Plan Overview:

SGSC’s QEP focuses on infusing undergraduate research into the curriculum and culture of the college. Because student engagement in research is considered to be a powerful active learning pedagogical tool, because SGSC has only recently in her history offered baccalaureate degrees with an inherent emphasis on research, and because the college had already engaged in some limited undergraduate research at the associate level established in 2013 through ties to the National Council for Undergraduate Research and continued through annual informal SGSC undergraduate research symposia, the college community readily agreed upon the current QEP topic in open forums, focus groups, and faculty meetings. Students enrolled in both bachelor’s degree programs and in several associate’s degree core curriculum general education courses will be involved.

The purpose of the QEP, as well as its emphasis on active student engagement, can be seen in the nine student learning outcomes to be assessed: (1) identify ethical research practices, (2) generate answerable research questions, (3) analyze prior research, (4) develop a hypothesis from a research question, (5) construct a research plan, (6) collect relevant data, (7) analyze relevant data, (8) draw appropriate conclusions based on analysis, (9) present research. While there will be some differences in bachelor’s and associate’s level research expectations and outcomes assessment, all affected students will be engaged in meeting the nine QEP outcomes.

Implementation Timeline:

The program began in year one (AY 2015-2016) with the BSN program to establish baselines and to validate methods and instruments. Year two will continue with the BSN while applying lessons learned from year one. Years three and four will include the BS in Biological Sciences. By year five, a modified version of the QEP will officially bring in select associate’s level courses.

The QEP Implementation Committee is in place, with Dr. Rob Page serving as chairperson. The committee membership includes Dr. Frank Holiwski, Dr. Scott Thigpen, Ms. Jacqueline Vickers, Ms. Bobby Jean Musgrove and Dr. Kimberly Hunt. Dr. Frank Holiwski will serve as QEP Coordinator. Professional development for all faculty involved in the QEP is ongoing as each academic program becomes involved.

Institutional Support:

SGSC supports the implementation of the QEP through a five-year budget commitment to cover travel, professional development, marketing, professional society membership, and support for student participation in research conferences, as well as through personnel time devoted to the plan and non-personnel resources already in place (such as library and technology resources). Some personnel costs will be budgeted for a library researcher and for the Faculty Coordinator and Electronic Journal Coordinator release time.

Budget:

The budget includes the items identified above in institutional support and amounts to an annual commitment of $80,000 for each of the five years of the plan.