

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GPS – Set Goals, Define Purpose, Achieve Success Chipola College

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Chipola Junior College was established in 1947, and in 2003 became Chipola College when it was approved to offer baccalaureate degree programs that address documented workforce needs. With an annual headcount enrollment of nearly 3000 students, Chipola is the third smallest state college in Florida. The college's service area is comprised of five rural counties in the Florida Panhandle.

Chipola's QEP, *GPS - Set Goals, Define Purpose, Achieve Success*, was developed over a two-year period in response to assessment results and with broad input from college constituencies, including students, faculty, staff, and trustees. Analyses of multiple institutional effectiveness measures revealed the need to help students develop skills for establishing career goals and steps to achieve those goals. For example, on the fall 2016 Entering Student Survey, 100% of respondents indicated "yes" or "maybe" when asked if they needed help identifying a college major or career. Other institutional data showed that students were much more likely to graduate if they had identified a major before beginning their second semester.

After analyzing institutional data, feedback from constituencies, and best practices cited in literature, Chipola College identified the goal of its QEP: *To Enable Students to Make Informed Decisions Regarding Their Career Goals and Related Educational Pathways*. To achieve its goal, the college developed and implemented a two-credit course, SLS 1401, Career and Life Planning, that first-time in college, A.A. degree-seeking students will take during their initial semester of enrollment. Through self-assessments and career exploratory assignments, students will attain the following outcomes: (1) Students will assess their personal skills, interests, and values related to career options. (2) Students will research the viability of career options related to the results of their self-assessments. (3) Students will establish career goals. (4) Students will formulate personal educational plans related to their career goals.

The college anticipates a decrease in the number of students who are undecided about their college majors once they have completing the Career and Life Planning course. Institutional data such as numbers of students declaring or changing majors, along with results of student assignment and reflection evaluations, will provide the formative and summative evaluation data for the overall comprehensive assessment of the QEP. Resource allocations and well-established assessment processes will ensure effective evaluation and improvement strategies as the course becomes fully embedded in the institution.

By enabling students to make informed decisions regarding their career goals and educational pathways, the QEP will help ensure that Chipola College effectively carries out its mission of providing access to quality learning opportunities toward degrees and certificates and facilitating the economic, social, and cultural development of the college's service area.