</p> <p>Definition: Conducting an investigation and arriving at conclusions based on the unbiased results of the study and organizing that information for presentation. The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable results. • Draw conclusions or create solutions based on evidence and logical thinking. • Draw conclusions or create solutions which may challenge existing thinking but are well thought out and reasoned. 			
<p>4. Considering alternative systems of thought.</p> <p>Definition: Considering the impact of different points of view on research. The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify examples of point of view or bias in sources. • Examine the source to determine if it is reliable. • Distinguish between factual and belief based statements. • Consult balanced resources. • Synthesize material to create knowledge new to the student or to the field of study. 			
<p>5. Communicating effectively with others.</p> <p>Definition: Identifying and developing a product to efficiently communicate the findings of the study or the solution to a problem. The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present findings in a clear, coherent fashion. • Present written material in standard format meeting accepted grammatical and stylistic rules. • Use a variety of presentation methods. • Base the results of the investigation or solution of the problem on sound reasoning. 			

Appendix B

QEP Leadership

QEP Leadership Structure and Membership from 2005-2007

(The functions of each team are described in Chapter 3.)

Leadership Team	
Dr. Cheryl Sparks	President
Mr. Terry Hansen	Executive Vice President
Ms. Linda Conway	Executive Dean for Instruction/ SACS Liaison
Dr. Amy Burchett	Executive Dean for Instructional Support
Dr. Jamie Peterson	Executive Dean for Workforce Education
Mr. Javier Flores	Executive Dean for Student Services
Mr. Terry Hanson	Executive Director for Correctional Studies
Ms. LeAnne Byrd	Provost, San Angelo Campus
Dr. Ron Brasel	Provost, SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf
Mr. Steve Smith	President's Assistant/Internal Auditor

QEP Task Force	
Membership	Responsibilities
Dr. Amy Burchett, Executive Dean for Instructional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as QEP Co-Chair (Administration) • Provide overall leadership of the QEP • Serve on the SACS Leadership Team • Coordinate professional development activities • Prepare five-year follow-up report • Communicate QEP progress to the college district.
Ms. Pam Callan-Stewart, Campus Dean of Instruction, San Angelo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as QEP Co-Chair (Instruction) • Provide overall leadership of the QEP • Serve as the primary resource for instructional content • Coordinate assessment measures • Assist with the preparation of the five-year follow-up report • Communicate QEP progress to the college district.
Ms. Barbara Brumley, Director of Institutional Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, synthesize, and report data • Coordinate QEP marketing strategies
Mr. Terry Hansen, Executive Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee budgeting process • Provide guidance in human and fiscal resource allocations • Serve as a leader for initiatives among Administrative and Educational Support Services
Mr. Abel Diaz, Associate Professor, Physics, Big Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as faculty leader for the Big Spring campus • Assist in determining appropriate professional development activities for faculty
Ms. Gwen Parsons, Division Director, General Studies, San Angelo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as faculty leader for the San Angelo campus • Assist in determining appropriate professional development activities for faculty • Serve as faculty leader for initiatives with preparatory studies
Mr. David O'Donnell, Instructor of Preparatory Studies, SWCID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as faculty leader for the SWCID campus • Assist in determining appropriate professional development activities for faculty • Serve as faculty leader for initiatives with the deaf and hard-of-hearing students

QEP Advisory Committee

Ms. Amber Buske	Division Director, Math/Science, Big Spring
Ms. Diane Gierke	Division Director, Professional Studies, San Angelo
Mr. Todd Coppic	Division Director, Workforce Training, San Angelo
Ms. Jeri Farmer	Division Director, Health Professions, Big Spring
Ms. Carol Hanes	Division Director, Arts/Social Sciences, Big Spring
Ms. Cynthia Voyce	Division Director, Health Professions, San Angelo
Ms. Gayla Williams	Division Director, Workforce Education, Big Spring
Mr. Daniel Campbell	Division Director, Workforce Education, SWCID
Mr. Cheng Tan	Division Director, General Studies, SWCID
Ms. Beverly Jones	Assistant Professor, English, San Angelo
Ms. Brenda Contreras	Instructor, Vocational Nursing, San Angelo
Ms. Carole Farrington	Assistant Professor, English, San Angelo
Mr. Clay Grizzle	Associate Professor, Drama, Big Spring
Mr. Dannie Chandler	Assistant Professor/Program Director, Computer Information Systems, San Angelo
Ms. Donna Rutledge	Program Director, Vocational Nursing, San Angelo
Mr. Gerald Allen	Assistant Professor, Mathematics, San Angelo
Ms. Karen Haagensen	Instructor, Vocational Nursing, San Angelo
Ms. Lilli Hensley	Instructor/Program Director, Criminal Justice, San Angelo
Ms. Linda Ronspiez	Program Director, Cosmetology, San Angelo
Mr. Lou Lux	Assistant Professor, Business, San Angelo
Ms. Nanci Economidis	Assistant Professor, Nursing, San Angelo
Ms. Nita Browne	Instructor, Computer Information Systems, San Angelo
Mr. Richard Hickam	Assistant Professor, Psychology, Big Spring
Ms. Rita Crockett	Instructor, Speech, Big Spring
Ms. Shannon Coad	Instructor, Biology Lab, San Angelo
Ms. Sonja Davis	Instructor/ Program Director, Health Information Technology, San Angelo
Ms. Suzi Welch	Instructor/Department Coordinator, Biology and Math, San Angelo
Ms. Tish Gutierrez	Assistant Professor/Department Coordinator, Speech, Psychology, English, Music, and Drama, San Angelo
Ms. Vicki Graham	Counselor, SWCID
Mr. Wayne Rackley	Instructor/Program Coordinator, Computer-Aided Drafting, SA
Ms. Shelly Borgstedte	Assistant Professor, Ornamental Horticulture, FCI
Mr. Edward Tagge	Dean of Student Services, SWCID
Mr. Javier Flores	Executive Dean for Student Services, Big Spring
Mr. John Parsons	Campus Dean of Support Services, San Angelo
Melissa Marlow	Student

Beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year, the QEP Oversight Committee will become the primary leaders for the QEP as described in chapter three. This team will become a permanent committee within the district's committee structure. The Leadership Team will continue their role in leading, supporting, and promoting QEP progress.

QEP Oversight Committee Membership

Executive Dean for Instructional Support, Chair
Campus Dean of Instruction, San Angelo, Vice-Chair
Executive Dean for Instruction
Executive Dean for Student Services
Campus Dean of Support Services, San Angelo
Dean of Student Services, SWCID
Faculty Members
(appointed by the President to serve two-year terms):
 Two from Big Spring
 Two from San Angelo
 One from Lamesa
 One from SWCID
 One from Correctional Studies
Student Members
 Student Government Association President
 from each campus.

Appendix C

Detailed QEP Budget for September 2005 – August 2011

QEP Planning Year Budget September 2005 – August 2006	
Official Functions	
Advisory Committee meetings (food, room rental, supplies)	\$1,000
Consultants on-site visit (exclusive of consulting fee)	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$3,000
Consultant	
May 2006 on-site visit	\$4,750
TOTAL	\$4,750
Advertising/Marketing	
Prizes/giveaways	\$2,000
Posters	\$500
Produce Video	\$1,500
TOTAL	\$4,000
Employee Travel	
Mileage between campuses.	\$300
CCSSE Workshop in Austin (4 faculty, QEP Co-Chair)	\$600
Learning Communities workshop (1 faculty)	\$500
TOTAL	\$1,400
Professional Development	
Dr. Linda Elder: August 15-17 (includes fee, travel, food for employees, supplies, etc.)	\$12,000
TOTAL	\$12,000
Periodicals	
Critical Thinking Competency Standards 200 @ \$5 plus shipping	\$1,200
TOTAL	\$1,200
Supplies	
Miscellaneous pens, paper, etc.	\$300
TOTAL	\$300
Miscellaneous	
Copy Charges	\$300
Telephone	\$100
TOTAL	\$400
2005-2006 Planning Year GRAND TOTAL	\$27,050

QEP Preparation Year Budget September 2006 – August 2007	
Personnel	
Fall 2006: faculty development stipend for course preparation and training (15 @ \$750 each).	\$11,250
Spring 2007: faculty stipend (15 @ \$750 each).	\$11,250
Summer 2007: training stipend for faculty CTT 2007 (15 at \$400 each)	\$6,000
Administrative Stipends	\$10,250
TOTAL	\$38,750
Official Functions	
Advisory Committee meetings (food, room rental, supplies)	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Advertising/Marketing	
Employee and student giveaways	\$2,000
Posters, printing	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$3,000
Employee Travel	
Mileage between campuses.	\$300
Conferences on Critical Thinking (3 @ \$3000 each)	\$9,000
Travel to college with model critical thinking program (4 @ avg. cost of 500 per person)	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$11,300
On-site Professional Development	
August: Foundation for Critical Thinking 2-day training for faculty and staff (includes fee, travel, food for employees, supplies, etc.)	\$8,000
On-site training by faculty/staff from a college with model programs/initiatives.	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$10,000
Periodicals	
Critical thinking booklets	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Supplies	
Faculty resource library (books, videos, research studies, software, etc.)	\$2,000
Office supplies	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$3,000
Miscellaneous	
Copy Charges	\$400
Telephone	\$300
TOTAL	\$700
2006-2007 Preparation Year GRAND TOTAL	\$68,750

QEP Training Year Budget September 2007 – August 2008	
Personnel	
Fall 2007: faculty development stipend for course preparation and training (15 @ \$750 each).	\$11,250
Spring 2008: faculty stipend (15 @ \$750 each).	\$11,250
Summer 2008: training stipend for faculty CTT 2007 (15 at \$400 each)	\$6,000
Administrative Stipends	\$10,250
TOTAL	\$38,750
Official Functions	
Advisory Committee meetings (food, room rental, supplies)	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Consultant	
Assessment expert	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Advertising/Marketing	
Employee and student giveaways	\$2,000
Posters, printing	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$3,000
Employee Travel	
Mileage between campuses.	\$300
Conferences on Critical Thinking (3 @ \$3000 each)	\$9,000
Travel to college with model critical thinking program (4 @ avg. cost of 500 per person)	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$11,300
On-site Professional Development	
August: Foundation for Critical Thinking 2-day training for faculty and staff (includes fee, travel, food for employees, supplies, etc.)	\$8,000
On-site training by faculty/staff from a college with model programs/initiatives.	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$10,000
Periodicals	
Critical thinking booklets	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Supplies	
Faculty resource library (books, videos, research studies, software, etc.)	\$2,000
Office supplies	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$3,000
Miscellaneous	
Copy Charges	\$400
Telephone	\$300
TOTAL	\$700
2006-2007 Training Year GRAND TOTAL	\$69,750

*Proposed QEP Budget Implementation Years September 2008 – August 2011	
Personnel	
Faculty development stipend for course preparation and training (15 @ \$1500 each; \$750 each semester)	\$22,500
Summer: training stipend for CTT 2008 (15 at approx. \$400 each)	\$6,000
Administrative Stipends	\$10,250
TOTAL	\$38,750
Official Functions	
Committee meetings (food, room rental, supplies)	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$1,000
Advertising/Marketing	
Posters, miscellaneous advertising	\$1,500
TOTAL	\$1,500
Employee Travel	
Mileage between campuses.	\$300
Workshop/Conferences on Critical Thinking (3 @ \$3000 each)	\$9,000
Guest speaker	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$12,300
On-site Professional Development	
August Professional Development Day for all employees (includes fee, travel, food for employees, supplies, etc.)	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$10,000
Periodicals	
Critical thinking booklets	\$500
TOTAL	\$500
Supplies	
Faculty resource library (books, videos, research studies, software, etc.)	\$500
Office supplies	\$200
TOTAL	\$700
Miscellaneous	
Copy charges	\$400
Telephone	\$300
TOTAL	\$700
2008-2011 Yearly GRAND TOTAL	\$65,450

*Inflation and changes in salary structures will be taken into consideration as the budget is developed each year.

Appendix D

Critical Thinking Resources

Currently Available in the Library

Audiovisual Materials:

1. Title: *Teaching Critical Thinking Skills Across The Curriculum* (Starlink Video; 90 minutes)
2. Title: *Critical Thinking: How to Evaluate Information and Draw Conclusions*
Publisher: Mount Kisco, N.Y. : Guidance Associates,
Publication Date: 1987 (VHS 47 minutes)
Designed to guide students toward reaching good conclusions, this program introduces the concept of "verbal maps," teaches the importance of considering the source of information, and dramatizes the traps of faulty reasoning.
3. Title: *Effective Thinking : Ways of Problem Solving*
Publisher: White Plains, N.Y. : Center for Humanities,
Publication Date: 1990 (VHS)
Describes the steps in problem solving
4. Title: *How to Teach Students to Listen and Read Well (Listen)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 56 minutes)
Listening and reading are effective means to learning only when done skillfully, yet most students lack basic listening and reading abilities. In this tape Richard Paul explains and models how to teach for excellence in listening and reading.
5. Title: *How to Teach Students to Write Well (Write)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 56 minutes)
In this tape Richard Paul explains and models how to teach for excellence in analytic writing. He details specific strategies and documents some basic mistakes in writing instruction.
6. Title: *How to Teach Students to Assess Their Own Work: The Foundation (Assess)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 53 minutes)
In this tape Richard Paul explains and models specific strategies for teaching awareness of intellectual processes, objects, and standards.
7. Title: *How to Teach Students to Assess Their Own Work: The Tactics (Read)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 53 minutes)
This tape focuses on teaching for excellence in self-assessment, including specific teaching strategies.

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8. Title: *Why Students — and Often Teachers — Don't Reason Well (Reason)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 54 minutes)
In this tape Richard Paul first documents common problems in student and teacher reasoning and assessment of reasoning. Then he explains some of the fundamental concepts and skills essential to good reasoning and how to teach for it.
 9. Title: *Why Intellectual Standards? Why Teach for Them? (Prove)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 58 minutes)
In this tape Richard Paul demonstrates the importance of making intellectual criteria and standards explicit in instruction. He provides examples of poor reasoning by both students and teachers in the absence of clarity in assessment.
 10. Title: *Putting it All Together: Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Problem Solving, Communicating, Mastering Content (Judge)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD)
In this tape Richard Paul demonstrates their intimate inter-connections, relating them to particular teaching processes and strategies.
 11. Title: *How to Devise Assignments and Activities Requiring Reasoning Students Are Capable of Doing (Reflect)*
Video Series: How to Teach Video Series
Author: Richard W. Paul
Publisher: Foundation for Critical Thinking (DVD 59 minutes)
In this tape Richard Paul illustrates the art of designing assignments and activities that require reasoning and hold students responsible for that reasoning.

Electronic books available through NetLibrary:

1. Title: *Teaching Youth Media : A Critical Guide to Literacy, Video Production & Social Change* (eBook)
Series On School Reform
by Goodman, Steven.
Publication: New York Teachers College Press, 2003.
 2. Title: *Connecting Concepts : Thinking Activities for Students* (eBook)
by Golding, Clinton.
Publication: Camberwell, Vic. Australian Council for Education Research, 2002.
 3. Title: *Critical English for Academic Purposes : Theory, Politics, and Practice* (eBook)
by Benesch, Sarah.
Publication: Mahwah, N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2001.
 4. Title: *Critical Thinking : An Introduction to the Basic Skills* (eBook)
by Hughes, William.
Publication: Peterborough, Ont. Broadview Press, 2000.
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5. Title: *Transforming Critical Thinking : Thinking Constructively* (eBook)
by Thayer-Bacon, Barbara J.
Publication: New York Teachers College Press, 2000.
 6. Title: *Critical Thinking for Students : How to Assess Arguments and Effectively Present Your Own* (eBook)
by Brink-Budgen, Roy van den.
Publication: Oxford How To Books, Ltd., 1999.
 7. Title: *501 Challenging Logic and Reasoning Problems* (eBook)
Earning Express Skill Builders Series (New York, N.Y.)
Publication: New York Learning Express, 1999.
 8. Title: *Smart Thinking for Crazy Times : The Art of Solving the Right Problems* (eBook)
by Mitroff, Ian I.
Publication: San Francisco Berrett Koehler, 1998.
 9. Title: *Students As Researchers : Creating Classrooms That Matter* (eBook)
Falmer Press Teachers' Library Series ; 15
by Steinberg, Shirley R.; Kincheloe, Joe L.
Publication: London ; Bristol, Pa. Taylor & Francis, 1998.
 10. Title: *Curriculum Integration : Designing the Core of Democratic Education* (eBook)
by Beane, James A.
Publication: New York Teachers College Press, 1997.

Critical Thinking Website Resources:

1. The Critical Thinking Community: <http://www.criticalthinking.org/>
 2. The National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking:
<http://www.criticalthinking.org/about/nationalCouncil.shtml>
 3. The Center for Creative Thinking: <http://okra.deltastate.edu/%7Ebhayes/tccct.html>
 4. Insight Assessment: <http://www.insightassessment.com/>
 5. Sample Rubrics: <http://winona.edu/air/rubrics.htm>
 6. Creating Rubrics: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teaching-methods/rubrics/4521.html>
 7. Assessing Critical Thinking: http://pages.towson.edu/assessment/critical_thinking.htm
 8. The Socratic Method: Teaching by Asking: http://www.garlikov.com/Soc_Meth.html
 9. Socratic Method Research Portal: <http://www.socraticmethod.net/>
 10. Socratic Teaching: <http://www.lonestar.texas.net/%7Emseifert/crit3.html>
 11. Austhink/Argument Mapping:
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http://www.austhink.org/tutorials/Overview/what_is_argument_mapping.htm
http://www.austhink.org/tutorials/Overview/why_map_arguments.htm
<http://www.austhink.org/tutorials/default.htm>

12. Tim van Gelder's Critical Thinking on the Web:
<http://www.austhink.org/critical/pages/institutes.html>
13. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills: <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/critical.htm>
14. Tutorials and Exercises on Critical Thinking: <http://philosophy.hku.hk/think/>
15. Critical Thinking – English: <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/tour/tourfrm4.html>
16. Critical Thinking Applications: <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/graphics/apps/apps.html>
17. Critical Thinking Mini-Lessons: <http://www.skeptdic.com/refuge/ctlessons.html>

Appendix E

Procedural Calendar for Planning and Evaluation For 2005-2008

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	APPROVAL	TARGET
1. Three-year planning and evaluation cycle begins.	Administrative Cabinet	President	By September 1, 2005
2. Councils review action plans. Documentation of review submitted to Vice President for Educational Programs and Institutional Effectiveness.	Administrative Cabinet	Vice President	Bi-monthly (odd months)
3. Review and report on the progress of the Planning and Evaluation process	Vice President	President	By 1 st week in November annually
4. HCJCD Planning Committee evaluates planning process and outcomes for prior fiscal year.	Chairperson of the Planning Committee	President	By 2 nd week in November annually
5. Student assessments of institutional effectiveness.	Executive Dean for Student Services	President	By 3 rd week in November
6. Review and approval of the Planning and Evaluation process (report from Planning Committee submitted)	President	Board of Trustees	By November or December Board of Trustees meeting (annually)
7. Program reviews	Program Review Committee Chairpersons	President	By 1 st week in December
8. Course/instructor evaluations (by students and supervisor).	Vice President, SA Provost, SWCID Provost	President	By end of fall semester.
9. Work with Board on Audit Report and approve audit.	Executive Vice President	President	By 4 th week in December
10. Planning Retreat of Administrative Cabinet to discuss action plans, evaluate progress of the planning and evaluation process, and consider future directions.	President	President	January and July; semi-annually
11. Advisory Committee Meetings (minutes to be filed with appropriate administrator)	Executive Director for Workforce Development, SA Provost, SWCID Provost	President	As scheduled annually
12. Annual Report based on completed and updated plans and projections for the future.	Vice President	President and Board of Trustees	By January Board meeting

13.	Budget workshops for division chairs, directors, and deans.	Executive Vice President	President	By 3 rd week in March (as needed)
14.	Individual personnel evaluations based on current unit plans.	Supervisors and staff	Administrative Cabinet	By 4 th week in March
15.	Department heads prepare and submit line item budgets based on department operating needs and action plans for upcoming year.	Department Heads	Administrative Cabinet	By 1 st week in May
16.	Analysis of first draft of preliminary budget prepared for distribution.	Executive Vice President	President	By 2 nd week in June
17.	Administrative Cabinet works with President to prepare and submit preliminary budget based on departmental requests.	Administrative Cabinet	President	By 4 th week in June
18.	Final draft of preliminary budget prepared for distribution.	Executive Vice President	President	By 1 st week in July
19.	QEP Annual Report submitted to Board of Trustees.	QEP Oversight Committee	Board of Trustees	By 1 st week in August
20.	Budget workshop with Board of Trustees.	President	Chairman/Board of Trustees	By 1 st week in August
21.	Preliminary budget submitted to Board of Trustees for review and approval.	Executive Vice President	President	By 1 st week in August
22.	Analysis of final draft budget.	Administrative Cabinet	President	By 2 nd week in August.
23.	Budget submitted to Board of Trustees for public hearing and adoption.	President	Board of Trustees	By 3 rd week in August
24.	Board sets tax rate for upcoming year.	President	Board of Trustees	By 4 th week in August
PREPARATION FOR NEW PLANNING AND EVALUATION CYCLE				
1.	Task Force appointed to review mission, vision, objectives, and strategies.	Vice President	President	January 2008
2.	Approval of mission, vision, objectives, and strategies developed by Task Force.	President	Board of Trustees	March 2008
3.	Councils begin work on action plans.	Administrative Cabinet	President	April 2008
4.	New planning and evaluation cycle begins.	Administrative Cabinet	President	September 1, 2008

Appendix F

Program Review Form

PROGRAM REVIEW FOR INSTRUCTION

Discipline: _____ Division Director: _____

Full-time Faculty: _____

Adjunct Faculty: _____

Faculty should research and report on the following areas:

1. **Enrollment Information** (may be provided by the Office of Institutional Research)
Comment on any trends.
2. **Financial Information** (attach copy of current budget)
Comment on adequacy of budget.
3. **Curriculum** (attach syllabi for each course taught)
Comment on changes being considered to curriculum.
4. **Student Learning Outcomes** (completion rates, program pass rates, retention, etc.)
Comment on improvements made since last review.
5. **Critical Thinking Initiatives**
Comment on professional development, student activities/projects, curriculum changes, learning outcomes/data, observations, and plans for improvement.
6. **Learning Resources**
Comment on the resources available and those resources that have been incorporated in courses.
7. **Planning Update**
Comment on progress with Action Plans, improvements from last year, and/or improvements needed in the future.
8. **Program Viability**
Comment on the need for this discipline in the college program.
9. **Overall Profile**
(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
10. **Professional Development**
Attach copies of Professional Development forms from previous year.