Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary

"Learning By Doing"

Britt Canada, Dean of Institutional Research and Effectiveness/SACSCOC Liaison
bcanada@wtc.edu

Executive Summary

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has established six core objectives (Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility) for Texas community colleges. Western Texas College (WTC) is required to assess its graduates in each of these areas. Through analysis of instructor input, student feedback, institutional data, and curriculum requirements, Western Texas College identified the need to improve the teamwork skills of our students. Various strategies will be used to enhance the learning environment, such as increasing the use of Project Based Learning (PBL) and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) concepts into the curriculum.

Implementation will begin with professional development. The initial emphasis will be placed on courses in the Math program. Math was chosen because of its importance to student success. Many students come to the institution needing developmental math. Although the success rate in developmental Math at WTC is higher than the state average, it can be improved. Additionally, Math is a "gatekeeper" subject because students need to complete Math requirements to graduate.

This project is designed to be scalable. While the initial emphasis focuses on the Math program, professional development will be offered to instructors in all disciplines. By providing professional development for everyone, the institution will provide opportunities for all instructors to implement AVID and PBL concepts in the curriculum. Both of these strategies emphasize teamwork. Together, the use of AVID and PBL strategies will increase student interaction in the classroom which will lead to an increase in Teamwork skills across the curriculum. The increase in Teamwork skills will help the institution meet the core objectives as identified by THECB.