

Somerset Community College's Rural Educator Academy (REA) Team Presents:

# Assessing Efficiency & Effectiveness of Student Support Initiatives



## OUR JOURNEY OUR "WHY", GOALS, CHALLENGES, WINS & PROGRESS

### ENSURING EQUITY IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION

At Somerset Community College (SCC), we've had the opportunity to take a closer look at the different roles and backgrounds of our REA Team. This has helped us identify the obstacles our students face when striving for academic success. We decided to focus on developing a capstone project that would streamline our resource allocation and determine which initiatives were most effective in addressing these obstacles. The end result was a transparent and consistent system for establishing, evaluating, and improving student success initiatives.

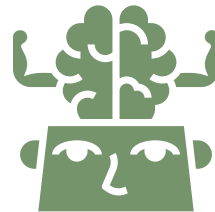
Our primary objective is to support student retention and success by ensuring that resources, both fiscal and otherwise, are being distributed and utilized to their maximum benefit.



## PROJECT GOALS



**Increase Retention & Impact of Resource Allocation**



**Embed Growth Mindset within Faculty & Staff Intervention Toolkit**



**Develop Process That Prioritizes Equity in Resource Allocation**



To achieve these goals, our cohort has agreed to focus on increasing the effectiveness of our student support initiatives through an assessment process that relays the needs for funds, staffing, and resources and their effective employment while identifying areas of strength and those that need improvement.





# Assessing Efficiency & Effectiveness of Student Support Initiatives

## REA Team Members

### Facilitator

**Catherine Tackett**  
QEP Director

### Faculty

**Michael Bloominburg**  
Associate Professor

**Scott McClendon**  
Associate Professor

### Staff

**Amanda Vanhook**  
Ready to Work Coordinator

**Sandra Standish**  
RAISE Director

**Meghan Hacker**  
Student Affairs Assistant- Financial Aid/Records

### Leaders

**Elaine Wilson**  
Director of Cultural Diversity

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**"We are only as successful as our most disproportionately impacted students."**  
COLLEGE STAFF MEMBER

## Capstone Project Process

1. Research Best Practices and Review Support Literature.
2. Develop Evaluation Metrics Based on College and Student Needs.
3. Develop a Process for the Implementation of an Assessment Tool.
4. Present to Management and Leadership Teams.
5. Implement Tool and Assess Effectiveness.

## REA Core Competencies Applied

- Collaborate with staff and faculty to outreach to marginalized groups in the local community.
- Design and facilitate ways to incorporate the rural student experience into the syllabus/lesson plan to utilize the voices of rural and non-rural students to identify and create ways to increase rural student success.
- Structure a process that validates the rural Appalachian student experience, increasing the awareness and utilization of student support services in a timely fashion to increase rural Appalachian student success.



## Progress

- Built relationships with colleagues at other colleges in the system.
- Identified multiple resources that need broader awareness/advertising.
- Gained more empathy for students and their struggles.
- Learned how projects could go from concept to fruition in a short period of time.

## Challenges Along the Way

In March 2023, we faced a major challenge. We were already down one team member and lost another with significant capstone assignments. Large projects were occurring statewide, and other colleagues were already assigned to those projects being completed by the end of Spring. We had to regroup.

One of the biggest challenges with student support initiatives is that they often try to address the exact needs of other programs and need a uniform process to evaluate results. By developing a standardized assessment process, we can ensure that our initiatives are assessed consistently and transparently, ultimately leading to better student outcomes. This process will also help identify areas where we can improve and streamline our efforts, leading to more effective use of resources and a better overall experience for our students.

## Wins Along the Way & Lessons Learned

- **Sharing Results with College** - Results of the capstone progress were shared at the Cabinet, Department Chair, Staff, Adjunct, and SGA meetings.
- **Implementation Plan Complete** - for fall semester, completed presentations and activities will be offered at Fall in-service.
- **Training Scheduled** for the fall semester.
- **Presentation Prepared** for CCA Conference.
- **Evaluation Metrics Established.**

