WAKE TECH
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

e-Learning Preparedness Initiative across the College

A Quality Enhancement Plan

Submitted to the

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools –

Commission on Colleges

by

Wake Technical Community College

Dr. Stephen Scott, College President

In preparation for an On-Site Review:

Oct. 28-30, 2014

September 16, 2014

Dr. Robin Hoffman
Vice President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033

Dear Dr. Hoffman:

I am pleased to submit to you and the on-site committee Wake Technical Community College's QEP: *EPIC: e-Learning Preparedness Initiative across the College*. *EPIC* is the culmination of a two-year participatory process that engaged the entire campus community in selecting a project best suited to meet institutional needs. A broad range of stakeholders developed this plan, which focuses on reducing online learning barriers and supporting student learning, persistence, and success in online courses. The QEP represents Wake Tech's commitment to student success and completion of online courses and programs in accordance with its strategic plan and in fulfillment of its mission.

Sincerely,

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President

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Instructional Technologist
QEP Co-Director

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Instructor, Business Administration
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Executive Summary

In 2012, Wake Technical Community College (Wake Tech) implemented an initiative established by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation called Completion by Design, which works with community colleges to increase student completion and graduation rates significantly. As a continuation of this initiative, Wake Tech's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), titled e-Learning Preparedness Initiative across the College (EPIC), has as its primary goal to reduce barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses. Readily available Wake Tech data, such as grade distribution reports, show that online student performance consistently lags behind face-to-face student performance by about 5%, on average, particularly in high-demand gateway courses, indicating the need to improve student learning in online courses. Having aggressively pursued distance education in keeping with the access component of its mission as an open-door community college, Wake Tech must now give greater focus to quality elements related to student learning. Therefore, EPIC's proposed interventions/strategies relate directly to the development of students' online learning skills and success.

EPIC emerged through an award-winning process at Wake Tech that is designed to create an engine for innovation—Applied Benchmarking. This process engages the college's 1000+ employees in creating positive change through micro-projects, and funnels those individual and group improvements with the greatest potential impact into college-wide projects. SAIL (Succeed, Achieve, Improve, Learn), also an award-winning Wake Tech process, provided a grassroots, participatory way of identifying Quality Enhancement Plan candidate initiatives, evaluating them for impact, feasibility, and sustainability, and scaling them into effective college-wide reforms. SAIL created a competitive environment challenging candidate project teams to develop and deepen their proposals to meet best practices. The SAIL process engaged the entire campus community in evaluating and selecting the project best suited to meet institutional needs.

EPIC directly relates to institutional needs identified by data analysis. Offering the largest number of online courses in North Carolina, Wake Tech filled nearly 33,000 seats in online courses in 2012-2013. However, course statistics reveal that average student success rates (% of grades "A," "B," and "C" among all grades including withdrawals) for all online course sections

is about 5% lower than success rates of face-to-face course sections. The difference between student performance and retention in online versus face-to-face sections is greater than 5% in approximately half of the courses with the highest online enrollments. Qualitative analysis of student survey responses also shows that while some students have the skills they need to succeed in online courses, others do not, even though some online course sections contain elements that should help them succeed.

Research on best practices indicates that when students complete orientation programs that assess online learner skills and characteristics and when faculty are trained in online course pedagogy, online learning and student success improve. Therefore, in keeping with Wake Tech's mission "to improve and enrich lives by meeting the lifelong education, training, and workforce development needs of the communities it serves" and "to promote individual success in the workplace and in higher education," a broad-based team of faculty and staff developed two key objectives and associated strategies for implementing them.

EPIC identifies the following objectives and associated strategies:

Student Preparedness: Help students overcome online learning barriers and gain the skills they need to be successful online learners. Through an interactive e-Learning Introduction (ELI) student orientation module, students will gain the skills, tools, and awareness they need to be successful in an online course. ELI focuses on the three skills necessary for a successful online student: expectation management, basic computer literacy, and learning management system (LMS) boot camp. Students will have the opportunity to self-assess and remediate within ELI prior to registration.

Faculty Preparedness: Design and deliver quality online courses. Faculty will develop the course design and delivery skills they need through an online instructor certification program that will provide instruction in the learning management system (LMS), pedagogy, instructional design, accessibility, and advanced training for teaching online. The program will also offer mentorship during which seasoned online faculty can lead the way for newcomers.

By employing these strategies, students will

- identify online learning barriers and strategies to overcome them,
- demonstrate online learning skills and use them in online courses,
- navigate online courses to complete tasks,
- communicate with online instructors, and
- collaborate with peers in online courses.

Broad-based input and participation of all appropriate stakeholders developed the QEP, and broad-based teams of relevant faculty and staff will implement EPIC by creating the ELI module and the online faculty instructor certification program, phasing-in each, assessing each, and adjusting each over a five-year period to ensure that EPIC is improving student learning outcomes and overall online student success rates. The QEP provides a detailed implementation plan, timetable, organizational structure, budget, and evaluation plan, showing Wake Tech's capability to initiate, implement, and complete the plan.

Process Used to Develop the QEP

EPIC was developed through a Wake Tech initiative to engage all employees in creative, collaborative problem solving, called SAIL (Succeed, Achieve, Improve, Learn). SAIL, a structured process through which a wide range of staff and faculty engage in teamwork to address institutional challenges, including key student learning and success issues, provides a way to scale up and capitalize on improvement efforts emerging from institutional, division, and department assessment. In addition, Wake Tech's Applied Benchmarking process asks employees to find a "great idea" or solution to a problem and adapt it for use at Wake Tech.

SAIL trains and supports employees in developing innovative proposals to target identified college priorities. Winner of the 2014 Innovation of the Year Award from the League for Innovation, it includes rigorous review and evaluation components to ensure the quality, feasibility, and sustainability of plans and projects. In its first implementation, SAIL guided the competitive development and selection of EPIC as Wake Tech's QEP.

The SAIL process used to develop the QEP involved three phases:

Phase I:	Initial topic identification
Phase II:	Proposal development and implementation planning
Phase III:	Proposal evaluation, final topic selection, further development, and implementation

SAIL Phase I – Topic Identification

SAIL Phase I took place during the fall of 2012 when college faculty, staff, and administration were invited to submit short proposals for QEP consideration. Similar ideas were merged where appropriate. Faculty, staff, and administrators from Curriculum Education and Student Services reviewed, rated, and ranked 19 proposals through both a survey and a rubric. After the proposals were grouped into common themes, five topics emerged: Information Literacy, e-

Learning Preparedness, College Readiness, First-Year Learning Experience, and Supplementing Math Instruction in Career Programs. The first three topics were chosen for the QEP's focus.

SAIL Phase II – Proposal Development

Phase II was initiated in the spring of 2013 with the formation of multi-disciplinary/cross-college teams to fully develop a QEP for each topic. The teams were responsible for conducting a search of the literature, gathering data on evidence of need, and planning the project in terms of implementation, assessment, and budget. Team members who were assigned official roles received stipends for participation.

In support of this teamwork, Wake Tech invited internal and local external experts to provide workshops on key topics related to QEP development. Workshops on the QEP process, assessment, project management, and change management assisted teams in creating competitive, winning proposals.

Throughout Phase II, the teams identified in Appendix H met with multiple stakeholders throughout the college to get feedback. Teams met on multiple campuses with faculty groups, staff groups, student groups, and various levels of administration. A rough draft of each QEP proposal was sent for external review in early November 2013. Based on internal and external feedback, the teams revised the proposals. Final proposals were submitted to the QEP Steering Committee in early December 2013 for final topic selection.

Both prior to and after selection, faculty and staff from multiple departments and all appropriate campuses developed the EPIC proposal. Task teams collaborated to work on all aspects of the proposal, including Student Learning Outcomes, Assessment, Marketing and Change Management, and Writing and Editing teams. Each team consisted of representatives from both faculty and staff at Wake Tech. Additional faculty, staff, and students were contacted as advisors for the proposal. Tables 1 and 2 present current EPIC team members. Many team members from Phase II teams chose to join EPIC teams to support the selected QEP.

Table 1 EPIC Planning Team Members

Planning Team Member	Position	Area Represented
Diane Albahrawy	Instructor	Business Administration
Mohamed Albahrawy	Student	WTCC Student Body
DeeDee Allen	Associate Professor / Faculty Assoc. President	Natural Sciences - Chemistry
John Bakken	Associate Dean	Arts and Sciences
Carrie Bartek	Coordinator Compliance	Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, and Research
Denise Barton	Professor	Business Administration
Gina Beaudry	Assistant Registrar	Student Services
Katherine Bennett	Instructional Technologist	eLearning Support
Cindy Booth-Neighbors	Associate Professor	English
Tracy Cheatham	Instructor	Natural Sciences - Chemistry
Alison Consol	Associate Professor/ Department Head	Advertising & Graphic Design/Web Technologies
Stephen Coppedge	Creative Services Manager	Marketing
Brandon Dragone	Data Analyst and Evaluation Specialist	Strategic Innovations
Cindy Foster	Associate Professor/ Department Head	Simulation & Game Development
Evan Friedman	Student	WTCC Student Body
Karen Fussell	Instructor	Pre-curriculum Math
Scott Austin Gaster	Student	WTCC Student Body
Traci Griggs	Adjunct	Communications
Patricia Godin	Dean	Applied Engineering and Technologies
Robert Grove	AVP	Creativity, Sustainability, and College Improvement
Joe Haigler	Department Head	Humanities
Cheryl Keeton	Dean	Math and Science
Ellen Mathis	Marketing and Communication Specialist	Student Services
Walter Martin	Dean	Business Technologies and Public Services
Julia Mielish	Reference/Instruction Librarian	Library Services
Ronda Minor	Asst. Assoc. Dean	Career and Employment Resources
Rebecca Neagle	Dean	Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Diana Osborne	Department Head	eLearning Support
Karen Phinazee	Senior Dean	Student Services
Serena Reavis	e-Learning Technologist	eLearning Support
Joan Romano	Instructor	Mathematics
Paula Rosen	Associate Professor/ Department Head	Office Systems Technologies
Francie Sanderson	Director	Communications Operations & Brand

		Management
Christy Shields	New Student Orientation Coordinator	Student Services
Eileen Sweeney	Instructor	English
Marilyn Terrill	Department Head	Business Administration
Jeralyn Valdillez	Department Head	English
Sheree Ward	Manager	Marketing Communications
Angela Washington	Professor	Radiography CT/MRI Radiography
Dale Weaver	Director	Systems Applications Development
Tammi Wilcox	eLearning Technician	eLearning Support
Dave Wilhelm	Associate Professor	Business Administration
Elizabeth Williams	Office Assistant	Individualized Learning Center
Andrea Winston	Instructor	Construction Management

Table 2 EPIC Advisory Team Members

Advisory Team Member	Position	Area Represented
Sandra Lynne Dietrich	AVP	Career Programs
Tonya Forbes	AVP	Arts and Sciences
Diane Albahrawy	Instructor	Business Administration
John Bakken	Associate Dean	Arts and Sciences
Carrie Bartek	Coordinator	Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, and Research
Katherine Bennett	Instructional Technologist	eLearning Support
Angela Bequette	Dean	Computer Technologies
Patricia Godin	Dean	Applied Engineering and Technologies
Laura Kalbaugh	Dean	Academic Support and Transition Resources
Cheryl Keeton	Dean	Math and Science
Walter Martin	Dean	Business and Public Service Tech.
Rebecca Neagle	Dean	Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

SAIL Phase III – Proposal Evaluation and Selection

In December 2013, when SAIL Phase II proposals were submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, and Research, a broad-based, college-wide QEP Steering Committee (see p. 5) was convened to evaluate, manage, and monitor QEP implementation over the next five years. The three finalists in the QEP competition—College Readiness Suite ("RU Ready"); e-Learning Preparedness (EPIC); and Information Literacy (FISH)—are available for review on the QEP page of Wake Tech's Employee Portal.

In January 2014, the QEP Steering Committee members (see p. 5) reviewed each proposal to evaluate the one that best met the criteria for the QEP and to determine the one that would have the greatest impact on student learning and success. The committee provided qualitative feedback on each proposal in addition to rating and ranking each, using an evaluation rubric (Appendix I). Three external reviewers also provided evaluations of the three proposals using the same rubric and process: Connie Wolfe, Dean of Arts and Sciences at Surry Community College; Jason Chaffin, QEP Director and English Instructor at Cape Fear Community College, and Myra Johnson, past President, Isothermal Community College.

In addition to the detailed evaluations of the potential QEPs, topic evaluation was conducted through a college-wide survey, *SAIL to the QEP*, administered to students, faculty, staff, and administration (Appendix E). Focus groups of faculty and student services staff from across the college were also conducted on Main and Northern Wake campuses to evaluate which topics and issues were most important to faculty and their students (Appendix D). The QEP Steering Committee determined that all three proposals—College Readiness, e-Learning Preparedness, and Information Literacy—provided convincing evidence that each would have a positive impact on student learning and success if implemented. They also determined that while College Readiness was the most popular topic among survey and focus group respondents, e-Learning was rated highest by the committee and external experts who conducted detailed evaluations that included QEP criteria. After careful consideration of all of the findings from the college-wide survey, focus groups, the committee's own detailed evaluations, and evaluations from external experts, the committee agreed that while the College Readiness proposal merits funding and was most popular at the topic level, the e-Learning Preparedness proposal (EPIC) is most vital to the long-term impact on student learning and success. EPIC provides for creative strategies that have the greatest potential for successful implementation. Therefore, the committee unanimously recommended the e-Learning Preparedness (EPIC) proposal as the first choice for

the college's next QEP. The President's Advisory Council approved the selection in February 2014.

Evidence of Need

National Trends in Online Education

According to *Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Learning*, "The proportion of all students taking at least one online class is at an all-time high of 32.0 percent" (Allen and *Seaman, 2013, p. 4).* In fact, the growth rate for online course enrollment is outpacing overall college course enrollment. Online education has become a significant portion of curriculum education. Allen and Seaman also report that "the proportion of chief academic leaders that say online learning is critical to their long-term strategy is now at 69.1%—the highest it has been for this ten-year period" (p. 4).This trend supports SACS Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, which states that "electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of educational institutions" (SACS, 2000, p. 1). Higher education shows a vested interest in e-Learning as a transformative learning environment and future-forward curriculum strategy.

Even though online course enrollment rates have increased and higher education has invested in online course development, student success in these courses is still lower than in face-to-face classes. In fact, online classes have a lower retention rate than their face-to-face counterparts (Dray, Lowenthal, Miszkiewicz, Ruiz-Primo, & Marczynski, 2011; Xu & Jaggars, 2013). In a brief for policymakers and practitioners, Shanna Smith Jaggars provides an evidence-based perspective on how online learning affects low-income and underprepared students (Community College Research Center Brief, March 2011). Jaggars' analysis of the literature examining course completion in the community college setting shows that studies strongly suggest that students are more likely to withdraw from online courses than from face-to-face courses. Jaggars speculates, "Perhaps due to those high withdrawal rates, some tentative evidence suggests that taking online courses may discourage students from returning to the community college in subsequent semesters and from moving on to subsequent courses in their program sequence." This evidence suggests that the impact of students' ability to be successful in online courses may have a profound effect on their perception that they can successfully complete higher-level education.

Online Education at Wake Tech

Student Data

Wake Tech offers the largest number of online courses in the state. While last year, Wake Tech filled nearly 33,000 seats in online classes, distance education enrollments are continuing to rise. As indicated in Figure 1, during Fall 2011 semester, 27% of Wake Tech's enrollments were in distance courses rising to 32% in Spring 2013. During Spring 2014, 43% of all enrolled students registered for at least one online course. The number of students taking only online courses was 3,710 in Spring 2013 and 4,117 in Spring 2014 with an age range of 14-70.

Figure 1 Distance Enrollments as Percentage of Total Enrollment

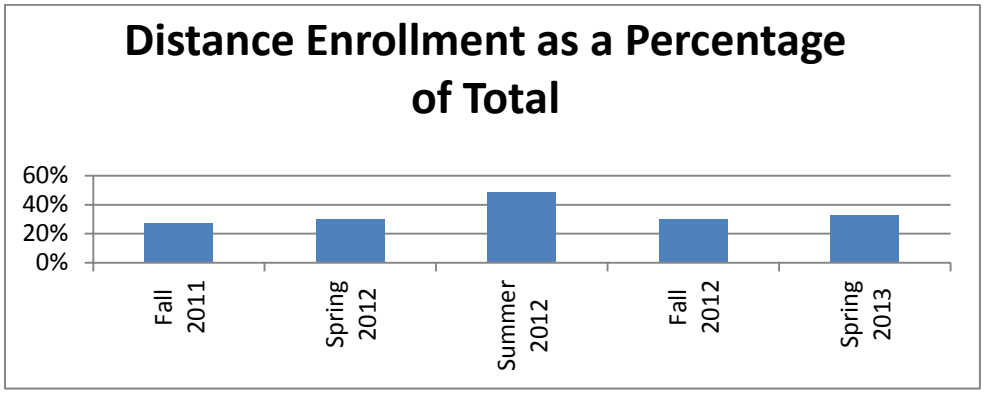


Table 3 shows that Black or African-American and White students comprise a majority of the populations of students enrolled in online sections of courses, and that nearly 43% of students enrolled in online sections of courses can be defined as "low-income," as identified by Pell eligibility criteria.

Table 3 WTCC Student Data (Online Enrollment Demographics)

Students Enrolled in Online Sections	(Race)	Low-Income (Pell Eligible)
Unreported Race	1,210	493
American/Alaska Native	99	46
Asian	607	196
Black or African American	4,152	2,637
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	22	6
White	8,376	2,783
Hispanic	968	437
Multiracial	416	193
Grand Total	**14,882**	**6,382**

* Source 2013-2014 WTCC Student Information System

While Wake Tech expects student learning and performance in courses to be comparable regardless of the method of delivery, student retention rates and student success rates at Wake Tech mirror the national trend: they are lower in online course sections than in face-to-face class sections and are lower for low-income students. See Figures 2 and 3 for overall average retention and success rates.

Figure 2 Aggregated Retention Rates--All Online and Face-to-Face Course Sections

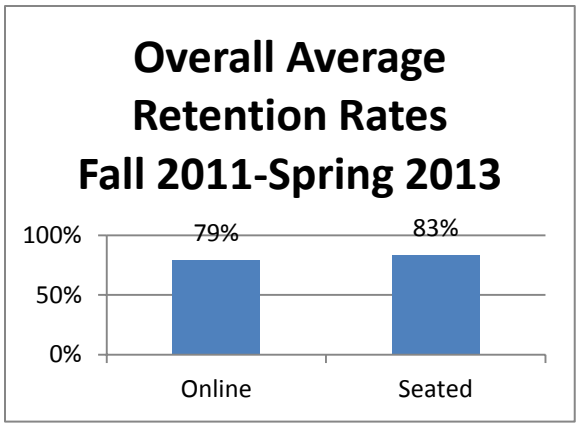


Figure 3 Aggregated Success Rates—All Online and Face-to-Face Course Sections

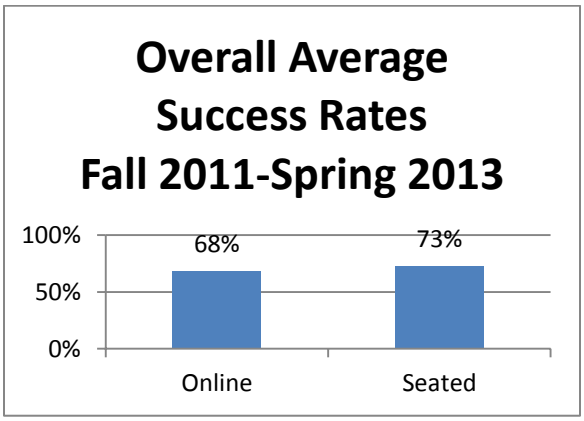


Table 4 presents Wake Tech's success and withdrawal rates for low-income students as compared to all students from Fall 2013 semester through Spring 2014 semester.

Table 4 WTCC Success Rates and Withdrawals for Low-Income Students Compared to All Students (Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 Semesters)

	Success	Withdrawals
All Online Students	69.3%	20.1%
Pell Eligible (Low Income)	64.7%	22.8%

* Source 2013-2014 WTCC Student Information System

The higher withdrawal rates of low-income students is particularly troubling since Jaggar's (2011) research indicates withdrawal rates are potentially linked to students discontinuing further study in the community college venue. Online courses are attractive to students because of the potential for greater scheduling flexibility, varying pacing options, and often, reduced overall economic impact when compared with face-to-face classes. For low-income students, these benefits are particularly important for increasing access and reducing barriers because they may be the deciding factor in these students' seeking higher education while continuing to earn income, meet family demands, and save transportation costs.

Course Statistics

Detailed analysis indicates that enrollment differences affect the college-wide average success and retention rate statistics and that larger differences exist among individual courses and course sections. Table 5 shows analysis of 58 courses with the highest online enrollments (200 or more students) from Fall 2012 through Spring 2014 semesters. These courses are taught in divisions across the college, and those with the highest enrollments are often gateway courses—the foundational courses students must take in a program of study.

Differences between the mean success rates (% of grades “A,” “B,” or “C” among all grades) and mean retention rates (% of all grades except “W,” “WF,” or “WP”) of face-to-face and online sections are also shown in Table 5. Positive values (shaded bars pointing right) signify success and retention rates that are greater in face-to-face sections. Negative values on the graph (shaded bars pointing left) signify success and retention rates that are greater in online sections than they are in face-to-face sections. Success rates in the face-to-face sections were greater than online sections by 5% or more in about half (30) of these courses, and by 10% or more in 11 courses. Success rates in online sections were greater than face-to-face sections by 5% or more in seven courses. Actual success rates in face-to-face sections are greater than online sections by as much as 40% in some semesters for some courses. Retention rates for courses generally follow the same pattern as success rates.

Table 5 Average Success-Retention Rate Differences in Courses

Course	Total Online Enrollment (FA2012-SP2014)	Total Face-to-Face Enrollment (FA2012-SP2014)	Difference in Mean Success Rate* (Face-to-face - Online)	Difference in Mean Retention Rate* (Face-to-face - Online)
ENG-231	982	2664	-6%	-4%
BUS-110	921	1031	10%	10%
PSY-241	861	2033	7%	5%
ENG-111	846	3052	3%	6%
POL-110	799	1387	7%	9%
OST-131	798	2215	7%	6%
PSY-150	796	2022	10%	10%
HIS-131	742	2566	1%	7%
ECO-151	697	670	-3%	0%
ECO-251	671	1038	12%	13%
HUM-110	630	966	6%	8%
ENG-114	606	3075	14%	7%
REL-110	576	745	4%	7%
SOC-210	572	971	9%	11%
ENG-112	563	1099	10%	13%
HIS-121	552	826	2%	6%
POL-120	536	320	7%	1%
HUM-115	519	997	5%	12%
BIO-110	503	1285	7%	4%
CSC-151	497	747	3%	6%
GEL-120	480	788	9%	6%
CTS-115	474	853	-4%	-6%
BUS-137	469	718	-1%	1%
CIS-115	445	550	13%	11%
HIS-122	428	474	4%	5%
EDU-153	421	421	1%	-9%
ANT-210	409	1037	-11%	-5%
MAT-171	400	1213	4%	13%

*Success Rate = % "A," "B," "C" among all grades
** Retention Rate = % of all grades except W, WF, WP

Table 5 continued

Course	Total Online Enrollment (FA2012-SP2014)	Total Face-to-Face Enrollment (FA2012-SP2014)	Difference in Mean Success Rate* (Face-to-face - Online)	Difference in Mean Retention Rate* (Face-to-face - Online)
ACC-120	399	740	9%	9%
HEA-110	392	395	-3%	5%
BUS-115	380	568	4%	1%
ECO-252	372	491	6%	10%
PHI-240	362	419	11%	11%
ART-111	362	713	8%	7%
GEL-230	362	251	2%	2%
BUS-121	362	741	1%	0%
ANT-220	359	363	-12%	-7%
CHM-151	357	927	14%	8%
NOS-110	344	334	-5%	4%
BUS-125	339	316	7%	5%
BUS-217	333	141	-1%	2%
MUS-210	331	205	-8%	-7%
MAT-151	320	801	6%	10%
NET-110	315	647	-4%	1%
MUS-110	310	386	5%	12%
EDU-119	300	134	6%	12%
ENG-110	289	213	18%	21%
PSY-118	285	281	7%	6%
BIO-155	268	467	-1%	-5%
HIS-132	260	482	7%	6%
COM-110	244	989	15%	14%
ACC-121	233	373	1%	1%
EDU-261	221	261	-5%	-5%
MAT-161	220	1032	2%	6%
ENG-232	220	355	-5%	-2%
EDU-131	211	91	5%	2%
DRA-111	210	176	15%	18%
MKT-120	204	903	4%	2%

*Success Rate = % "A," "B," "C" among all grades
** Retention Rate = % of all grades except W, WF, WP

While this analysis demonstrates the existence of differences in average success rates that are above 5%, it does not provide an explanation as to why some courses have large differences in success between online and face-to-face delivery methods. Why do some student populations succeed and others do not? In some courses, why do students in face-to-face sections perform better than students in online sections, while conversely, in other courses, students perform better in online sections than in face-to-face sections? What online learning strategies does Wake Tech already employ that lead to student success? What strategies should be developed? While the EPIC QEP has addressed some of these questions through literature reviews of best practices, the causes of these differences at Wake Tech require additional research to determine the student-specific and course-specific factors.

End-of-Course Student Surveys

Spring 2013 student survey responses contain indicators of some of the factors that might affect performance differences between students taking online and face-to-face course sections. Examples of student responses from some of the online sections of the 58 courses with high online enrollments are provided below (responses provided verbatim, spliced for brevity and combined as appropriate):

Strengths

- *I have really enjoyed this course. I've learned a lot and the ease of use of it was really a relief to me.*
- *Great online course. Organized well!*
- *Communication is effective and useful for me when I get into troubles with my assignments. The course is interesting and beneficial to my intended major.*
- *It really helped that the professor made work available so that I could work ahead of the syllabus when needed.*
- *…….easy to follow and she helps when needed*
- *I feel the class got to interact a lot more than a seated one would.*
- *BB discussion areas were very helpful to interact with other classmates*
- This class is very informative and fun. I am a slow reader, and sometimes was difficult to fallow the lectures, however all the visuals and extra examples that our instructor provided made it easy to grasp the material.
- …instructor ….. answers emails quickly and does everything in her power to help me any time I get confused.
- online learning is convenient and great for people who have a family and a job…….adding flexibility to student schedules… has helped me tremendously with my busy schedule.
- I really enjoyed this class and learned a lot. I liked the fact that Prof. XXXXXX read each of my discussion board posts/responses and gave in-depth feedback. He also jumped into discussions as needed to offer perspective. I enjoyed the field research project and learned a lot from it.

- Timely response to student's email, cordial engagement with the students, constructive correction, and clear guidelines about what needs to be done in every class activity are what made the class outstanding.

Challenges

- *This course was far more time consuming than any other I've taken for three credits.*
- *Online doesnt work for me. i am more face to face and hands on.*
- *There was not a lot of communication between the students. There was a forum to post questions in, but we were not required to use it.*
- *…. I was notified that the exam would not be taken online the week AFTER the mid-term exam, and received a ZERO with no opportunity to do anything about it. Instead of placing this information somewhere a student would find it if they went out of their way to look for it, the information should be written in bold, where a student would see it no matter what.*
- *……..Labs needed more explanation, better examples. Tutorials did not give you enough information.*…..in the online setting, the student is left out in the cold without resources to assist, particularly with the labs. If you added some actual lectures, it would help bring concepts together.
- I wish I would have taken [redacted] in a seated class so I had more hands on and face to face interaction so I could understand the concepts a little more clearly.
- this was my first online class. Was difficult to get used to asking questions via email or group discussion. I'm not made for lab/class via online. I need face to face.
- I would like to see the technologies that are available be utilized much more.
- I find that online courses limit the interactions between students and the professor and students with each other

Most of these responses are from students who have completed or nearly completed their online courses. Students who withdrew are underrepresented, so not all issues are presented here. However, these responses provide qualitative evidence for common themes that are useful for developing strategies to support student learning and to improve student persistence and success in online courses. These themes include the following:

- **Flexibility:** Students value the ability to take online courses because of busy schedules.
- **Student expectations:** Before they begin an online course, students need to have a clear understanding of the time and work involved in online courses.
- **Interaction:** Communication with instructors, instructor presence in the course, and collaboration with peers help students.
- **Course organization:** Students appreciate well-organized courses with clear guidelines.
- **Technology:** Students need to engage with active, hands-on learning tools and strategies to be able to learn, practice, and master difficult concepts.

Summary and Conclusions

Wake Tech offers the largest number of online courses in the state in a wide range of disciplines and programs. The highest enrollments are often gateway courses—the foundational courses

students must take in a program of study. Average student success and retention rates in these courses mirror the national trend: overall, average performance of students in online course sections is about 5% lower than of those in face-to-face sections and about 8% lower among low-income student populations. Success rates in the face-to-face sections among courses with the highest online enrollments were greater than online sections by 5% or more in about half (30) of these courses, and by 10% or more in 11 courses, with greater differences among sections of individual courses. Success rates of online sections were greater than face-to-face sections by 5% or more in seven courses. Because a significant number of students enroll in the online sections of these courses over time, they represent priority courses for EPIC to address in its early phases.

While literature reviews show there are likely both course-specific and student-specific factors for success and retention rate differences between the online and face-to-face sections of high enrollment courses, further research is needed to determine the causes of these differences. Qualitative indicators, as revealed by survey responses from Wake Tech students, provide evidence that student expectations, the level of interaction with the instructor and their peers, course organization, and technology are all factors that influence student success in online courses and that these should be addressed when developing intervention strategies.

EPIC Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

Because online students represent a significant student population at Wake Tech and online learning success is directly related to the strategic plan goals and objectives of the college, EPIC will help the college in achieving its goals and objectives and in fulfilling its mission (see below).

Wake Tech is guided by its mission “to improve and enrich lives by meeting the lifelong education, training and workforce development needs of the communities it serves; to promote individual success in the workplace and in higher education; and to increase entrepreneurship as well as cultural, social, and economic development.” This mission, as stated in the college’s strategic plan, is executed through goals and objectives.

Research during Wake Tech’s strategic planning process identified e-Learning as critical to the growth of Wake County’s economy. EPIC was designed to improve outcomes related to e-Learning and to address two identified strategic plan goals:

Strategic Plan Goal 1: Student Success

Wake Tech will provide students with a safe and dynamic learning environment through policies, curricula, instruction, and support services that are responsive to their needs and focused on improving completion rates in programs that prepare them for employment or transfer to a four-year institution.

Strategic Plan Goal 3: Diverse Learning Needs (including online education)

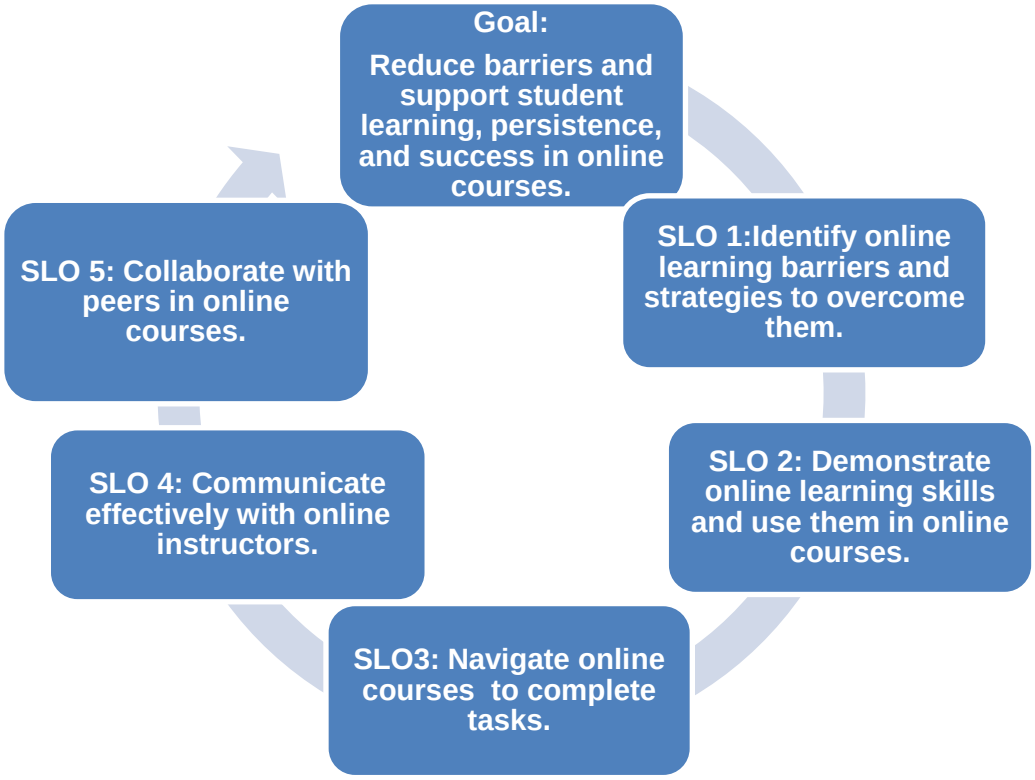
Wake Tech will provide citizens with opportunities to develop and upgrade essential skills for lifelong learning and for the workplace through flexible, accessible, and customized educational and training programs. Table 6 depicts the alignment of EPIC objectives with these goals and objectives, and Figure 4 depicts the main student learning outcomes expected as a result of implementation.

EPIC Goal: Reduce barriers and support learning, persistence and success of students in online courses.

Table 6 Alignment of EPIC with Wake Tech Missions, Strategic Plan Goals, and Objectives

Strategic Plan Goals	Strategic Plan Objectives	EPIC Objectives
Strategic Plan Goal 1: Student Success	O1: Wake Tech will meet or exceed benchmarks for student progress, transfer, and completion.	**Objective 1:** **Student Preparedness:** Help students overcome online learning barriers and gain the skills they need to be successful online learners
	O3: Wake Tech will meet or exceed targets for effective educational services.	
Strategic Plan Goal 3: Diverse Learning Needs	O8: A diverse student population will be able to access and complete programs.	**Objective 2:** **Faculty Preparedness:** Help faculty design and deliver online courses in accordance with Wake Tech's e-Learning quality standards
	O9: Students will be able to use technology to access and complete credentials.	

Figure 4 Goals and Student Learning Outcomes



Literature Review and Best Practices

In “Persistence in Online Classes: A Study of Perceptions among Community College Stakeholders,” Stanford-Bowers (2008) finds evidence to support varying expectations of online learning among administrators, faculty members, and students. While administrators view self-discipline as the most important quality of a distance learner, faculty members perceive self-motivation as essential, and students find convenience and flexibility most valuable. The marked differences lie between administrators and faculty members on one hand and students on the other. Stanford-Bowers (2008) concludes:

> Community colleges offer online courses with the understanding that convenience and flexibility are attractive drawing points. The level of flexibility, however, varies with each course, and rarely is a course designed around the convenience/flexibility factor. Students, on the other hand, enroll in online courses primarily because of the convenience/flexibility factor. When course activities and requirements conflict with convenience and flexibility, students tend to neglect or leave the courses.

In “Factors Associated with Student Persistence in an Online Program of Study: A Review of the Literature,” Hart (2012) defines persistence as the ability to complete an online course despite obstacles or adverse circumstances. The author identifies several factors associated with student persistence in an online program:

- satisfaction with online learning,
- a sense of belonging to the learning community,
- motivation,
- peer and family support,
- time management skills, and
- increased communication with the instructor.

In “What We Know about Online Course Outcomes,” Jaggars, Edgecombe, and Stacey (2013) review student outcomes in online classes and suggest three major interventions to increase student success: student preparation and support, course quality and design, and faculty professional development (p. 4). Their research suggests that a number of issues affect student success rates; some issues directly relate to course quality and instructor presence while others relate to student expectations and preparedness. One of the most significant factors affecting student outcomes is that “students and instructors [differ]…in their expectations for their responsibilities in online courses” (Jaggars, Edgecombe, and Stacey, p. 3). For instance, faculty members think of themselves as content curators only, while students would prefer to know the professor through more direct interaction within the online course. These conflicting expectations suggest that both parties can improve the online experience by increasing both participation and responsibility.

In *The Journal for Educators Online*, Alyse Hachey and others (2012) report an improvement in student retention and success in online courses for students who withdrew the first time they attempted an online course. One of the leading causes for the initial withdrawal was found to be the students’ perceptions of their own skills and a belief that “successful navigation of the online course environment requires a new skill set that may seem daunting to the novice user.” As part of their intervention for improving student outcomes in online classes, Jaggars, Edgecombe, and Stacey (2013) advise creating readiness activities to prepare students for online learning. They report that “readiness activities should not only cover the technological requirements and competencies necessary to succeed in online courses but also outline the behaviors and responsibilities expected of students” (p. 4).

Recent research has provided evidence that providing a student orientation to online learning is a promising practice for increasing success and retention of students in online courses. In consideration of technological and life skills, Richland Community College implemented a mandatory online orientation for all first-time online students. Over the course of three years, retention rates improved remarkably, from 71.8% to 80-84% (Jones, 2013, p. 44). In addition to retention rates, students also reported positive results from completing the orientation. The orientation evaluation revealed that "87% felt confident to very confident in their personal understanding of what it takes to be successful in an online course, and 93% felt confident to very confident in their ability to effectively navigate and use the College's LMS for their online course" (Jones, 2013, p.44). Richland's orientation provides evidence of increased student success when students are able to assess their own skills and approach online learning more prepared for what they will encounter.

Using quantitative comparative methods at a large urban community college in North Carolina, Koehnke (2013) provides evidence for a statistically significant difference in online course retention and performance (dependent variables) between a sample group who took a modularized online orientation (independent variable) in the spring of 2013 and a control group who took the same courses but did not complete the orientation in the spring of 2009. The sample included 330 students who enrolled in one of six fully-online course sections, 70.3% who elected to take the online orientation. Aggregated end-of-course grades and retention rates by course were collected to determine whether completion of the online orientation affected retention or attainment of "A," "B," or "C" grades. A t-test was conducted to compare the mean retention rates and grade attainment of the research and control groups. Koehnke (2013) found an 8.7% increase of "A," "B," and "C" grades and a 4.9% increase in retention among students in the research group compared to the control group. Results of a one-tailed t-test on both the retention and grade data also revealed with 95% certainty that there was a statistically significant difference in student retention rates and grade attainment between the student group who completed the online orientation and the control group who did not.

Course Quality and Faculty Training

Jaggars and Xu (2013) provide evidence for the linkage between course quality standards and online student success at a community college. The study sample included 19 faculty participants at a large community college who taught 23 courses (some faculty taught multiple courses) in 35 online course sections during the spring of 2011, with a student sample size of 678. To assess course quality, they developed a rubric to address four areas, including

organization and presentation, learning objectives and assessments, interpersonal interaction and use of technology. A research team monitored the course websites over the semester, evaluated them using the rubric, and conducted in-depth faculty interviews, which were then coded using quantitative data analysis software. They employed a random-effects model to account for differences between ratings measured at the course level and student characteristics measured at the student level. Their study indicated that interpersonal interaction was the strongest predictor of student grades in online courses; qualitative data implies that students value student-instructor interaction more strongly than student-student interaction. They also conceded that course organization and structure may be more important than their evidence indicates, as these variables may not have predicted course success due to the nature of the rubric measurement and inter-rater reliability issues.

Through an Applied Benchmarking project, a member of Wake Tech's E-Learning Support department identified Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) as making strides to improve the quality of courses delivered in the LMs through faculty training programs. The Technology and Applications Center at NOVA aided in the creation of the guidelines and training currently used in a competency program to train online instructors. The competency program at NOVA is required for all faculty, not just online instructors. Though NOVA is not currently collecting comparative data and will not release raw data for our compilation, college officials did indicate that anecdotal reports from faculty demonstrated better student performance overall. The NOVA competency program had three notable features:

1. During initial stages of the program current faculty were able to demonstrate LMS competency through a course review in order to waive training requirements. Competency was assessed by lead instructors or department heads.

2. The initiative contained a mentoring component that was beginning to expand to include faculty mentors in each department. Mentors would need to be fully Blackboard certified, which includes advanced workshops on Blackboard features and building blocks in addition to the basic competency requirement.

3. The biggest barrier to the competency requirement was faculty resistance. Upper administration pushed the program through as a requirement from the very beginning. Nonetheless, the driving force behind NOVA's implementation of the competency program came from the administration's recognition of the growth of online learning and their desire to preserve faculty jobs since cuts had been proposed for any faculty not prepared to teach online.

In "Contingent and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty: Motivations and Incentives to Teach Distance Education Courses," Chapman (2011) reports the results of a survey conducted to

determine the best incentives that motivate faculty members to teach online classes. Contingent faculty, or those not tenured, such as the instructors at Wake Technical Community College, reported free professional development opportunities, stipends for professional development, higher pay, an online community for distance education instructors, and a program for certification in online instruction among the top five incentives (p. 8). Enhanced technical support was the sixth-ranked incentive (Chapman, 2011, p. 8). These incentives reveal instructors' needs, but also align with research pointing to potential improvements in online education to increase student success rates. Essentially, faculty members need additional training in online tools and pedagogy to create an effective online class environment.

In addition, researchers at the American Public University System (APUS), an institution that offers only online courses, recently published the results of their study and findings on student retention in their online courses. They found that "effective retention practice centers on community and connection in the classroom" (Boston, Ice & Gibson, 2011). The community necessary to an online classroom often has to be built into the content delivery, which can be challenging for novice online instructors. To prepare their instructors to meet the demands of online learners and implement effective retention practices, the American Public University System provides a training program for all new instructors. The APUS New Faculty Training Course for all new instructors provides theoretical background on student engagement, learning, and retention, as well as a deeper understanding of the online learner. Within the course, content is delivered, modeled, and discussed within groups, including best practices that can be directly applied in the design, development, and delivery of a course to increase student learning and persistence (Boston, Ice & Gibson, 2011).

One type of training involves universal design for learning (UDL) principles. The National Center for Universal Design defines UDL as a "set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone—not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs" (2014). UDL goes beyond accessibility by providing multiple paths to learn content, such as by watching a long lecture broken into short video clips, printing presentation slides for review away from a computer, participating in simulations, or taking quizzes to test retention.

Offering a "template" for course design can optimize the quality, utility, and operability for universal design standards. Universities such as North Carolina State University—specifically its

support division DELTA—offer clear guidelines and best practices for designing online instruction and for requesting peer review. Additionally, DELTA encourages faculty to apply for grants and funding so they can work closely with instructional designers.

The starting point for the template begins with the following best practices found in Chickering and Gamson's, *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991):

- Communicate High Expectations
- Establish Course Procedures
- Encourage Student/Faculty Contact
- Encourage Student Cooperation
- Encourage Active Learning
- Provide Prompt Feedback
- Emphasize Time-on-Task
- Respect Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning
- Use Technology Effectively

In summary, current research indicates the following:

- Online education is central to the future of educational practices.
- Lower success rates in online classes are symptomatic of institutional practices.
- The two major factors in improving online success are student preparedness and faculty preparedness.
- When students complete orientation programs that assess learner characteristics, technological skills, and self-efficacy, student success in online learning improves.
- When faculty are trained in online course pedagogy, such as content delivery, course design, and online instructor presence, student success in the online learning improves.

EPIC Framework and Strategies

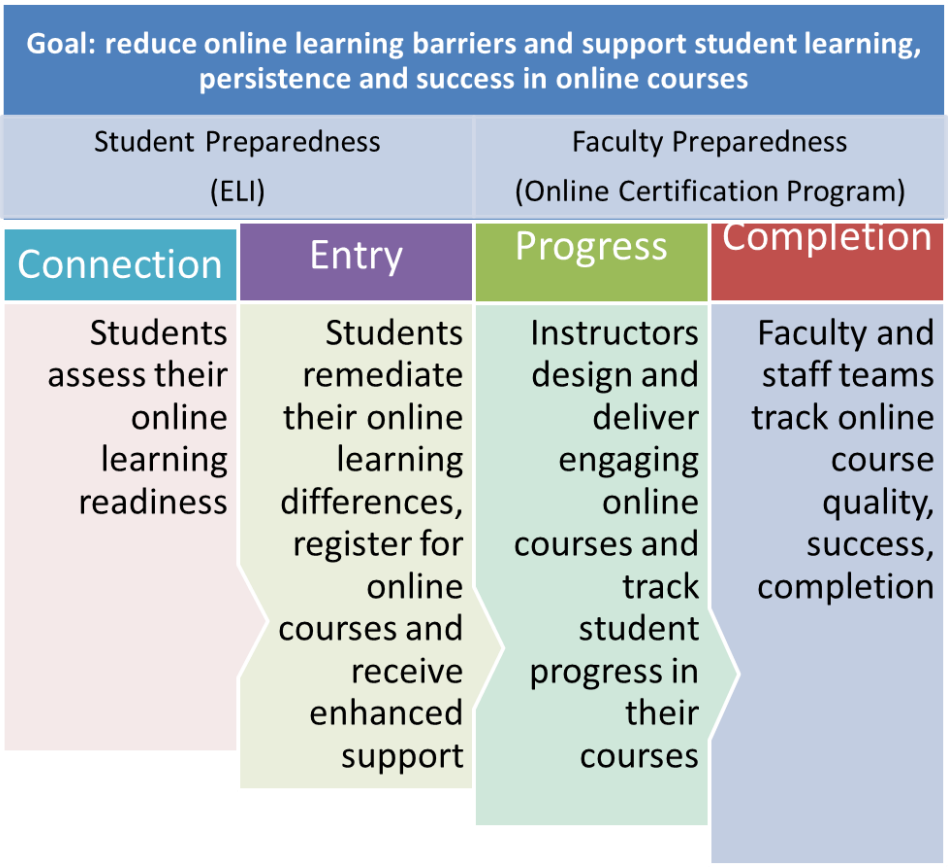
EPIC is a continuation of Wake Tech's Completion by Design initiative, a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation initiative that tackles student retention and successful completion challenges in online education. The Completion by Design Loss and Momentum Framework is a tool that helps institutions find points of loss (barriers) and momentum along student's higher education pathways. Barriers include anything that holds a student back from completing credentials. Both intrinsic and extrinsic barriers can be identified for e-Learning (Table 7).

Table 7 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Barriers to Online Learning

Intrinsic Barriers	Extrinsic Barriers
Online learning expectations	Online teaching expectations
Basic Computer/Academic/Technology Skills	Cost and access to the Internet and technology support
Time Management	Variable course standards and policies
Learner motivation issues	Inadequate interaction with instructors and peers

By reducing these learning barriers through student preparation and intentionally planned course design and delivery, EPIC seeks to support learning momentum toward credential completion. Figure 5 introduces the progression of strategies planned to achieve EPIC's goal.

Figure 5 Progression of EPIC Strategies



ELI Orientation: A Student Preparedness Strategy

QEP Resource Teams, led by the Co-Directors, will develop a new online student orientation course called E-Learning Introduction (ELI). Students will be given access to the ELI course upon admission, and successfully completing ELI will be a prerequisite for all students who wish to take an online course. Through ELI, students will be able to

- assess their online learning readiness,
- remediate their online learning differences, and
- meet the criteria to register for online courses.

ELI will be designed in three distinct modules: expectation management, basic computer skills, and learning management system (LMS) boot camp. In each module, students will receive instructional information and take a self- or pre-assessment. A score of 70 or above on the pre-assessment will count toward successful completion of the module, allowing the student to move forward to the next module. A score of 70 or above on all three modules will indicate successful completion of ELI, allowing the student to register for an online course.

Module 1: Expectation Management and Transferable Skills

In the Expectation Management and Transferable Skills Module, students will assess, learn, remediate, and acquire the “soft skills” necessary to be successful online students. Content will emphasize skill elements of concepts such as effective time management, planning and prioritizing, goal setting, self-advocacy, professionalism, accountability, and effective communication that are applicable while using electronic media. After students self-assess, ELI will provide informational videos, testimonials, FAQs with answers, and an interactive platform to apply the skills described above. Module 1 will also provide an overview of clear expectations of the online learning experience, student accountability, and student responsibility in online courses.

Upon successful completion of Module 1, students will be able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses based on identified characteristics and skills of successful online learners. They will be able to communicate effectively in an online environment, manage their time appropriately, prioritize their tasks, organize their work, and hold themselves accountable for their success. These skills go far beyond the online learning experience and will transfer to all areas of student life now and employment opportunities in the future. Table 8 further defines and clarifies expectation management skills.

Table 8 ELI Module 1 Expectation Skills

Expectation Management Skills
Communication—effectively communicate ideas, information, and needs with instructors and peers in an online environment.
Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork—effectively work with others to solve problems and complete tasks.
Academic Integrity—demonstrate behaviors that relate to academic honesty and adhere to Wake Tech policies and Student Code of Conduct.
Problem Solving—effectively identify problems and potential causes of problems in the online learning environment and take steps to resolve those problems and find solutions.
Responsibility and Accountability—effectively prioritize tasks to meet goals, complete tasks on time, follow directions, comply with instructor expectations and deadlines, and show consistent reliability.
Adaptability—learn in a new format and adapt to changing technologies, methods, processes, and learning environments.
Organizational Skills—manage time appropriately using calendars, task lists, to-do lists, schedules and other tools to effectively categorize, organize, and manage tasks.

Students will then move forward to Module 2.

Module 2: Basic Computer Skills

In the basic computer skills module, students will assess, learn, remediate, and acquire basic computer skills. Students who are deficient in these skills will go through an accelerated remediation within ELI, acquiring the basic computer skills necessary to enroll in and successfully complete an online course. Upon successful completion or remediation of the Basic Computer Skills Module, students will acquire/improve the basic computer skills, indicated in Table 9, necessary to complete an online course successfully.

Table 9 ELI Module 2 Skills

Computer Literacy Skills
Keyboarding
Mouse and CPU knowledge
Computer concepts • Navigate tool bars, desktops, windows, menus, tabs, and dialog boxes. • Use components of windows. • Recognize system and software applications. • Identify computer specifications and software requirements for online courses.
File management and naming
Digital literacy (Internet usage)
Communication in an online format • Send and receive email, replying to and forwarding messages. • Create attachments, screen shots, email etiquette. • Detach and save files.

Students will then move forward to Module 3.

Module 3: Learning Management System Boot Camp

In the Learning Management System Boot Camp Module, students will assess, learn, remediate, or acquire an ability to navigate the LMS successfully. Students who are deficient in these skills will go through an accelerated remediation within ELI. Upon successful completion or remediation of the LMS Boot Camp Module, students will be able to navigate the LMS and successfully submit assignments, take assessments, and post discussions. Table 10 lists some of the applicable LMS boot camp skills.

Table 10 ELI Module 3 Skills

Blackboard Boot Camp Skills
Log in to Blackboard.
Navigate online courses.
Use Blackboard Tools: • Email and/or messages • Collaboration tools, discussion boards, groups • My Grades • Global Navigation Menu
Upload files, submit assignments, view/print attached files.
Take online assessments.
Manage wireless, mobile device, and dial-up issues.

If adopted as a pre-registration orientation, an optional module covering the registration process will also be included.

Development of the ELI course will begin in Year 1 of the QEP with a pilot of the program scheduled for the summer of 2015. All student learning actions will be implemented in Year 2. See Appendix A for the flowchart of ELI modules.

Additional Student Support

Increased Help Desk Hours. Based on Blackboard usage analytics, the college has discovered peak LMS usage during certain times of the week. The college used LMS analytics to research the usage of Blackboard, using the day and time that significant activity is recorded in Blackboard, including evening hours and weekends when the eLearning staff is not present. During evenings and weekends, students are routed to Blackboard Student Service for help with Blackboard issues. During several focus groups, students noted that they received superior help from the eLearning staff as compared to the help they received from Blackboard Student Services. Therefore, as part of the QEP, eLearning Support will increase the hours and days of operation for help desk eLearning staff by 30 hours per week to enhance support during peak hours of usage. The QEP Resource Team will pilot these increased hours during the first year of QEP implementation and assess the plan to ensure it is effective. The QEP Resource Team will then adjust the increased hours as needed. See Appendix F for the learning management usage chart.

Learning Management System (LMS) Course Menu Template. Both student and faculty focus groups indicated that a course menu template was an important element in online course design. Student success has been proven contingent on familiarity and consistency in other aspects of institutional process (e.g., the structured pathways initiative that emerged from the Completion by Design grant that required elimination of choices in programs of study) and common themes from focus groups interviewed by the QEP teams spoke to the need for a course menu template.

Quality course design, combined with clear standards of how to design online courses that enable students to see common threads and familiarity from one course to another, no matter the division or subject, are necessary to increase student success and access. Additionally, the articulation and dissemination of a course menu template before faculty design and audit of their materials is necessary to improve the community of instructors who choose to teach online.

A course menu template is not standardization of course design; it is a recommendation that all online courses follow the same or very similar main menu items to assist students' ability to navigate courses more easily.

The course menu template will include links to Announcements, Lessons, Discussion Boards, and My Grades (at minimum) in a consistent order on the menu.

In addition to the course menu template, the recommended LMS course menu will include a Help and Support menu item that contains links to important student support services available at Wake Tech.

Enhanced Student Support for Special Populations. Because Wake Tech is committed to student success regardless of instructional medium and because the institution recognizes that some students will benefit from enhanced, directed support, the QEP Team recommends that alternative blended learning opportunities be made available for students who

- are initially challenged in synthesizing information online but still need or want to enroll in online course; these students may have processing disorders or other impediments that may, on the surface, impede their ability to learn online, but in actuality, only need mitigation strategies, or
- have completed ELI successfully but did not persist in their first online course ("W," "WP," "WF") or persisted but did not succeed in the course ("C" or higher).

Blended learning opportunities may take the form of the following:

- **Student success counseling** focused on online learning and strategies for overcoming anxiety, procrastination, and other non-productive behaviors. Students may be able to engage in round table sessions with peers or one-on-one mentoring with an experienced practitioner.
- **Seminars** offered through Disability Support Services ─ or other support areas for students with particular learning or cognitive deficits─ that offer a credential or badge in lieu of taking ELI.
- **Discipline-centered, contextualized learning sessions** sponsored by programs and divisions that encourage online learning for students who are desirous of continuing in an online-course intensive program of study but who have not initially met with success.

ELI Prerequisite for Online Course Registration

Wake Tech will automatically place the E-Learning Information (ELI) Student Orientation Course in students' accounts once they are accepted. Students must successfully complete ELI before they can register for online courses. If they do not complete the orientation, they will not be permitted to register for online courses. Requirements for registration will be provided both inside the ELI course and through marketing and change management strategies.

The ELI Student Orientation Course will also be made available at any time during the semester for students who may wish to take it voluntarily, even if they are not currently registering for an online course but may wish to take one in the future. All students with access to the LMS will be enrolled in this continuous course.

Information Technology Services will develop scripts to automate enrollment in ELI and to report successful completions. QEP resource team members will develop the ELI Student Orientation Course. Development of the course and scripts will begin in Year 1 of the QEP.

Development of automated processes will begin in Year 1 of the QEP with a pilot of all parts in the summer of 2015. All registration actions will be implemented beginning Year 2, after which students will be encouraged to take orientation upon acceptance into Wake Tech and directed to ELI orientation prior to online course registration.

Online Instructor Certification—A Faculty Preparedness Strategy

EPIC strategies also help faculty to learn and stay current on best practices in online teaching. Table 11 provides percentages of all faculty, full- and part-time, who currently teach at least one course online.

Table 11 Snapshot of Online Percentages of Faculty

	Total	Full-Time		Part-Time	
All Faculty	817	509	62.3%	308	37.7%
Online Faculty	299	190	63.5%	109	36.5%

*Source WTCC Spring 2014 Data

Spring 2014 data also shows that half of current faculty have taken current Blackboard Basics training. The Online Certification programs will provide faculty with the additional training they want and need in pedagogy and technology. The training and certification process will be implemented according to a planned schedule so that all online faculty can receive their online teaching certificates within EPIC's 5-year implementation. The following describes EPIC's three online teaching certification pathways:

Pathway 1—Online Teaching Certification through Professional Development

Certification through Professional Development is one of three ways for instructors to be certified in online teaching. This pathway includes 30 hours of professional development

training, which concentrates on online teaching pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning principles, with co-requisites in LMS technology training, as well as interactive technologies, advanced course design and accessibility.

Because Wake Tech's professional development policy allows faculty the flexibility to decide which types of professional development are best for them, online faculty taking courses in the Online Teaching Certification Program may choose to use this training to fulfill all or part of the thirty-hour annual requirement. In this way, EPIC gives online instructors the ability to optimize their time by efficiently gaining the skills they want and need for helping their students learn.

All new online instructors will be required to take the Professional Development Pathway to Certification before teaching online. Current faculty may choose this option and may receive credit for similar courses previously taken, reducing the hours required. Program courses will be mapped to rubric elements (which will be developed simultaneously with the courses) in a simple matrix to give instructors and supervisors a tool for deciding what credit can be given for prior training and what courses need to be taken for certification. The Online Certification Team has already begun its work by developing an initial schedule of courses for the certification program Appendix B.

Experienced, qualified online instructors who have completed relevant courses can be certified very quickly using Pathway 2 described below. These instructors are then eligible to be certified online Master Instructors or mentors.

Pathway 2—Certification by Review

Experienced faculty may already have completed extensive training in LMS technology and online pedagogy through professional development opportunities both on and off campus. If such training has been put into practice, it will be an observable element in existing courses. With supervisor approval, faculty may opt to put a course up for review in order to receive credit for all or part of the Online Instructor Certification Program (OIC) requirements described in Pathway 1. The Online Instructor Certificate will be awarded after a successful review. In this pathway, previously awarded professional development hours would be considered only for certification purposes, not for fulfillment of PD hours, since those PD hours would have been previously awarded. Some of the details of Pathway 2 are shown below:

> **Certification by Review Process:** Instructors will be certified by a team of three evaluators (one rubric expert and two faculty content/online experts, which can be

department heads or online leads). Instructors will be provided with an online LMS Course Menu template developed by faculty and staff that provides a framework for best practices in online course design, as well as a new, modified rubric and a checklist for providing evidence of best practices in online course delivery.

The process will be initiated by the instructor and authorized by the supervisor. A review committee will review the course and will provide feedback directly to the instructor as a formative assessment. The instructor can choose to either have the course reviewed online or present the course to the reviewers in person. In collaboration with instructors, supervisors may choose to be trained as a reviewer and be part of the review committee, or may authorize the review committee to conduct the review. After the instructor is certified by review, the instructor will send the certification to the supervisor for documentation. If the instructor is not certified by the review process, targeted training may be recommended as described below.

Course Quality Standards and Rubric Pilot and Development: Course Quality Standards and a rubric have already been developed by initial Online Instructor Certification (OIC) Team members via an Applied Benchmarking project approved by the college during Spring 2014, and piloting began in Summer 2014 (Appendix G). During the first year of implementation, the standards and rubric will be refined by the OIC implementation team with input from faculty and department heads (using elements from existing online course observation documents) and will be evaluated by an external reviewer. The standards and rubric will also be refined and improved over the course of the initiative based on analysis of assessment results.

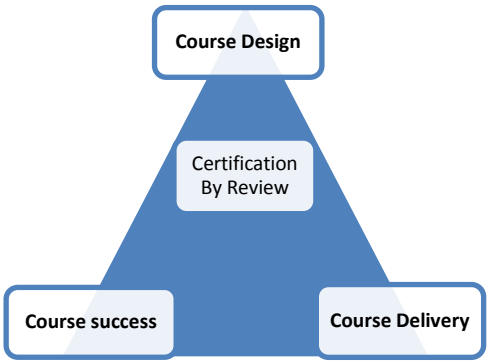
Reviewed Courses: Instructors will submit past courses for review. The QEP Certification Team will develop criteria for courses eligible for review. Instructors new to online teaching who do not have past or current online courses to evaluate may submit a face-to-face course or other Blackboard shell that may be evaluated for waiver of LMS-related training, as identified through the Pathway 2 process.

Triangulated Course Review Measures: The review will be triangulated in the following manner:

- **Course Design:** Evaluated by rubric
- **Course Delivery:** Rubric observation elements, student course surveys, and instructor self-surveys related to required delivery elements evaluated by course delivery checklist
- **Course Success:** Evaluated by comparison between historical online course success and retention rates and those of other online and seated sections of the same course. For courses where comparison groups may not be available, a cohort of similar courses may be identified.

Figure 6 presents success elements needed to attain certification by review.

Figure 6 Certification by Review Process



- **Targeted Training:** If the instructor is not immediately certified during course review under Pathway 2, the review team may recommend selected courses from the Online Teaching Certification Program for certification in lieu of the entire 30-hour program. The review committee will make the recommendation to the instructor, who will discuss it and make a decision with his/her supervisor.

- **The Online Master Teaching Certificate** may be pursued by faculty members who complete Pathways 1 or 2 and are recommended by their supervisors.

- **Reviewer Requirements and Training** will be managed by the Online Certification Team to ensure appropriate participation and representation. Faculty (usually online leads) and department heads who would like to become reviewers for the Pathway 2 process can complete the Online Teaching Master Certificate program or specific training on the rubrics created for the review. The rubrics will be the assessment tool reviewers use to guide recommendations. Each team will consist of a team lead, a content matter expert, and an experienced online instructor, all three certified peer reviewers. Reviewers will be part of the first phase of participants in the certification program.

- **Exemplary Courses** — Each year, exemplary course shells that demonstrate excellent design and delivery practices will be posted as examples on an internal website for review and use by others; 10 to 15 exemplary course shells will be posted each year, beginning with 30 priority courses. Owners of the shells will be recognized publically.

- **Quality Assurance** — to assess the effectiveness of the certification programs, the Assessment Team will conduct scheduled reviews of course sections. A multi-semester, and preferably, multi-year review schedule will be distributed in advance, with a published list of courses. Notifications and reminders will be sent to instructors teaching those courses at least one semester prior to review, and a time will be scheduled for review with the instructor. The instructor will have the opportunity to either have the course reviewed online or present the course to the reviewers in person. The instructor can choose to be present for the review. The instructor and supervisor can decide whether the supervisor will be present for the review. Departments can decide their own policies.

Pathway 3 – Lateral Entry / Short Notice Hires

In the event instructors are needed to teach online courses on short notice (as determined by supervisors), they must meet the following requirements:

- Have successfully completed the ELI Modules

AND

- Have taught at least one online course for a minimum of two semesters for an accredited institution of higher learning and can provide the supervisor, or evaluators requested by the supervisor, access to the online course for review and approval

OR

- Have taught a seated, web-assisted course at Wake Technical Community College

AND

- Agree to work with a qualified / certified instructor or administrator while concurrently completing the Online Instructor Certification Program during a period of no more than three 16-week semesters. A mentor/auditor will be responsible for ensuring adherence to guidelines and standards.

Ideally, in this situation, an instructor would be provided with a model online course developed by a subject matter expert from the applicable department.

All Pathways Lead to Online Instructor Certification Certificate

Faculty pursuing certification through any of the three pathways, if certified, will attain identical certification. Figure 7 provides a flowchart for all three pathways toward online teaching certification as well as the pathway toward master teaching certification.

Designed for all faculty, the Online Master Teaching Certificate Program is optional. This new program will consist of three concentrations from which to choose, a series of electives, and a final practicum. The program will be designed to increase an instructor's mastery of online teaching. One avenue of concentration in this program is becoming a faculty mentor. Through this QEP, a two-year mentoring program will be implemented for new online faculty. New online instructors will be assigned an online teaching faculty mentor within their department (or the most relevant discipline area if there are no available faculty members within their discipline with online experience). The e-Learning Support department staff will also be available throughout the mentoring term. Mentor training, a mentor handbook, and a checklist will be created for faculty mentors. The handbook will be a resource for both the mentor and mentee that will

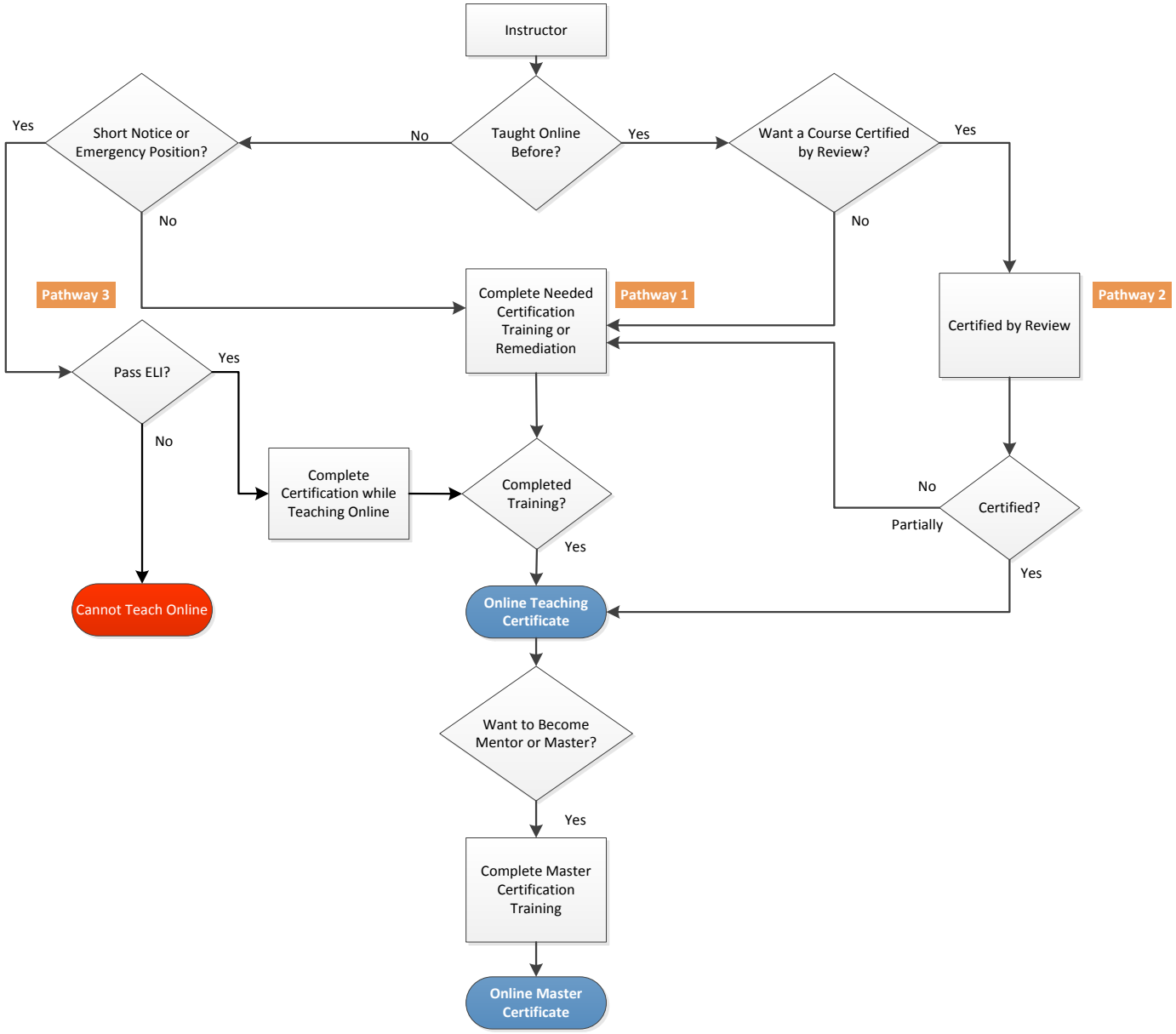
provide expectations, timelines, and goal-setting tips. The checklist will serve as a quick reference guide throughout the mentoring process.

Faculty wishing to become mentors will get approval from their supervisors and complete the Online Master Instructor Certification program. Mentors will receive a stipend for the extra work and time involved in mentoring new faculty.

The QEP Online Certification Team made up of experienced online instructors and experienced e-Learning Support staff will work together during Year 1 of this QEP to further develop the courses in both certification programs. The Online Instructor Certification Program will be phased in based on priority courses first (see Table 5). These courses will serve as a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of the certification strategy in this QEP but will not be used to evaluate faculty.

Figure 7 presents a flowchart of the three pathways planned for the online teaching certification strategy for EPIC.

Figure 7 Flowchart for Online Certification



Marketing and Change Management Actions

Marketing and change management programs have already begun for this QEP. The QEP team, with assistance from the college's Digital Media Producer, created a video entitled *EPIC: E-Learning Preparedness Initiative across the College* that was shared with faculty and staff during convocation in August 2013. The Marketing and Change Management Team plans videos throughout the duration of the QEP both to generate enthusiasm and to inform students, faculty, and staff about EPIC/ELI and its benefits. In addition, QEP co-chairs met with deans and department heads to gather feedback on the proposed initiatives, and QEP co-chairs presented to faculty members during the fall 2013 professional development conference. In November 2013, co-chairs presented QEP initiatives to Wake Tech President Dr. Stephen Scott and other administrators.

Registration and Student Learning Marketing Plan

During Year 1, the QEP Marketing and Change Management Team launched a college-wide marketing campaign creating awareness of the new ELI requirements for all new students registering for online courses. Flyers will be distributed during admission and advising. A webpage including general information and frequently asked questions will also be available and linked from the main registration website. To raise awareness and buy-in among faculty, staff, and students, the team will strategically employ various marketing strategies. Promotional events will take place on all campuses and online with participation rewards. Examples of participation rewards are ball caps, carabiner key rings, banners, USB drives, T-shirts, and Wake Tech EPIC logo red Solo cups for students. Flat screen displays and other promotional items are strategically employed on all campuses to create awareness of EPIC/ELI and to lead students and faculty to the EPCI/ELI website.

Students will receive a notice about the ELI course in WebAdvisor in the course comments section. During the admissions and advising processes, students will be told that if they are registering for an online course for the first time, they must complete ELI.

Marketing Initiatives

To kick off the marketing campaign, the Marketing and Change Management Team conducted a college-wide “Logo Design Contest” in the spring of 2014 to design branding with the creation of an EPIC/ELI logo and slogan. The contest raised awareness of EPIC/ELI ahead of implementation. The logo will appear on the QEP website and all promotional, marketing materials such as ball caps, carabiner key rings, banners, USB drives, T-shirts, red Solo cups, and polo shirts for faculty who complete EPIC training.

The Marketing and Change Management Team also launched an EPIC kickoff event during Fall 2014 convocation to create excitement and anticipation as EPIC begins. Following the kickoff, information sessions have been held at division meetings and October Professional Development day. EPIC will continue to maintain a presence at college events by presenting information and updates at convocations, student orientations, Fall Festival, Spring Fling, Facts & Snacks, and other appropriate events in the life of the college.

Press releases, videos, social media, digital signage, e-newsletters, and emails will be used to promote the rollout of EPIC/ELI and celebrate milestones throughout the campaign. Once the initiative is launched, a video/social media campaign will be implemented featuring testimonials from faculty and students on the positive impact of EPIC/ELI on their online teaching and learning experiences. Students might discuss their initial assumptions about e-learning contrasted with the realities of the online environment, for example, ". . . ELI really helped me have a better understanding of what to expect and what was expected of me in online classes.” Faculty might discuss their teaching experiences before and after completing EPIC training. The testimonials will appear in college publications, on college websites, YouTube pages, and social media. The current working title or tagline for the testimonials is **“Power Up for EPIC Success!”** These materials will be produced in conjunction with Wake Tech’s Communications Division.

EPIC Project Implementation Timeline

Tables 12, 13, and 14 present the timeline for implementing EPIC strategies. This timeline was developed and refined during the summer of 2014 with input from the Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, and Editing Team members and will be refined further as the initiative moves forward. The table shows that the project is designed to be implemented in phases, with phases progressing over time. According to this timeline, full implementation of this project occurs in 2017-2018.

Table 12 Implementation Timeline--Objective 1: Student Preparedness

EPIC Project Implementation Timeline

Objective 1: Student Preparedness: Help students overcome online learning barriers and gain the skills they need to be successful online learners		2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Activities (Actions/Strategies)	**Responsibility**	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU
Develop LMS course menu template	ELI Team	X														
Market LMS course menu template	Marketing/Change Management Team		X	X												
Implement course menu template	ELI Team				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop e-Learning Introduction (ELI) modules and diagnostics	ELI Team and Media Consultants	X	X													
Develop registration processes for ELI and online course enrollment	IT and ELI Team		X													
Market ELI for students who want to take priority courses	Marketing and Change Team		X													
Test, assess, and revise automated student enrollment and other registration actions	IT and ELI Team			X												
Implement/assess and adjust ELI for students in priority courses with prerequisite or hold	ELI Team; Assessment Team			X	X	X										
Test and assess additional help desk hours and campus help sessions	eLearning support technologist and ELI Team				x	X	X									
Implement actions recommended for improvement of ELI Program by Steering Committee during EPIC Program Reviews	ELI Team					X			X			X			X	
Market ELI to all online students	Marketing and Change Team						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ELI fully operational for all online students	ELI Team						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implement enhanced student support actions based on testing	Co-Directors and ELI Team							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 13 Implementation Timeline--Objective 2: Faculty Preparedness

Objective 2: Faculty Preparedness: Design, develop, and deliver online courses in accordance with Wake Tech's e-Learning quality standards.		2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Activities (Actions/Strategies)	**Responsibility**	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU
Refine Wake Tech's online course standards and course quality rubric and develop process for certification by review	Online Certification Team	X	X	X												
Certification Pathway 1: Develop and refine 30-hour curriculum for Online Certification Program, including matrix that correlates standards to certification courses	Online Certification Team		X	X												
Market/Manage Change: Pathways 1 and 2	Marketing/Change Management Team		X	X												
Phased implementation of Pathway 1 for instructors teaching priority courses	Online Certification Team				X	X		X	X							
Train online course reviewers on rubric	Online Certification Team				X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	
Certification Pathway 2: Phased implementation for instructors teaching priority courses	Online Certification Team				X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	
Support faculty in designing, developing, and delivering their online courses, including accessibility components, in accordance with LMS course menu template and Wake Tech Course Quality Standards	Instructional Designers				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Master Certification: Develop and refine curriculum	Online Certification Team				X	X										
Develop, test, and refine mentoring program for new instructors teaching priority courses	Online Certification Team				X	X	X									

Objective 2: Faculty Preparedness: Design, develop, and deliver online courses in accordance with Wake Tech's e-Learning quality standards.		2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Activities (Actions/Strategies)	**Responsibility**	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU
Exemplary design and delivery practices identified and course shells disseminated—15 exemplary course sections posted each year, beginning with 30 priority courses	Online Certification Team					X			X			X			X	
Implement actions recommended for improvement of OIC Program by Steering Committee during EPIC Program Reviewers	Online Certification Team					X			X			X			X	
Market/Manage Change: Master Certification/Mentoring Program for instructors in priority courses	Marketing/Change Management Team					X	X									
Implement Master Certification and mentoring program for instructors teaching priority courses	Online Certification Team							X	X		X	X		X	X	
Online Instructor Certification Program, Master Certification Program, and Mentoring Program fully operational for all instructors	Online Certification Team										X	X		X	X	

Table 14 Implementation Timeline--Administrative Activities

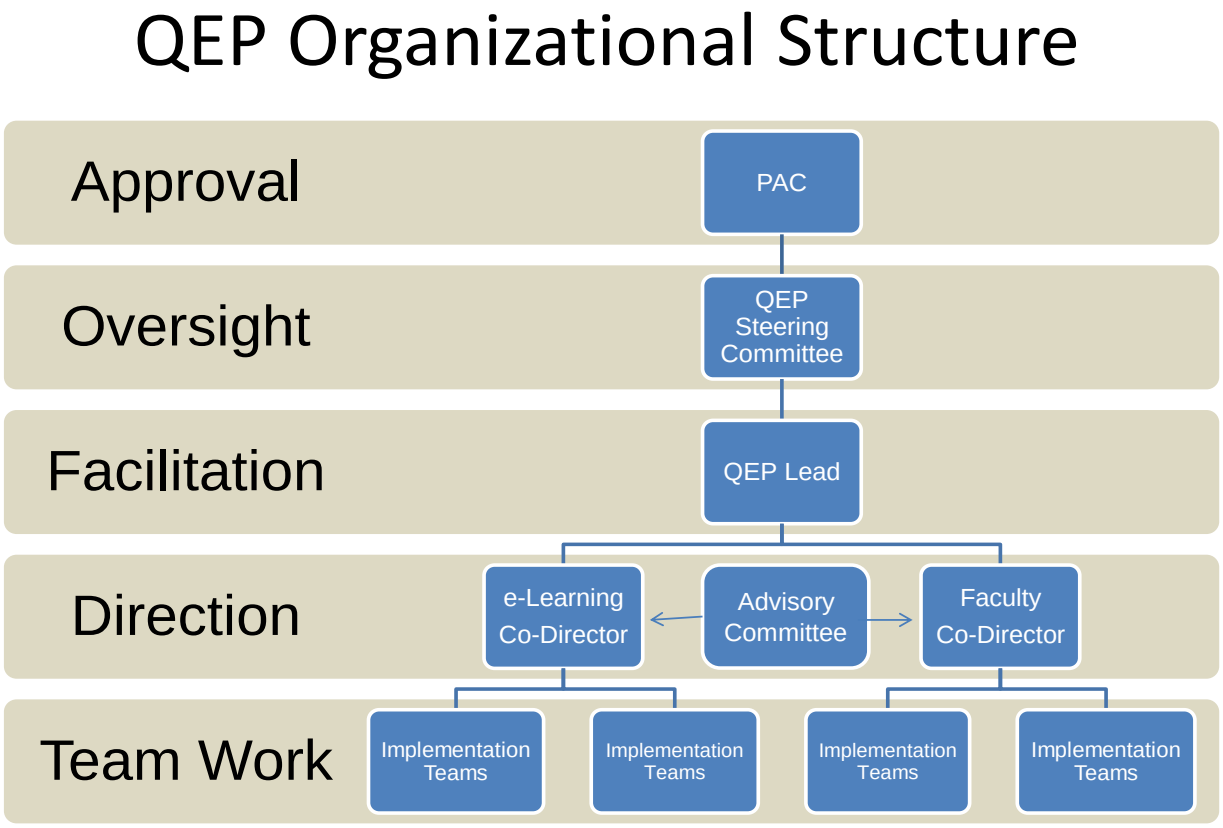
Administrative, Marketing/Change Management, Evaluation, Dissemination Activities		2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Activities (Actions/Strategies)	**Responsibility**	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU
Hire personnel, convene Implementation Teams, hire part-time implementation team leaders	Co-Directors	x	x													
Launch EPIC throughout campus to all stakeholders	Co-Directors & Implementation Teams	x														
Conduct EPIC informational tours, workshops, newsletters, student events, recognition ceremonies	Co-Directors & Implementation Teams	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	
Monitor and provide oversight of project implementation	Steering Committee	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	
Plan assessments	Internal Assessment Team	x	x		x			x			x			x		
Implement assessments	Internal Assessment Team		x			x			x			x			x	
External review of ELI modules and diagnostics	External online learning consultant		x						x						x	
External reviews of OIC Program standards, curriculum map, and rubric	External online learning consultant		x						x						x	
Quality assurance reviewers: Scheduled internal and external reviews of 60 top-enrolled online courses using rubric	Internal Assessment Team, External Reviewer					x			x			x			x	
Analyze assessment findings and report outputs and outcomes, including external reviews to implementation teams and steering committee	Co-Directors and Internal Assessment Team			x			x			x			x			x
EPIC Program Review: Evaluate project outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Make recommendations to implementation teams.	Steering Committee				x			x			x			x		

Administrative, Marketing/Change Management, Evaluation, Dissemination Activities		2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
Activities (Actions/Strategies)	**Responsibility**	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU	FA	SP	SU
Attend professional conferences to learn best practices and coordinate on-campus professional development workshops with outside experts for implementation leaders and team members	Implementation Team leaders	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	
Disseminate findings at meetings	Co-Directors and Implementation Team leaders					X			X			X			X	

Organizational Structure, Resources, and Budget

Continuing with the collaborative efforts of faculty and staff that developed this proposal, the organizational structure of the QEP will consist of representatives from multiple departments. The QEP Lead and Co-Directors will work collaboratively to manage the QEP. Figure 8 outlines the QEP organizational structure.

Figure 8 QEP Organizational Structure



QEP Roles and Responsibilities

PAC

The President's Advisory Council (PAC) assists the President in formulating decisions and approving actions recommended by the QEP Steering Committee. QEP Steering Committee recommendations will be presented to the PAC by the QEP Steering Co-Chairs. Recommendations approved by the PAC will become recommendations to the President, who

retains final approval. QEP actions approved by the President become recommendations to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Steering Committee

The main purpose of the QEP Steering Committee is to provide oversight for the QEP Project. This committee is responsible for the long-term management and monitoring of the QEP, formulating strategic decisions by regularly evaluating implementation results and activities and recommending guiding policies, procedures, and revisions for successful project completion and improvement. The QEP Steering Committee Co-Chairs report to the PAC.

The QEP Steering Committee Co-Chairs will be a senior administrator from Curriculum Education Services and a representative from the President's Advisory Council. Membership on the Steering Committee will include the following representatives:

- Senior Vice President of Curriculum Education Services – represents the interests of the Curriculum Education Services Council and serves as Chief Academic Officer on SACS Leadership Team
- Deans (2) – represent Arts and Sciences and Career Programs deans
- Department Heads (2) – represent Arts and Sciences and Career Programs department heads
- Faculty (2) – represent Arts and Sciences and Career Programs faculty
- Student Services (2) – represent Student Services interests
- Continuing Education (2) – represent Continuing Education interests
- Faculty Senate (1) – represents Faculty Senate interests
- Staff Council (1) – represents Staff Council interests
- PAC Member (Non-Curriculum) – represents Board of Trustees interests
- SACS Liaison – represents SAC interests, on SACS Leadership Team
- QEP Lead – represents Co-Directors and team interests on SACS Leadership Team

Membership responsibilities include communication of QEP status and updates, as well as soliciting input from constituencies and making recommendations based on that input.

Lead

The QEP Lead serves as the QEP representative on the SACS Leadership Team. The primary responsibility of the QEP Lead will be general project management, oversight, facilitation, and support to ensure realization of the project outcomes, and compliance with SACS and stakeholder expectations. The QEP Lead will provide support to the QEP Co-Directors and teams; oversee the management of expenditures; oversee reporting, including assisting Co-Directors with internal accountability reporting and preparing SACS reports; and provide

assessment support in continued evaluation to improve the QEP. The QEP Lead reports to the QEP Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

Faculty Co-Director

The QEP Faculty Co-Director will work with the e-Learning Co-Director and QEP Lead to ensure successful project implementation and achievement of outcomes. The primary responsibility of the Faculty QEP Co-Director will be to lead faculty and academic departments and divisions in implementing the EPIC Initiative. The Faculty Co-Director and e-Learning Co-Director will co-chair teams of faculty liaisons and developers, instructional designers, and assessment specialists to develop and implement the online teaching certification program and will coordinate with departments and divisions to implement the initiative. The Faculty Co-director will lead the faculty Mentoring Program and support the e-Learning Co-Director by serving as facilitator on teams devoted to the ELI program. The Faculty Co-Director will also ensure delivery of all required internal accountability reports, support SACS reporting, and present information to various stakeholders as needed. The Faculty Co-Director reports to the QEP Lead for the project.

e-Learning Co-Director

The QEP e-Learning Co-Director will work with the faculty Co-Director and QEP Lead to ensure successful project implementation and achievement of outcomes. The primary responsibility of the e-Learning Co-Director will be to lead e-Learning staff in implementing the EPIC Initiative. The e-Learning Co-Director will co-chair teams of faculty liaisons and developers, instructional designers, and assessment specialists who will develop and implement the online teaching certification program and will coordinate with Student Services, Information Technology, and other service areas to implement the initiative. The e-Learning Co-director will lead the ELI Program and will support the Faculty Co-Director by serving as facilitator on teams devoted to the Mentoring Program. The e-Learning Co-Director will also ensure delivery of all required internal accountability reports, support SACS reporting, and present information to various stakeholders as needed. The e-Learning Co-Director reports to the QEP Lead for the project.

Advisory Committee

The purpose of the QEP Advisory Committee is twofold: 1) to provide a venue for the QEP Implementation Teams to communicate implementation status and details; and 2) to provide the

QEP Teams with input and recommendations to strengthen QEP implementation and integration with other Curriculum initiatives. Members of the advisory group will include:

- Curriculum Vice Presidents and Deans
- Department Head, e-Learning Support
- QEP e-Learning Co-Director
- QEP Faculty Co-Director
- QEP Lead

Members will serve as representatives of their employees, bringing implementation concerns and proposed solutions to the QEP Co-Directors to deliver to the QEP Implementation Teams for integrating and revising the QEP implementation plans.

QEP Implementation Teams

The QEP Implementation Teams will be responsible for implementing the QEP. These teams will include the following:

ELI Program

The ELI Program team will develop and deliver the student orientation modules for the ELI program and implement the program. The team will also collect ELI program outcomes data, analyze the results, and report them to the Assessment Team along with planned and implemented changes and improvements to the program based on analysis of results. The e-Learning Co-Director will chair this team.

Online Teaching Certification Program

The Online Teaching Certification Program team will be responsible for developing and delivering the online teaching certificate program, including the development and delivery of courses. A rubric for course design and evaluation and procedures for quality assurance in online instruction will be developed to coordinate and integrate this program with college-wide Professional Development. The team will collect program outcomes data, analyze the results, and report them to the Assessment Team. Planning and implementing changes and improvements to the program will be based on analysis of results. This team will be co-chaired by the e-Learning and Faculty Co-Directors.

Faculty Mentoring Program

The Faculty Mentoring Program team will be responsible for developing and delivering the Faculty Mentoring program and procedures and for providing professional development and

resources to faculty mentors and mentees. This team will also collect program outcomes data, analyze the results, and report them to the Assessment Team along with planned and implemented changes and improvements to the program based on analysis of results. The Faculty Mentoring team will be chaired by the Faculty Co-Director.

Marketing and Change Management

The Marketing and Change Management team will be responsible for developing and implementing marketing and communications initiatives and procedures that include the following: building awareness of and communications pathways and networks for the QEP, creating desire for its implementation, building knowledge of how to implement it effectively, and reinforcing the initiative to maintain and improve its momentum.

The team will collect data on the effectiveness of the Marketing and Change Management actions, analyze the results, and report them to the Assessment Team along with planned and implemented changes and improvements to the program based on analysis of results. The membership of this team will include the Communications Division representatives as well as representatives from Curriculum Education, Student Services, and the Convocation team. The Marketing and Change Management Team will be chaired by a member of the Communications Division, who will report to the QEP Co-Directors.

Assessment Team

The purpose of the Assessment Team is two-fold: to evaluate courses for the purpose of certification by review, determining the quality course outcomes of the initiative; and to collect, compile, and review outcomes assessment reports from the implementation teams and prepare internal reports for the QEP Steering Committee on the effectiveness of EPIC.

The reports will include recommendations for changes and improvements based on analysis of results. Course evaluators will consist of one expert trained in Wake Tech's Quality Course rubric and two expert mentors. The Assessment Team will be chaired by the QEP Co-Directors.

Team Membership

Each team will include representatives from the following areas, as appropriate:

- e-Learning Technologists
- Instructional Designers
- Accessibility Technologist
- Faculty Liaisons

- Faculty Mentors
- SGA representative
- Academic Advising and Admissions
- Registrar, Audit and Compliance
- Director of System, Information Technology Systems
- Department Head, e-Learning Support
- Assessment Specialist
- Curriculum Deans
- Curriculum Department Heads

Personnel

To ensure success of this QEP, proper leadership and sufficient personnel resources are required. Wake Tech will invest significantly in the human resource needs for this project.

QEP Lead

The QEP Lead is a full-time, twelve-month employee. This person will devote 25% of efforts toward the general oversight and project management of the QEP. This position will be filled by existing personnel from Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, and Research.

QEP Co-Directors

The QEP Co-Directors are full-time, 12-month employees. These two individuals will devote 50% of their efforts toward the design, development, implementation, evaluation, and management of the QEP. These positions will be 50% funded for the duration of the QEP project. One position will be filled by a member of the e-Learning Support department, and one position will be filled by a curriculum faculty member. The faculty member will receive 50% release time required to serve as Co-Director.

Data Analyst/Programmer

The Data Analyst/Programmer, a full-time staff member, will assist with the programming and monitoring services provided by IT. This new position is to be funded for the duration of the QEP.

Data Technician

The Data Technician, a full-time paraprofessional staff member, will monitor the student orientation completions and remove registration holds. This new position is to be funded for the duration of the QEP with possible ongoing funding.

Department Head, e-Learning Support

The Department Head of e-Learning Support, a full-time, 12-month staff member, will support the development, management, and success of the QEP. This is an existing position.

Director of Systems

The Director of Systems, a full-time, 12-month staff member, will serve as lead programmer and IT liaison for the QEP. This is an existing position.

e-Learning Technologists

The e-Learning Technologists are full-time, 12-month staff members who will work on the design, development, and delivery of modules and training. e-Learning Technologists will also provide support for faculty. One new position will be added to a team of existing positions that currently carry responsibilities in instructional design, training, and support.

e-Learning Support Technician

The e-Learning Support Technician, a full-time, 12-month staff member, will work toward the development, implementation, and assessment of the student orientation. This person will provide ongoing student support. This is an existing position.

Faculty Liaisons

Faculty liaisons are representatives from curriculum faculty who will serve on either the QEP Resource Team or the QEP Assessment Team. Liaisons serving on the Resource team will assist in the design process of QEP initiatives. Liaisons serving on the Assessment team will assist in the evaluation and assessment of the QEP. Estimated stipends of $1,500 will be provided for each liaison each semester for the duration of the QEP.

Faculty Mentors

Faculty mentors are full-time faculty members who will devote efforts comparable to teaching one online course toward mentoring up to three new faculty members. Mentors will meet regularly with mentees, provide guidance, observe classes, and assist with course evaluations. Estimated stipends of $1,500 will be provided for each mentor each semester.

Instructional Designers

The Instructional Designers are full-time, 12-month staff members who will each devote efforts toward the design, development, and delivery of modules and training. Instructional Designers will also provide support for faculty. Three new positions will be created to assist with the

design, development, accessibility concerns and assessment of QEP initiatives. These positions, funded for the duration of the QEP, will receive ongoing funding to provide support to faculty after the QEP.

Assessment Specialist

The Assessment Specialist, a full-time, 12-month staff member, will devote approximately 50% time toward assessment of the QEP. This is an existing position.

Media Consultant

The media consultant will record and edit multimedia content for QEP initiatives. Either the position will be filled by a part-time, temporary staff member, or these services may be contracted.

Technical Assistant

The Technical Assistant, a full-time, 12-month staff member, will provide administrative support to the QEP team. This new position is to be funded for the duration of the QEP.

Impact of QEP on Existing Positions

The QEP will affect the existing responsibilities of existing positions. The existing teaching responsibilities of the Faculty Co-Director will have to be shared with other faculty in that department to compensate for the 50% course reduction for this individual. Existing responsibilities for the e-Learning Co-Director will be shared among the e-Learning staff. e-Learning Technologists and Support Technicians will be expected to contribute substantially to the QEP along with regular support duties. The addition of Instructional Designer and e-Learning Technologist positions will help alleviate the significant increase in workload for the e-Learning Support department.

Department Heads, Lead Online Instructors, and faculty members may see increased workloads. Recognizing that work flow adjustments will occur as a result of this initiative, impact funding will be set aside for use as needed. Faculty liaisons and mentors will be given extra responsibilities and will receive stipends for their work.

Student Support Services staff may also see increased load. The impact funding will also be available to help with seasonal staffing where needed.

Professional Development

Wake Tech will also invest in the continuing professional development of its faculty. Stipends based on an estimate of $33 per hour will be provided to all adjunct faculty members who complete the online teaching certificate program.

Members of the QEP Implementation Teams who will be the primary designers and developers of the training materials will also need training on the design tools to be used. The primary tool for which training is required is Adobe Captivate, which will be used to create interactive lessons. Each design team member will receive a *Lynda.com* membership to access online training. *Lynda.com* memberships provide unlimited access to over 2,000 instructional video taught by leading experts.

Operational Investments

Additional investments for assessment needs, travel, marketing, equipment, and materials are described below.

Assessment

An internal rubric has already been developed to assess online courses, and will be refined further during the course of the initiative (Appendix G). Wake Tech's Peer Reviewer training courses are required for all faculty and staff who will be assisting with internal assessments, including the QEP Lead, QEP Co-Directors, Instructional Designers, e-Learning Technologists, Faculty Liaisons on the Assessment Team, Faculty Mentors, and department heads. Courses identified by the Assessment Team as priority courses due to their high enrollment and success rate differences that are at or greater than 5%, will be the first submitted for review. Internal subject-matter experts, and external online learning experts, will be called upon periodically to strengthen the review process.

Travel

The QEP Lead, Co-Directors, and Assessment Specialist will attend conferences for professional development and project dissemination. Implementation team leaders will also receive professional development through travel to conferences or via external experts brought in to give all implementation team members workshops in these areas. Travel costs include registration, travel, and accommodations; consulting fees are required for external speakers.

Marketing

A design contest was held for the graphic design of the logo to be used for this QEP. Student submissions were accepted during Spring 2014 semester and incentives were awarded to the winners. Flyers, mailers, handbooks, and other paper advertisements will be printed and distributed throughout the duration of the QEP. The QEP will be marketed at campus events such as open house and convocation. Pens, flash drives, and other promotional items will also be distributed at events. Promotional items will have the logo and website printed on them.

Equipment and Materials

Each new position created through this QEP will require office space, computer use, and phone access. The new buildings and renovations to North Campus and Main Campus will provide more office space. Computers and phones will be purchased for each new employee.

Members of the QEP Implementation Teams who participate in the active design and development of orientation modules and training sessions will use Adobe Captivate to create interactive, engaging video tutorials. Captivate licenses will be required for these individuals.

Budget and Resources

EPIC's primary goal is to reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses. Wake Tech has developed student and faculty preparedness strategies to achieve this goal. The college is committed to supporting EPIC strategies, and possesses the financial, physical and human resources necessary to implement these strategies and accomplish this goal. The QEP and its associated 5-year budget have been fully approved by the President's Advisory Council (PAC) , which includes the Chief Financial Officer , Chief Academic Officer, and other Senior Administrators, as well as the Board of Trustees.

Existing and new resources and costs associated with the QEP have been fully considered and the budget to implement the plan has been developed within the means of the college, which is funded via allocations from the state of North Carolina. Currently, state funding used for the QEP is based on Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) calculations, which are based on enrollment. Enrollment continues to grow at Wake Tech and enrollment growth is projected over the next five years as Wake Tech increases its capacity. As state funding shifts from FTE-based to performance-based funding, higher success rates in online courses will lead to additional state funding. Should state funding be lower than expected, other budgeted resources set aside for non-recurring expenses will be used.

Table 15 presents the Budget Timeline.

Table 15 Budget Timeline

Resource	Description	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
Implementation Team Personnel – Support Staff							
QEP Co-Directors (2)	1. Development and delivery of ELI and Online Certification Programs. 2. Coordination with QEP Lead, Implementation Teams, Advisory Committee, and Steering Committee. Fifty percent of salary funded by QEP.	28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	140000.00
		28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	28000.00	140000.00
Data Analyst/Programmer (new position; fringe included)	Assist with the programming and monitoring services.	72167.00	72167.00	72167.00	72167.00	72167.00	360835.00
Media Consultant	Record, edit multimedia content.	28800.00	28800.00		28800.00		86400.00
Student Services Data Technician (new position; fringe included)	1. Monitor ELI successful completers list generated by ITS. 2. Remove registration holds.	25753.00	51506.00	51506.00	51506.00	51506.00	231777.00
e-Learning Technologists (existing)	1. Assist with the development and assessment of ELI modules, Online Teaching Certificate, and Mentoring courses. 2. Provide support for faculty.	21600.00	21600.00	21600.00	21600.00	21600.00	108000.00
	Stipends provided to compensate for additional workload ($1,800 per technologist per semester).						
e-Learning Technologist (new position; fringe included)	1. Lead extended support efforts for students and faculty. 2. Provide informational sessions for students. 3. Assist in development of ELI.	30720.00	61440.00	61440.00	61440.00	61440.00	276480.00
Instructional Designers (3 new positions; fringe included)	1. Assist with the development of ELI modules, Online Teaching Certificate, and Mentoring courses. 2. Provide faculty with course shell development support.	122880.00	184320.00	184320.00	184320.00	184320.00	860160.00
e-Learning Support Technician (existing)	Monitor the ELI modules; provide support to students. Stipend provided to compensate for additional workload	1500.00	1500.00	1500.00	1500.00	1500.00	7500.00

Resource	Description	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
	($500/semester).						
Technical Assistant (new position; fringe included)	Provide administrative support to the QEP Team.	37850.00	37850.00	37850.00	37850.00	37850.00	189250.00
Implementation Team Personnel - Academic							
Faculty/Staff Implementation Team Members	Stipends for faculty and staff to serve as leadership team members on QEP Implementation Teams.						
	ELI Program Team: $1500 per semester per leadership team member; 5 total.	15000.00	15000.00				30000.00
	Online Instructor Certification Program						
	Peer Review Certificate: Stipend for successful completion of WTCC Peer reviewer course ($200 per faculty member).		4200.00	4200.00	3000.00	3000.00	14400.00
	Peer Reviewers: Stipend for developing and implementing peer review process and training, and serving as Peer Reviewer ($200 per participant).		4000.00	4000.00	2000.00	1250.00	11250.00
	Professional Development Liaisons: Stipend for working with eLearning Support to develop Online Instructor Certification Courses ($1500 per semester per leadership team member; 15 total).	45000.00	45000.00	45000.00			135000.00
	Marketing and Change Management Team Liaisons: ($1500 per year per leadership team member; 7 total).	10500.00	10500.00	10500.00	10500.00	10500.00	52500.00
	Assessment Team: 2 faculty leadership team liaisons ($1500 per semester).	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	30,000.00
Faculty Mentors	Stipends to carry out duties as faculty mentor.		7500.00	37500.00	60000.00	60000.00	165000.00
	Five mentors during summer pilot.						

Resource	Description	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
	Twenty additional mentors accepted annually in fall semesters.						
	$1500 per mentor per year.						
Part-Time Instructor Training - Online Instructor Certificate	30-hour faculty training series required for all faculty. Compensation for part-time faculty is needed.		74250.00	74250.00	74250.00	74250.00	297000.00
	Supporting 75 adjunct instructors per year.						
	$33 per hour at 30 hours.						
Project Evaluation							
Fees for external reviews of ELI modules	$1,000 per review for best practices.	1000.00		1000.00		1000.00	3000.00
External reviews of OIC Program standards, curriculum map, and rubric.	Fees for external reviews of OIC standards, rubric, certification courses; $1,000 per review for best practices.	1000.00		1000.00		1000.00	3000.00
External reviews of high enrollment online course shells.	Fees for review of sampled course shells for design and delivery effectiveness: review services, $1,000 per course, samples of 60 top enrolled online course shells, 20 sample course shells per year.			20000.00	20000.00	20000.00	60000.00
External Project Evaluation Consultant	Work with the Assessment Team, in particular the QEP assessment specialist and Co-Directors, to a) develop and refine data collection instruments to ensure their reliability and validity, b) collect data, c) analyze data, d) report or review data findings, and/or e) report findings with respect to and implications, as they relate to the QEP evaluation.	9500.00	9500.00	9500.00	9500.00	9500.00	47500.00
Travel							
SACS conference	Travel, accommodations, registration for four QEP leadership team members.	8000.00	8000.00	8000.00	8000.00	8000.00	40000.00

Resource	Description	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
Assessment conferences/workshops	Travel, accommodations, registration for six EPIC Implementation Team Leaders, including Instructional Designers or for consultant(s) honorarium, travel and accommodations to deliver in-house workshop.	12000.00	12000.00	12000	12000.00	12000.00	60000.00
Online Teaching and Learning conferences/workshops	Travel, accommodations, registration for 10 EPIC Implementation Team Leaders, including Instructional Designers or for consultant(s) honorarium, travel and accommodations to deliver in-house workshop.	20000.00	20000.00	20000.00	20000.00	20000.00	100000.00
NCCCS Conference	Travel registration for four QEP leadership team members.	800.00		800.00		800.00	2400.00
Marketing Materials							
Graphic Design Contest	Incentives for winning student designs.	500.00					500.00
Printing Costs		500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	2500.00
Promotional Items	Flash Drives, pens, etc. with logo, name, and website.	7000.00	3500.00	3000.00	1000.00	1000.00	15500.00
Campus Events	Representation of QEP initiatives at campus events.	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	2500.00
Resources - Equipment and Materials							
Computers	Nine computers for new positions. Replacements after four years.	10800.00				10800.00	21600.00
Phones	Nine phones for new positions.	3600.00					3600.00
Mobile Devices	Four tablets or laptops for leadership team use with replacements after 3 years (includes device, protective case, app store gift card, A/V connectors, etc.).	6000.00			6000.00		12000.00
Adobe Captivate	Captivate licenses for QEP Co-Director, e-Learning Technologists, and Instructional Designers.	6600.00		4400.00			11000.00
	Version update after two years.						

Resource	Description	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
Lynda.com Memberships	Access to online training on Captivate and other tools used for design and development of modules. Content developers will each have an account ($350 per person).	3150.00	3150.00	3150.00	3150.00	3150.00	15750.00
Office Supplies	General office supplies.	1000.00	1000.00	1000.00	1000.00	1000.00	5000.00
Impact Contingency							
Contingency costs for QEP impact on Department Heads/Faculty Evaluators	To support department heads who will have to implement new course observation methods		$22,500	$22,500	$22,500	$22,500	90000
Total QEP Costs		**565720.00**	**762283.00**	**775183.00**	**775083.00**	**753133.00**	**3631402.00**

EPIC Logic Model and Evaluation Plan

The following outlines EPIC's key objectives, strategies, desired outputs and outcomes, measures used to evaluate outcomes, and timeline for evaluation. It guides the planning process, serves as an outline and foundation for more detailed work plans and evaluation plans during EPIC implementation, and will be amended via stakeholder input over time.

Issue: Student performance in online course sections lags behind performance in face-to-face sections. Many students are not aware of the requirements or skills necessary for successfully completing online courses. Some find that their online courses include the design and delivery elements they need to learn, persist, and succeed in online courses while others do not.
EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.

Objective 1: Student Preparedness: Help students overcome online learning barriers and gain the skills they need to be successful online learners

Objective 2: Faculty Preparedness: Help faculty design and deliver online courses in accordance with Wake Tech's e-Learning quality standards

EPIC Outcomes:
Students will:

- Identify online learning barriers and strategies to overcome them
- Demonstrate online learning skills and use them in online courses
- Navigate online courses to complete tasks
- Communicate with online instructors
- Collaborate with peers in online courses

Faculty will:

- Organize online courses according to the LMS Course Menu Template.
- Design and deliver online courses according Wake Tech's course quality standards

Performance:

- Student persistence in online courses improves
- Student success in online courses increases

Rationale: Current research on best practices in online learning indicates that when students complete orientation programs that assess online learning skills and characteristics and when faculty are trained in online course pedagogy, online learning and student success improve.
Resources: See "QEP Organizational Structure, Resources and Budget" for existing and additional resources available for implementing the QEP.
Time Frame: 5 years

EPIC Logic Model

The logic model shown in Table 16 depicts the relationship between the goals/objectives of EPIC, the ***activities*** (actions) described in the Implementation Plan, and the resulting outputs and outcomes of the project. For this logic model, ***outputs*** refer to the measurable, direct products of project activities that lead to outcomes. Outputs include counts of persons involved, training provided, new courses designed, etc. ***Outcomes*** refer to the learning and behavior changes that occur, or the difference that results, for students and faculty because of their participation in this project.

Table 16 EPIC Logic Model

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence and success in online courses.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Activities</th><th>Outputs</th><th>Time Line</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Objective 1: Student Preparedness:
Help students overcome online learning barriers and gain the skills they need to be successful online learners
1. Develop and implement LMS course menu template.
2. Design, Develop and implement e-Learning Introduction (ELI) diagnostics and modules.
3. Develop registration actions for ELI enrollment and automated prerequisites/hold lifting for course registration.
4. Phased implementation of ELI with prerequisite or hold for 1) special populations of students who want to take</td><td>Policy and procedures for using standardized course menu template disseminated</td><td>SU2015</td><td rowspan="6">Short-Term Outcomes (1-3 Years)

<u>Via ELI, students :</u>
• Identify:
○ online learning barriers
○ strategies to overcome them
• Demonstrate online learning skills

<u>Via the LMS, faculty:</u>
• Organize online courses according to the LMS Course Menu Template</td></tr>
<tr><td>Standardized course menu template for all online courses deployed</td><td>FA2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>Three ELI modules and diagnostics completed:
a. Expectation Management
b. Basic Computer Literacy
c. Learning Management System</td><td>SP2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>Policy, process, and procedures for enrolling students into ELI implemented</td><td>SU2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>Process and procedures for enrolling students into online courses based on ELI completion implemented</td><td>SU2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>ELI operational for special student populations (such as first-time online course takers, Pell-eligible students, unsuccessful online students) who</td><td>SU2015</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence and success in online courses.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Activities</th><th>Outputs</th><th>Time Line</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">priority courses; and 2) all students who want to take priority courses.
5. Implement ELI for all online students.
6. Implement enhanced student support actions (increased help desk hours, face-to-face student help sessions).</td><td colspan="2">want to register for one of the 30 priority courses</td><td></td><td rowspan="6"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">ELI fully operational</td><td>30 priority courses with the highest online enrollments</td><td>SU2016</td></tr>
<tr><td>all online courses</td><td>SU 2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">9300 students use ELI and register for online courses</td><td>SP2015-SP2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Help Desk hours aligned with need</td><td>FA2015-FA2016</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Face-to-face help sessions deployed for special student populations wanting access to online courses but unable to pass ELI or who took ELI and cannot persist in online courses</td><td>FA2016</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Objective 2: Faculty Preparedness: Help faculty design and deliver online courses in accordance with Wake Tech’s e-Learning quality standards

1. Refine Wake Tech’s online course standards and course quality rubric and develop process for certification by review.
2. Certification Pathway 1: Develop and refine 30-hour curriculum for Online</td><td colspan="2">Online course quality standards and rubric aligned with best practices and disseminated</td><td>SP2015</td><td rowspan="5">Mid-Term Outcomes (3-4 Years)

<u>Via the OIC Program, instructors will:</u>
• Design and deliver online courses according Wake Tech’s course quality Standards

<u>When taking online</u></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">OIC curriculum map aligning online course quality standards and course work disseminated</td><td>SU2015</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">30-hours of OIC training phased-in</td><td>Online instructors teaching 15 top enrolled priority courses (with greatest success rate differences)</td><td>FA2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>Online instructors teaching next 15 priority courses</td><td>FA2016</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence and success in online courses.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Activities</th><th colspan="2">Outputs</th><th>Time Line</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr>
<td rowspan="11">Instructor Certification Program (OIC), including matrix that correlates standards to certification courses.
3. Certification Pathway 1 – Phased implementation for instructors teaching priority courses.
4. Train online course reviewers on rubric.
5. Certification Pathway 2 – Phased implementation for instructors teaching priority courses.
6. Support faculty in designing, developing, and delivering their online courses including accessibility components, in accordance with LMS course menu template and Wake Tech Course Quality Standards.
7. Master Certification: Develop and refine curriculum.
8. Develop, test, and refine mentoring program for new instructors teaching priority courses.
9. Exemplary design and delivery practices identified and course shells disseminated – 15</td>
<td></td><td>All online instructors</td><td>FA2017</td>
<td rowspan="11"><u>courses, students will:</u>
Use online learning skills in their courses
• Navigate online courses to complete tasks
• Communicate with instructors
• Collaborate with peers

Long-Term Outcomes (4-5 Years and beyond)

• Student persistence in online courses improves.
• Student success in online courses increases.

Via Evaluation, improvements are implemented for:
• ELI
• OIC
• Assessment
• Overall EPIC Program</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Half of all online instructors complete the OIC</td><td>SP2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Peer reviewer training begins (1 rubric expert trains 2 other peer reviewers per online course)</td><td>SU2015</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Peer review process and procedures disseminated and implemented</td><td>Online instructors teaching 15 top enrolled priority courses (with greatest success rate differences)</td><td>FA2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>Online instructors teaching next 15 priority courses</td><td>FA2016</td></tr>
<tr><td>All online instructors</td><td>FA2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Faculty begin receiving assistance with online course design and development, from instructional designers</td><td>FA2015</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Master instructors identified and 60 exemplary course shells developed and disseminated internally</td><td>15 priority courses</td><td>SP2015</td></tr>
<tr><td>15 priority courses</td><td>SP2016</td></tr>
<tr><td>15 top-enrolled online courses</td><td>SP2017</td></tr>
<tr><td>15 top-enrolled online courses</td><td>SP2018</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">12 hours of Master Certification and Mentoring program begins for all instructors</td><td>FA2016</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence and success in online courses.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Activities</th><th colspan="2">Outputs</th><th>Time Line</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="10">exemplary course sections posted each year, beginning with 30 priority courses.
10. Implement Master Certification and mentoring program for instructors teaching priority courses.

Administrative, Marketing/Change Management, Evaluation, Dissemination
1. Hire personnel, convene Implementation Teams, and hire part-time implementation team leaders.
2. Launch EPIC throughout campus to all stakeholders via convocation and student events.
3. Conduct EPIC informational tours, workshops, newsletters, student events, and recognition ceremonies.
4. Monitor project outputs, assessments, and outcomes.
5. Plan and implement assessments.
6. External review of ELI modules and diagnostics.
7. External reviews of OIC Program standards.
8. Quality assurance reviews: Scheduled internal and</td><td colspan="2"></td><td></td><td rowspan="10"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Information tours, newsletters, student events and recognitions begin</td><td>FA2014, Every semester</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Initial implementation teams convened and begin meeting</td><td>FA2014</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Instructional Designer, Media Consultant, Data Analyst/Programmer and assistant hired</td><td>FA2014</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Two Instructional Designers, e-Learning Support, Student Services, and part-time leadership team members on implementation teams hired</td><td>SP2015</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">EPIC Assessment Plans finalized</td><td>Every Fall Semester</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">EPIC summative and formative assessments (surveys, focus groups, data analysis) completed</td><td>Every Spring Semester</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Internal and external Quality Assurance reviews completed</td><td>20 sample priority course shells</td><td>Fall 2016</td></tr>
<tr><td>20 top enrollment course shells</td><td>Fall 2017</td></tr>
<tr><td>20 top enrollment course shells</td><td>Fall 2018</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assessment results analyzed and reports compiled, forwarded to</td><td>Every Summer</td></tr>
</table>

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence and success in online courses.			
Activities	**Outputs**	**Time Line**	**Outcomes**
external reviews of 60 top-enrolled online courses using Wake Tech Course Quality Standards Rubric. 9. Analyze assessment findings and report outputs and outcomes, including external reviews to implementation teams and Steering Committee. 10. EPIC Program Review: Evaluate project outputs, outcomes, and impacts and recommend improvements to implementation teams. 11. Implement actions recommended by Steering Committee during EPIC Program Reviews. 12. Attend professional conferences to learn best practices and coordinate on-campus professional development workshops with outside experts for implementation leaders and team members. 13. Disseminate findings at conferences/workshops.	implementation teams and Steering Committee	Semester Beginning 2015	
	EPIC Program Review completed by Steering Committee; recommendations for improvements disseminated	Every Fall Semester beginning Fall 2015	
	At least two professional development conferences or in-house workshops by consultants attended by implementation leaders	Annually	
	At least four different presentations delivered about EPIC outputs and outcomes; one presentation per academic year	Annually	

EPIC Evaluation Plan

Both a formative and summative evaluation utilizing a mixed-methods approach and a quasi-experimental comparative design will be undertaken to evaluate QEP. The formative evaluation will begin upon project implementation and will last throughout the life cycle of the project. Its purpose is to identify ways in which the project could be changed or refined to improve the likelihood that intended objectives are reached and intended outcomes occur. The summative evaluation will begin in August 2016. Summative evaluation activities are designed to measure the degree to which intended objectives and outcomes are obtained:

1. The formative evaluation will provide information on how a) students experience ELI; b) instructors perceive using the rubric and Online Instructor Certification, Master Certification, and Mentoring programs to improve their ability to better support online learning; and c) students experience online classes with newly certified instructors; as well as information that can be used to improve the likelihood of project sustainability.

2. The summative evaluation will assess the extent to which EPIC has achieved intended outcomes, including a) the degree to which ELI helps students be more successful as online learners; b) the degree to which instructors participate in the certification and mentoring program; c) the degree to which online course revisions better support student learning; and d) the degree to which differences between online student performance and face-to-face student performance decreases, particularly in priority courses.

A critical aspect of the evaluation plan is the assessment of student learning and the extent to which this results in

- Reduced differences in online and face-to-face performance in priority courses;
- Increased online performance of students in priority courses;
- Decreased withdrawal rates among students who take online courses; and
- Increased persistence of students who take online courses.

Student learning that will be assessed includes: 1) the degree to which students identify online learning barriers and strategies to overcome them and enact these strategies; 2) the degree to which students demonstrate and utilize the skills needed for progress and successful completion of online courses;, and 3) the degree to which students navigate online courses successfully and submit all assignments, assessments, and discussions on time.

The crosswalk shown in Table 17 links intended EPIC outcomes with related evaluation questions, measures/indicators of change, and the timeline for evaluation activities along with who is responsible for their undertaking. As is shown, multiple measures, both quantitative and qualitative, will be collected in order to triangulate findings. While some measures directly assess outcomes, others are more indirect indicators of outcomes such as self-perceptions or self-assessments. In some cases, measures are internal, meaning that Wake Tech personnel are responsible for assessing findings, whereas in other cases measures are noted as external, such as when an outside reviewer is used to assess course design and quality.

Table 17 Crosswalk

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.			
Outcomes	**Evaluation Questions**	**Measures (Indicators of Change)**	**Timeline / Responsibility**

Via ELI, students will:
• Identify
  ○ online learning barriers
  ○ strategies to overcome them
• Demonstrate online learning skills
	Formative: To what extent can students assess their online learning readiness via ELI?
	
	Formative: How long does it take students to assess their learning via the ELI pre-diagnostics?
		Direct: 90% of online students who attempt ELI diagnostics are able to assess their online learning prior to registering.	ELI Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every fall semester beginning SP2016

	Formative: To what extent can students remediate their online learning readiness via ELI? **Formative:** How long does it take students to remediate their learning via the ELI pre-diagnostics? **Formative:** Are students satisfied with the quality and usefulness of the ELI modules?	Direct: 75% of online students who attempt ELI diagnostics are able to remediate their online learning prior to registration. Indirect: 80% of students taking ELI and responding to the survey indicate they are satisfied with the quality and usefulness of ELI.	ELI Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every fall semester beginning SP2016

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.			
Outcomes	**Evaluation Questions**	**Measures (Indicators of Change)**	**Timeline / Responsibility**
	Summative: To what degree has ELI helped students learn success skills for online learning?	Direct: 80% of students who are required to take ELI modules due to low pre-diagnostic scores will perform better on post-ELI diagnostic assessments after completing the ELI modules.	ELI Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every fall semester beginning FA2015
	Summative: Do instructors and students perceive differences in the learning success skills of students who have used ELI as compared to students who have not used ELI?	Indirect: 75% of instructors completing the Online Instructor Survey indicate students who have taken ELI have better online learning success skills than those that do not. Indirect: 75% of students who participate in the Online Class Survey indicate their success skills have increased as a result of using ELI.	ELI Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every spring semester beginning SP2016
Via the LMS, faculty will: • Organize online courses according to the LMS Course Menu Template	**Formative:** To what degree do faculty utilize the course menu template? **Formative**: What would they change about the course menu template?	Direct: 95% of sampled instructor course shells reviewed via Course Quality Reviews and rubrics are organized according to the LMS course menu template adopted by Wake Tech.	Assessment Team and External Evaluator every spring semester beginning SP2016
	Summative: Is there a difference in course organization and ease of navigation between courses utilizing the course menu template and those that do not? **Formative:** What would they change about the course menu template?	Indirect: 80% of students responding to the Online Class Survey and via focus groups indicate that courses employing the course menu template are better organized and easier to navigate than those that do not.	Assessment Team and External Evaluator every spring semester beginning SP2016
Via the OIC Program,	**Formative:** To what degree do instructors utilize the course quality rubric and participate in the Online	Direct: 85% of online instructors report using the course quality rubric and participating in the Certification	OIC Team, Assessment Team, and External

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.			
Outcomes	**Evaluation Questions**	**Measures (Indicators of Change)**	**Timeline / Responsibility**
instructors will: Design and deliver online courses according Wake Tech's course quality standards	Certification Programs to improve their online classes and teaching? **Formative:** What do instructors like about the rubric and the certification programs? **Formative:** What would they change about the rubric or professional development?	Program, as measured via Online Instructor Surveys and Focus groups.	Evaluator, every spring semester beginning SP 2016
	Summative: To what degree do instructors teaching online courses meet Wake Tech Course Quality Standards?	Direct: 85% of Wake Tech Online courses "meet standards", as measured by scheduled sampling and reviews of online courses by internal and external experts using Wake Tech's Course Quality rubric.	OIC Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every spring semester beginning SP 2017
When taking online courses, students: • Use online learning skills in their courses • Navigate online courses to complete tasks • Communicate with instructors • Collaborate with peers	**Summative:** To what degree can students: • Use online learning skills in their courses • Navigate online courses to complete tasks • Communicate with instructors • Collaborate with peers as a result of ELI and/or the Online Instructor certification program?	Direct: Students in online courses who have taken ELI: • Use online learning skills in their courses • Navigate online courses to complete tasks • Communicate with instructors • Collaborate with peers at statistically significant greater rates than students who have not taken ELI and/or are enrolled in courses taught by instructors who have not been certified, as determined by 1) a rubric deployed through the LMS and completed by faculty; 2) Quality Assurance reviews of sampled courses. Indirect: Surveys of faculty and students indicate students who have taken ELI in	OIC Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every spring semester beginning SP 2017

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.			
Outcomes	**Evaluation Questions**	**Measures (Indicators of Change)**	**Timeline / Responsibility**
		courses with certified instructors have greater ability to: • Use online learning skills in their courses • Navigate online courses to complete tasks • Communicate with instructors • Collaborate with peers than those who have not taken ELI and are not in courses with certified instructors.	
	Summative: To what degree do faculty and students believe course changes in accordance with Wake Tech standards allow students to achieve learning objectives?	Indirect: Surveys of faculty and students indicate greater achievement of course learning objectives for students who have taken ELI and/or are enrolled in courses with certified instructors.	OIC Team, Assessment Team, and External Evaluator, every spring semester beginning SP 2017
Student success in online courses increases to face-to-face levels.	**Summative:** To what degree has student success improved in online courses for different student populations?	Direct: Increase in success rates (% A, B, C) of online courses sections to levels of face-to-face sections (currently 75%) for all student populations and online courses, especially priority courses. Direct: Success rates among students who take ELI and online courses with certified instructors will be greater than students who have not taken ELI or courses with certified instructors.	Assessment Team and External Evaluator every spring semester beginning SP 2016
Student persistence in online courses improves to face-to face levels	**Summative:** To what degree has student persistence improved in online courses for different student populations?	Direct: Decrease in withdrawal rates (%W, WP, WF) of online course sections to levels of face-to-face sections (currently 17%) in all student populations. Withdrawal rates among students who take	Assessment Team and External Evaluator every spring semester beginning SP 2016

EPIC Goal: Reduce online learning barriers and support student learning, persistence, and success in online courses.			
Outcomes	**Evaluation Questions**	**Measures (Indicators of Change)**	**Timeline / Responsibility**
		ELI and courses with certified instructors will decrease.	
		Direct: Decrease in course repeater rates of online courses (% of students who repeat the same course), especially priority courses. Repeater rates among students who take ELI and courses with certified instructors will decrease.	Assessment Team and External Evaluator every spring semester beginning SP 2016
Via Evaluation, improvements are implemented for: • ELI • OIC • Assessment • Overall EPIC Program	**Summative:** To what degree has EPIC improved because of evaluation?	Direct: Review of assessment findings and evaluations reported by assessment team show that improvements to EPIC have been implemented.	Steering Committee, every fall semester beginning FA 2015

Assessment Instruments

The QEP will use the following assessment instruments:

ELI Survey. This survey, designed as a Web Survey to be completed by all students completing ELI, will elicit their opinions on what they like about ELI, how they believe ELI can help them as online learners, and what they would change about ELI. For students who have participated in online courses previously, the survey will ask what they do differently than in the past and how they perceive the online learning environment as compared to the past one.

Project Records. Project records that will be reviewed include documentation of numbers of students and instructors participating in ELI and the certification programs respectively, including instructors of priority courses.

Course Quality Rubric. Instructors, the Peer Review Team, and the Assessment Team will use this rubric to assess online classes in terms of the student learning environment and ability to be successful.

LMS Rubric. An online rubric will be provided through LMS to measure students' abilities to use online learning skills in their courses, navigate online courses to complete tasks, communicate with instructors, and collaborate with peers.

Online Student Survey. This survey, designed as a Web Survey to be completed by all students participating in online courses, will elicit their opinions on newly-revised classes, including their perception of course design and delivery as supportive of or a hindrance to their success. In addition, it will elicit the opinion of students who have used ELI to understand what they do differently than in the past and how they perceive the online learning environment as compared to the past. Because all students taking online classes must complete this survey, the opinions of students not participating in classes taught by instructors who were mentored will also be obtained and can be compared.

Online Instructor Survey. This survey, designed as a Web Survey to be completed by all instructors teaching online courses, will elicit their opinions on how they design and teach their respective classes and perceive student communication (student-student and student-instructor), peer collaboration, and potential for success. Because all instructors teaching online

classes must complete this survey, comparisons in practices and opinions can be made between instructors who have been certified and those who have not. In addition, this survey will ask instructors who have taught online courses at WTCC in the past to retrospectively rate their students in terms of their communication (student-student and student-instructor), peer collaboration, and potential for success.

Student Focus Groups. Groups will be conducted with a sample of students in newly-revised courses and a sample of students taking online courses to further understand their experiences and perception in the areas noted above.

Instructor Focus Groups. Groups will be conducted with a sample of instructors who were certified to further understand their experiences and perception in the areas noted above.

PI / Mgmt. Team Interviews. All data above will be supplemented by interviews with the PI and Management Team who can provide more contexts for findings as well as discuss drivers of and barriers to implementation of project activities and project success.

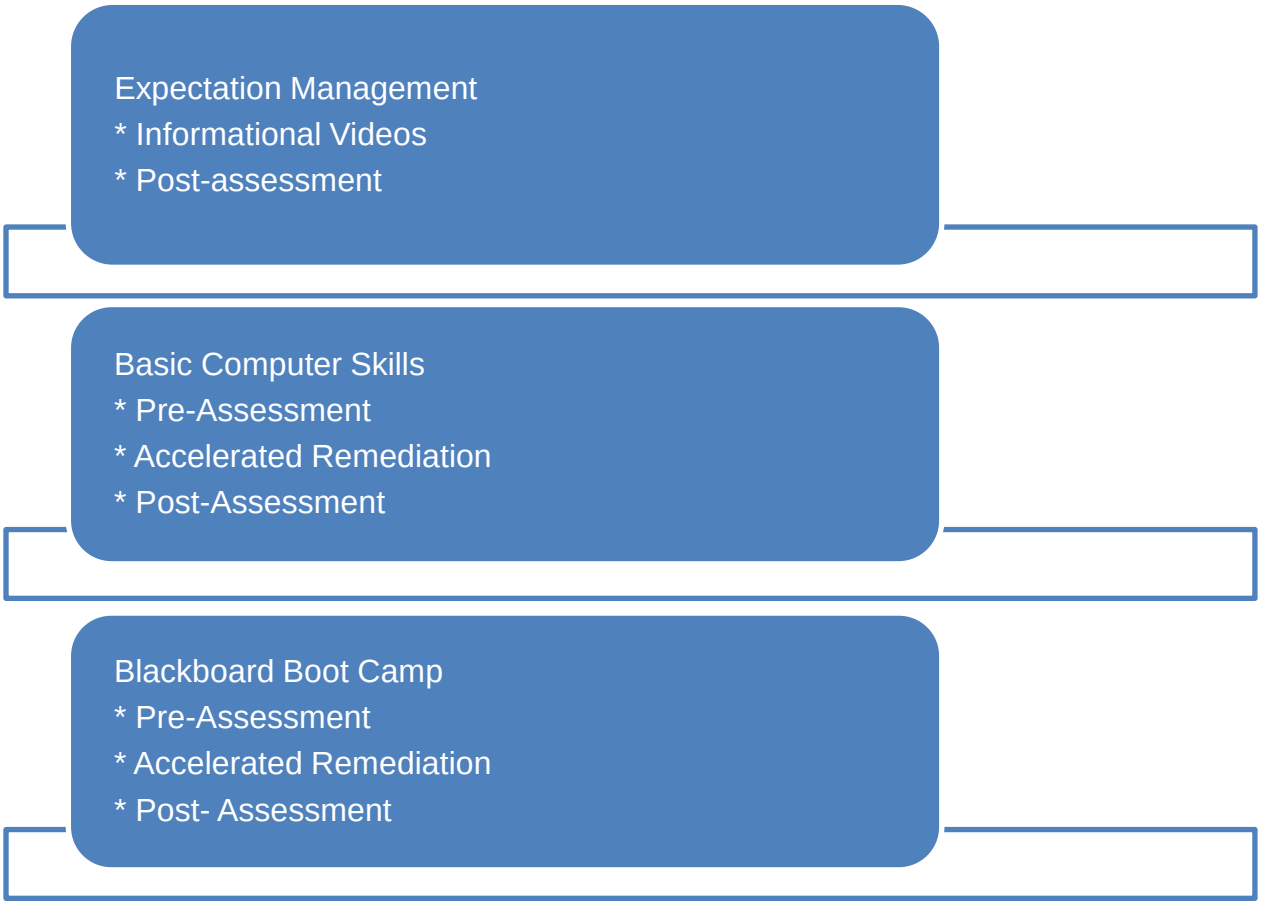
Summative Data. Summative data that will be collected and analyzed to assess project success include class grades (for all online courses and their face-to-face counterparts) and rates of student retention (for online and non-online students). In all cases, historical data will also be obtained in order to provide baselines from which to accurately measure change.

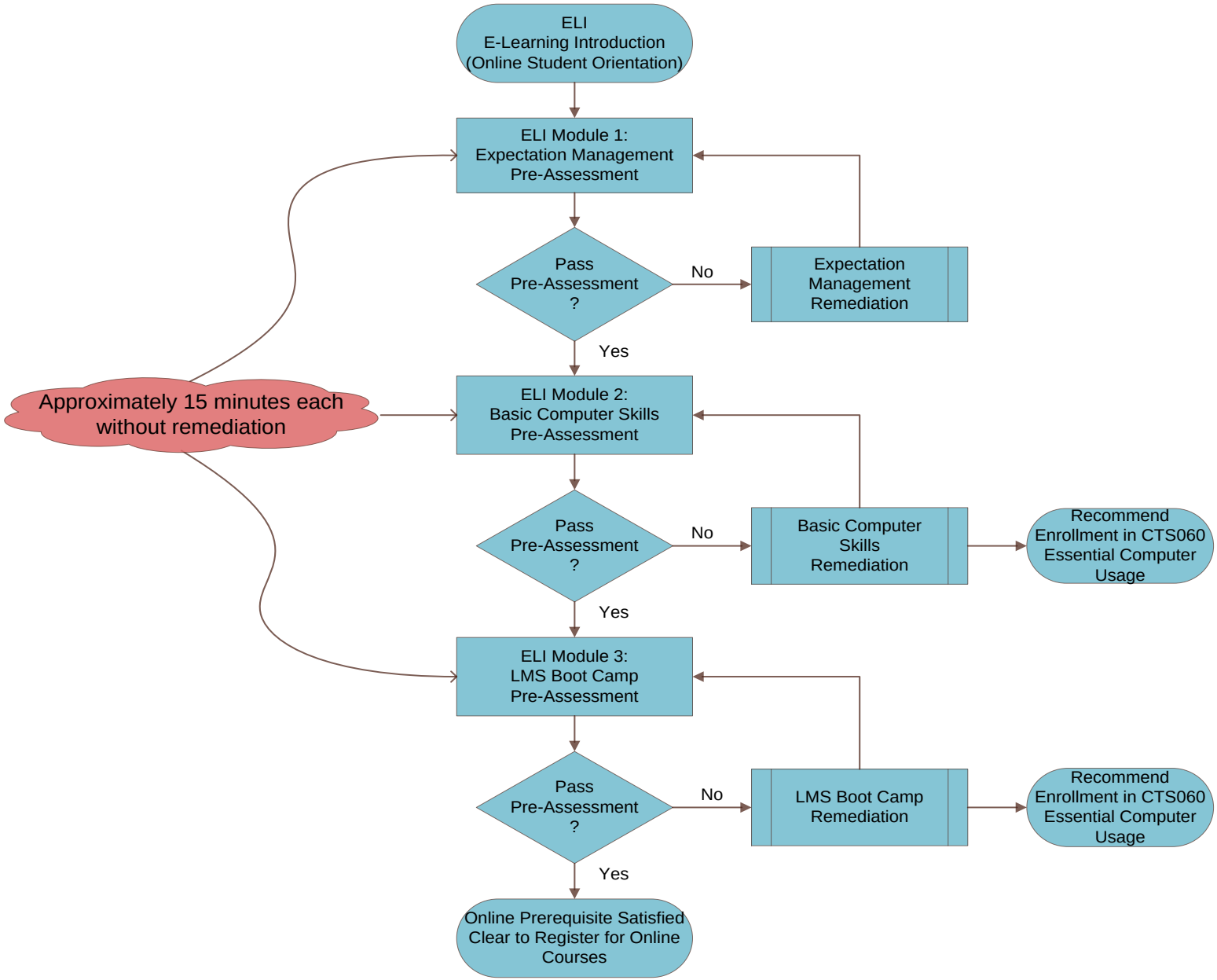
Priority Courses

Priority courses are courses with the highest online enrollments and average success rate differences of 5% or greater between online and face-to-face course sections. Initially, 30 of these courses were identified based on Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 data; however, priority courses will likely change as the initiative moves forward and other variables, such as course scheduling and enrollment practices, change during the five-year project period. In addition, while these courses will serve as the primary focus of assessment, success data from all online courses will be collected and analyzed.

Appendices

Appendix A ELI Modules




ELI
E-Learning Introduction
(Online Student Orientation)
ELI Module 1:
Expectation Management
Pre-Assessment
Pass
Pre-Assessment
?
No
Expectation
Management
Remediation
Yes
Approximately 15 minutes each
without remediation
ELI Module 2:
Basic Computer Skills
Pre-Assessment
Pass
Pre-Assessment
?
No
Basic Computer
Skills
Remediation
Recommend
Enrollment in CTS060
Essential Computer
Usage
Yes
ELI Module 3:
LMS Boot Camp
Pre-Assessment
Pass
Pre-Assessment
?
No
LMS Boot Camp
Remediation
Recommend
Enrollment in CTS060
Essential Computer
Usage
Yes
Online Prerequisite Satisfied
Clear to Register for Online
Courses

Appendix B: Certification Programs – Sample Certification Program Outline

Online Instructor Certificate Courses	PD Credit Hours
Planning for Online Learning (Incorporates LMS Customization and Resources, Grade Center, Course Files and Content, and Assessments)*	6 hours
Accessibility Introduction (AI)*	3 hours
Teaching and Learning Online using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles*	4 hours
Effective Online Instructional Design	4 hours
Communication and Interactivity in Online Learning (Co-Requisite: BB Communication Tools)	3 hours
Creating Engaging Learning Experiences (Co- or Prerequisites: Accessibility and UDL)	3 hours
Assessing Student Learning in an Online Environment (Co- or Prerequisite: Assessments in BB)	3 hours
Using LMS and Other Technologies to Enhance Learning and Student Motivation (Co- or Pre-Requisites: Accessibility, UDL, and BB tech training)	4 hours
Total	30 hours

Master Certificate Courses	PD Credit Hours
Practicum in Instructional Design using Universal Design Principles	4 hours
AND Choose 1:	
Advanced Accessibility Training	6 hours OR
Advanced Technology Training	6 hours OR
Faculty Mentor Program	6 hours
AND Choose 2:	
Teaching Adult Learners Online	2 hours OR
Creating Engaging Learning Experiences Part II	2 hours OR
Theory and Culture of Online Learning	2 hours
	12 hours total

Appendix C Definition of Terms

Blackboard: Wake Tech's online learning management system.

Blended: A course that combines both face-to-face and online elements. Course content is delivered inside a traditional classroom setting with student communication and interactions that occur online.

Face-to-face: A course in which content delivery and teaching occur inside a traditional classroom setting on campus.

Hybrid: A course that combines both face-to-face and online elements. Typically, 50% of the course is delivered inside a traditional classroom setting and 50% of the course is delivered online.

Online Course: A course in which content delivery and teaching occurs in a learning management system or utilizing electronic tools over the Internet.

Quality Matters: A well-respected organization that offers a fee- or subscription-based quality assurance program for online learning. (qualitymatters.org).

SAIL: Succeed, Achieve, Improve, Learn: Wake Tech's award-winning, grassroots process designed to spur continuous improvement and student success.

WebAdvisor: Web-based tool that allows students and employees to access some college services. Students may review their academic profile, register for classes, e-mail their advisor, make tuition payments, and check financial aid status.

Web-Assisted Course: College credit or continuing education course in which the primary delivery method is traditional, face-to-face, seated instruction with a requirement that students have Internet access as a supplemental part of the course. (Definition adapted from North Carolina Community College System website.)

Appendix D Focus Groups Summary Wake Tech Community College

Focus Group General Information

As part of the SAIL II process, the EPIC QEP Team conducted two focus groups and a survey on the proposal. One focus group consisted of personnel from Student Services and one focus group consisted of faculty members. An additional survey on all three SAIL II proposals was conducted college wide. The results of those focus groups and surveys are outlined below. The actual questions and comments of each are available upon request, but not attached here.

Student Services Focus Group

Common Themes:

- Positive reaction to focusing on and prioritizing e-Learning at the college.
- Positive reaction to the inclusiveness of the proposal (includes both faculty and student-directed initiatives with the two-prong approach).
- Concern regarding faculty buy-in and adjunct participation; faculty and adjuncts will need to invest time to make EPIC successful; concern regarding mandatory participation.
- Student Services is very interested in partnering with the EPIC team to help play to students' strengths and meet students where they are now.
- Concern about ELI and how long the modules will take a student to complete; whether the remediation is individualized based on student success in the module.
- Concern regarding increasing technology/IT support for students around campus.
- Concern about getting the message to students that ELI is mandatory and part of a college-wide initiative. Need a strong marketing campaign to get the word out.
- Concerned about faculty buy-in to the EPIC proposal.
- Concern about how the college will encourage adjunct faculty to take the certification course when they do not have to take any professional development courses and are not paid to take any.
- Need clear incentives for faculty to be mentors/mentees through the process.

Faculty Focus Group

Common Themes:

- EPIC only targets students in online/distance education courses, not the entire student population.
- Faculty do not have time to complete the certification courses. Online courses and training take too much time. Will EPIC be worth it in the end?
- We need faculty and student buy-in to make EPIC work.
- We need clear incentives for faculty if the college wants them to take and use the certification courses.
- Faculty are concerned about how their online courses will be evaluated once EPIC is mandated. Faculty do not want an e-Learning person to evaluate the quality of their online courses. They want someone who is neutral but knowledgeable regarding faculty life.
- Need to standardize the BB course shell, with some, but little, flexibility in the structure of the course.
- The Faculty Certification Course needs to be mandatory for it to be successful.

- Faculty would like a clear system or process of being able to “place out” of one or more sections or courses in the certification pathway.
- College needs to prioritize and focus on only one or two initiatives at a time. Faculty feels that the college is on ‘initiative overload.”

QEP Proposals Survey

Common Themes:

- Positive feeling toward required orientation for online students (ELI).
- Positive feeling that ELI will provide students with the skills they need to be successful in online courses.
- Concerns about the budget for the project: costly, where will the money come from?
- Positive feeling overall for the EPIC proposal. Feel that EPIC will have a strong, positive impact on student learning for years to come.
- Assessment measures/SLOs need to be strengthened in the proposal; what does “communicates effectively” mean?

Appendix E Faculty, Staff, and Student Surveys

The survey data below encompass all faculty at Wake Tech during the requisite time period, not only online faculty. By surveying all faculty, the data provide information regarding the potential impact of EPIC strategies for reducing barriers and increasing student learning for all faculty across the college including new potential online instructors. Because distance education is growing rapidly as indicated within the narrative, more and more faculty will be teaching online in the future. Therefore, the surveys lend a voice to all faculty, not just those currently teaching online.

Faculty Surveys

Spring 2013 Distance Education Faculty Support Survey

On February 27, 2013, an e-mail invitation to participate in an online 20-question Distance Education Faculty Support Survey was sent to all curriculum faculty. The survey remained available until March 27, 2013. The response rate was 10%.

Of the 83 faculty (74 full-time, 9 adjuncts) who responded to the survey, 24% had not completed Basic Blackboard training. Forty-six percent had never taken an online course. Faculty members selected the following five training topics from a list of 14 as being essential for advancing effective online instruction:

1. Blackboard Learning Management System (62.5%)
2. Online Communication Tools (61.3%)
3. Accessibility (60.0%)
4. Online Collaboration Tools (46.3%)
5. Microsoft Office (40.0%)

2013 Spring Staff and Faculty Conference

After Wake Tech's March 5, 2013, professional development conference, 278 faculty and staff responded to an eight-item opinion survey. Fifty-eight (57.9%) percent strongly agreed that the conference was appropriate in scope and variety, and 59.4% strongly agreed that they would recommend this conference to a colleague. In the results, faculty indicated a need for additional training. When asked how the conference could have been improved, faculty requested additional technical, pedagogical, and discipline-specific training. In addition, many responders indicated the desire that these sessions be made available throughout the year to increase their availability. In the comments section, the following training topics were requested most often:

1. Technology Training (10)
2. Teaching & Learning (5)
3. Discipline Specific (5)
4. Health & Wellness (5)
5. Accessibility (1)

Student Surveys

Curriculum Education Course Evaluations

Curriculum Education course surveys are deployed to students at the mid-point of each term with response rates averaging 40%. Survey results are reported by instructor/course. Total responses to individual survey questions are not aggregated, but a general conclusion may be

reached by reading students' comments in the survey's Section 2: Online Environment Questions. In general, comments are largely positive, but it is not uncommon for faculty to receive a small number of negative comments regarding course content or delivery along with a larger number of positive comments for the same course.

Blackboard Orientation Assignment

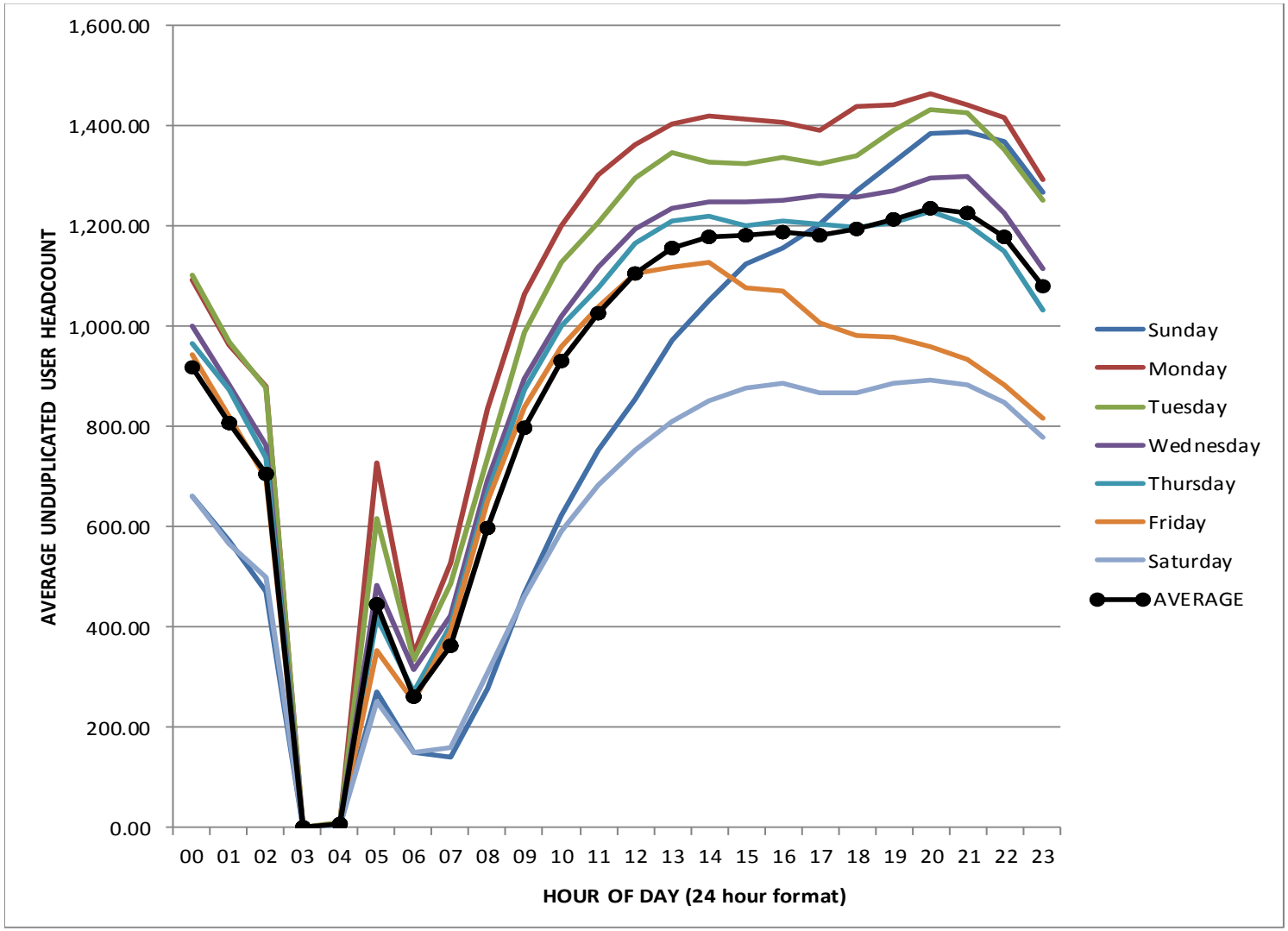
The Online Student Orientation contains general information, technical recommendations, and step-by-step instructions for online learners at Wake Tech. In the orientation, students may practice taking a quiz, submitting an assignment, posting to the discussion board, and sending an e-mail message from within the Blackboard learning management system. Since May 2004, the Online Student Orientation has been available online in Blackboard for anyone interested in taking an online course at Wake Tech.

In Fall 2013, students in BUS 115-1401, BUS 217-0001, and BUS 217-4101 courses were given an assignment to complete Wake Tech's online student orientation in Blackboard and to respond to six short-answer discussion board questions about the orientation. Seventy-four students answered the survey questions, forty-nine of whom were enrolled in an online course. A majority of the students found the directions for using Blackboard most useful. Eighteen experienced online students did not find the orientation useful. Twelve students said that it was useful as a refresher. Forty-two students reported that learning how to use Blackboard would make them more successful in online courses. Sixty-two would recommend the orientation to other students. Most of the students were able to complete the orientation within 15-40 minutes.

Focus Groups and College-wide Survey

As part of the SAIL III process, the QEP Steering Committee conducted two focus groups and a survey. One focus group consisted of personnel from Student Services and one focus group consisted of faculty members. An additional survey on all three SAIL II proposals was conducted college wide. The results of those focus groups are outlined in Appendix D.

Appendix F Learning Management System User Statistics



Average number of users by day of week and hour of day
(1/1/14 to 3/13/14)

Appendix G Sample Course Quality Rubric

Note: Double-click the document below to view the entire rubric.

Wake Technical Community College E-Learning Quality Standards Rubric

COURSE INFORMATION

Faculty:	"[Faculty's Name]"
Course:	"[Course Title]"
Description:	"[Course Description from CCL]"

REVIEW TEAM

Names:	"[Reviewer's Name]"
	"[Reviewer's Name]"
	"[Reviewer's Name]"
Review Date:	4/15/2014

RUBRIC

For the purpose of this rubric, we will employ the following scale:

- Non-Existent: Not found in course, but should be, based on course design and/or content.
- Needs Improvement: Some evidence of this criterion, but it needs to be presented more clearly or better developed.
- Meets: Evidence of this criterion is clear and appropriate for this course. More could be added, but course meets this standard.
- N/A: Not applicable based on course design and/or content.
- N/O: Not observed within the course.

To achieve a Wake Technical Community College E-Learning Quality Seal for an individual course, all essential standards and 90% of recommended standards must be met.

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Appendix H Phase II QEP Teams

College Readiness Team		
Team Member	**Position**	**Area Represented**
Jason Whitehead	Instructor	Chemistry
Emily Moore	Instructor	Pre-curriculum
DeeDee Allen	Associate Professor	Chemistry
Scott Johnson	Instructor	Biology
Mary Pearce	Associate Professor	Mathematics
Carrie Bartek	Facilitator	Institutional Effectiveness
Laura Kalbaugh	Dean	Academic Success and Transition Resources
EPIC Team		
Diane Albahrawy	Instructor	Business Administration
John Bakken	Associate Dean	Arts and Sciences
Carrie Bartek	Facilitator	Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, and Research
Denise Barton	Professor	Business Administration
Katherine Bennett	Instructional Technologist	e-Learning Support
Cindy Booth-Neighbors	Associate Professor	English
Tracy Cheatham	Instructor	Natural Sciences – Chemistry
Alison Consol	Associate Professor/Dept.H	Advertising & Graphic Design/Web Technologies
Karen Fussell	Instructor	Pre-curriculum Math
Robert Grove	AVP	Creativity, Sustainability and College Improvement
Joe Haigler	Department Head	Humanities
Cheryl Keeton	Dean	Math and Science
Walter Martin	Dean	Business Technologies/Public Services
Rebecca Neagle	Dean	Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences
Diana Osborne	Department Head	e-Learning Support
Serena Reavis	e-Learning Technologist	e-Learning Support
Eileen Sweeney	Instructor	English
Marilyn Terrill	Department Head	Business Administration
Jeralyn Valdillez	Department Head	English
Tammi Wilcox	e-Learning Technician	e-Learning Support
Dave Wilhelm	Associate Professor	Business Administration
Elizabeth Williams	Office Assistant	Individualized Learning Center
Information Literacy Team		
Carrie Bartek	Facilitator	Institutional Effectiveness
Ken Beasley	Instructor	Pre-curriculum and ILC
Jackie Case	Dean	Library Services
Suvanida Duangudom	Campus Librarian	Library Services
Jennifer Evarts	Instructor	English
Melanie Gnau	Evening Librarian	Library Services
Patricia Godin	Dean	Applied Engineering & Technologies
Lesley Graybeal	Instructor	English
Tonya Greene	Pre-Curriculum Faculty	Pre-curriculum
Barry Malone	Instructor	History
Deborah Maness	Instructor	Pre-curriculum
Sharon McMillian	Department Head	ILC
Kim Metera	Instructor	Biology
Julia Mielish	Instruction Librarian	Library Services
Megan Rudolph	Librarian	Library Services
Megan Rudolph	Campus Librarian	Library Services
Amanda Sinodis	Faculty	ILC
Jackie Swanik	Associate Department Head	Natural Sciences
Jenifer Wolkowski	Instructor	English

Appendix I QEP Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Rater name:

Position:

Department/College:

Rubric Number: (internal use)

QEP Criteria [Example]								
Code	**QEP Criteria**	**Unacceptable - 1**	**Weak – 2**	**Acceptable - 3**	**Exceptional - 4**	**College Readiness Score**	**EPIC (Online Teaching and Learning) Score**	**Fishing (Information Literacy) Score**
1A	An institutional process	No evidence provided of process used for developing QEP topic, etc. or a top-down approach used and only narrow involvement of university, staff and faculty	A core group of institutional representatives develop topic and plan. Some attempt is made to tie topic/plan to prior institutional planning	Topic is directly related to prior institutional planning which had involved a broad-based effort. Plan then developed by key individuals/groups on campus.	Plan is directly related to institutional planning efforts. Topic selection involved process that generated information and specific ideas from a wide range of constituents. Selection of topic determined by representative process that considered institutional needs and viability of plan			

Impact Criteria

The mission of Wake Technical Community College is to improve and enrich lives by meeting the lifelong education, training, and workforce development needs of the communities it serves; to promote individual success in the workplace and in higher education; and to increase entrepreneurship as well as cultural, social, and economic development.

Based on your review of the three proposals and in light of the college's mission and your own experience in the North Carolina Community College system, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with statements about the college-wide impact of the proposals.

Code	Impact Criteria	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Subscore
College Readiness Suite						
The College Readiness Suite is designed to improve student learning and completion through student-centered tools designed to help them assess and remediate deficits in college readiness in seven areas: math, basic technology, placement test preparation, English and reading, academic behavior, college knowledge, and science.						
7A	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student learning at the college**					
7B	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success (completion of courses, completion of programs) at the college**					
7C	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success in the workplace**					
7D	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success at a four-year institution**					
					College Readiness Subtotal	0

Code	Impact Criteria	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Subscore
EPIC (Online Teaching and Learning)						
EPIC focuses on increasing student learning and completion of online courses through an interactive E-Learning Introduction (ELI) Student Orientation Module that focuses on Expectation Management, Basic Computer Literacy, and Blackboard Boot Camp, as well as a two-year Online Instructor Certification Program for faculty that will provide best practices training in instructional design, accessibility, and advanced online teach pedagogy.						
7A	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student learning at the college**					
7B	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success (completion of courses, completion of programs) at the college**					
7C	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success in the workplace**					
7D	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success at a four-year institution**					
					EPIC Subtotal	0

Code	Impact Criteria	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Subscore
Fishing for Information (Information Literacy						
Fishing for Information focuses on increasing student learning, course performance, and employability skills by improving their ability to find, evaluate, and use appropriate information for any projects they encounter academically or in the workforce						
7A	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student learning at the college**					
7B	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success (completion of courses, completion of programs) at the college**					
7C	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success in the workplace**					
7D	**This proposal is a top priority for improving student success at a four-year institution**					
					Fishing Subtotal	0

Analysis and Ranking

Proposal	QEP Criteria Score	Impact Score	SUM
College Readiness Score	0	0	0
EPIC (Online Teaching and Learning) Score	0	0	0
Fishing (Information Literacy) Score	0	0	0

Proposal	Overall Ranking Based on Rating Scores (Assign a 1, 2, or 3 to each proposal)
College Readiness Score	
EPIC (Online Teaching and Learning) Score	
Fishing (Information Literacy) Score	

Please provide qualitative comments and suggestions here:

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