

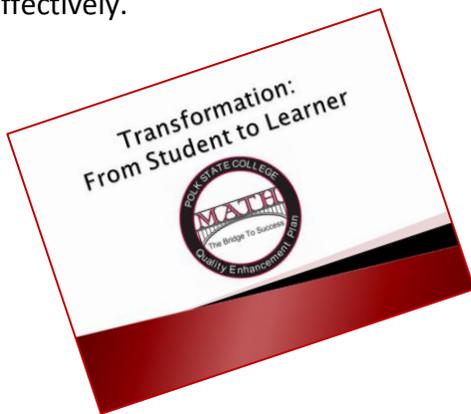
Math: The Bridge to Success

Polk State College's Quality Enhancement Plan

April 2015 Newsletter

Professional Development Day Presentations

The QEP Professional Development Day presentations focused on three ways to teach more effectively.



**Teach learning-
to-learn skills
along with
content**

In her book, *Developing Learner-Centered Teaching: A Practical Guide for Faculty*, Dr. Phyllis Blumberg explains, “Students need to acquire further learning-to-learn skills as they progress through college. Unfortunately, many instructors either assume their students already have these skills or do not take the time to teach them” (2009, p. 132).

Based on Dr. Blumberg’s comments and their own experiences in the classroom, faculty in one of the QEP communities of practice developed a presentation specifically addressing those learning-to-learn skills. Members of the community of practice are Megan Cavanah, Nerissa Felder, Steve Frye, Bonny Hardesty, Susan Hiatt, Richard Leedy, Mike Malone, Penny Morris, and Carolyn Orr. The group consulted with Lynda Wolverton for her expertise in reading and self-regulation.



Penny Morris and Richard Leedy presented Transformation: From Student to Learner which focused on metacognition and how to incorporate learning-to-learn skills into the curriculum.

“...metacognition does not necessarily develop on its own ... instructors can play a critical role in helping students develop the metacognitive skills that they need to succeed in college: assessing the task at hand, evaluating one’s own strengths and weaknesses, planning, monitoring performance along the way, and reflecting on one’s overall success” (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010, p. 216).



Reading with comprehension, organizing skills, classifying skills, and self-assessing skills were also discussed in the presentation.



Professional Development Day workshop participants interactively work on categorizing and classifying skills.

Some Common Misconceptions Students Have About Learning

(Adapted from Schommer, 1990)

Misconception:	Possible result that could negatively affect learning:
Knowledge is absolute with no gray areas.	Having difficulty in courses where there aren’t decisive explanations. Expecting the professor to give them an answer. Not being open to exploring new ideas in conflict with preconceived ideas.
Knowledge is composed of unrelated facts.	Trying to memorize facts rather than understand concepts. Trying to keep facts separate rather than linking one fact to another.
Knowledge is external and transmitted from an authority.	Thinking the instructor is responsible for the student’s learning. Regarding themselves as passive in the learning process. Blaming the professor if the student isn’t doing well.
Learning happens quickly or not at all.	Unwilling to stick to a task or try a different approach. Giving up easily.
The ability to learn is fixed at birth.	Unwilling to make an effort to learn in an area they consider themselves “not good at.”

Ambrose, S., Bridges, M., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M., & Norman, M. (2010). Introduction: Bridging learning research and teaching practice. In *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching* (p. 336). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schommer, M. (1990). Effects of beliefs about the nature of knowledge on comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82, 498-504.



Make connections with students, advising, the TLCC, other faculty, and other areas of the College



Lorne Fairbairn and Richard Decker explain how to help students create connections with the instructor, peers, support services, and the college community. By helping students to create connections, we are also helping to increase the likelihood that the students will persist and graduate.

"I've become aware of the benefits of student-to-student interaction in addition to instructor-to-student interaction." – QEP Participant



Jessica James shares information about how to make a connection with the college community.

Create a supportive learning environment to promote academic tenacity.



Engage students in the learning process

One of the QEP communities of practice presented on the importance of engagement, sharing several ways to actively engage students. Members of the community of practice include Roger Aleman, Stephen Drier, Joyce Lee, Paul Pletcher, Cynthia Scofield, Gregory Toole, and Mostafa Zamani.



Professional Development Day participants are engaged with a puzzle.

“...the more actively engaged students are, the more likely they are to learn and to attain their academic goals” (Young, 2010, p. 15).

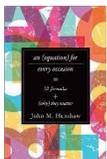


Steve Drier points out that there is a difference between participating and really being engaged.

“The QEP has motivated me to try to design lessons that are engaging, meaningful, and fun.” – QEP Participant

Young, Mark R. (2010). The art and science of fostering engaged learning. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, 14, 1-18.

4-1-1 Math-Related Book



An Equation for Every Occasion: Fifty-Two Formulas and Why They Matter

By: John M. Henshaw

Polk State College is committed to and encourages equal opportunity/equity/access for its programs, services, and activities.