

# SOUTH GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Quality Enhancement Plan

***Ready, Set, J.E.T.!***

(Jobs, Education, Technical Training)



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# ***Ready, Set, J.E.T.!***

(Jobs, Education, Technical Training)

South Georgia Technical College  
Quality Enhancement Plan  
(In progress)

Prepared for  
The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SGTC's Quality Enhancement Plan focuses on student success to improve retention and graduation rates while decreasing withdrawals by teaching two important soft skills: how to set S.M.A.R.T Goals and effective communication.

The QEP is aligned with SGTC's mission of workforce development and its strategic plan. The SGTC QEP, Ready, Set, J.E.T.! (Jobs, Education, and Training) defines the following outcomes:

- Student Success Outcome #1 – The QEP will decrease unofficial and official withdrawals by 0.5% each year of the QEP by a total of 2.5% overall for students.
- Student Success Outcome #2 – The QEP will increase student retention rate by 1% each year of the QEP for a total of 5% overall
- Student Success Outcome #3 –The QEP will increase completion of Technical Certificates of Credit (TCCs), diplomas, and degrees by 1% each year of the QEP for a 5% increase overall.

Over the next five years, SGTC will transform communication and goal setting for students through the Blackboard Learning Management System, where students will complete a QEP class with two focused modules on S.M.A.R.T goal setting and effective communication. All students will be enrolled in and encouraged to complete both modules. Workshops, signage, and student activities related to goal setting and effective communication will reinforce the QEP class in Blackboard.

Student success will increase through the development and training of faculty in advisement best practices to increase retention and completion rates for students. The QEP was developed with broad-based support from faculty, students, staff and the QEP committee, in alignment with stakeholder goals and input.

The committee will assess data to evaluate the impact of the QEP on official, and unofficial withdrawals, retention, and graduation rates. Overall, SGTC's QEP aims to increase student success by providing soft skills to benefit students in the classroom and the workforce.

In keeping with more than 75 years of providing quality education to students from southwest Georgia and beyond, South Georgia Technical College remains committed to setting students up for success. The skills needed to compete and succeed in today's workforce go beyond hands-on or traditional classroom instruction.

## BACKGROUND

South Georgia Technical College's long rich history dates to before World War I. Prior to being used as a technical institute, the land on which SGTC now stands was an Air Force training base during both World Wars. Charles Lindberg purchased his first airplane, The Spirit of Saint Lewis, from Souther Field in Americus, Georgia, in 1923 and learned to fly at is what now South Georgia Technical College. South Georgia Technical College was once named South Georgia Trade and Vocational school when it opened in 1948 as the second technical vocational school in the state of Georgia. 75 students were enrolled in six programs (diesel mechanics, aircraft and aircraft engine mechanics, auto mechanics, radio and television repair, cabinet making and upholstery refinishing) that took six to twelve months to complete. The aviation and diesel programs are still active.

The "Trade School" moniker was dropped in 1963 when the school became South Georgia Technical and Vocational School. The name changed again in 1988 to South Georgia Technical Institute when the Department of Technical and Adult Education was created by a legislative act and the school came under the governance of the new department. South Georgia Tech opened a satellite campus in Cordele in July 1990. On November 2, 2000, the name was once again changed to South Georgia Technical College after then-Governor Roy Barnes passed his education reform bill.



Under the umbrella of the Technical College System of Georgia, SGTC serves a seven-county area (Sumter, Crisp, Schley, Macon, Marion, Webster, and Taylor) and offers certificate, diploma, and degree programs. Some of the programs offered at SGTC include healthcare and personal services, business, and industrial and transportation technologies. Additionally, adult education literacy classes are offered in the seven-county service area.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

According to the South Georgia Technical College (2016), the mission statement of South Georgia Technical College defines its purpose and primary objectives:

As a member of the Technical College System of Georgia and a residential institution of higher education, it is the mission of South Georgia Technical College to prepare individuals for success in the workforce by providing accessible, high-quality associate of applied science degrees, diplomas, technical certificates of credit, and non-credit programs and services that support the needs of citizens, businesses, and industries within our service delivery area in Southwest Georgia.

To realize the distinctiveness of its mission, South Georgia Technical College is committed to:

Providing a broad range of campus based and online instructional credit courses that lead to an associate of applied science degree, diploma, or technical certificate of credit as well as non-credit course offerings and services which support workforce development

- Supporting learner success through quality student services
- Promoting economic development through partnerships with business, industry, government and local communities
- Providing accessible educational facilities and state-of-the-art equipment and technology
- Providing a qualified faculty and staff
- Providing administrative support through analysis, planning and budgeting

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Goal 1: Provide Student Access and Promote Student Success at All Levels**

South Georgia Technical College seeks to train and retrain a highly competitive workforce by providing resources to meet the expectations of citizens and businesses in our service area.

**Goal 2: Build Georgia's Workforce for Economic Vitality**

South Georgia Technical College will facilitate economic development for our service delivery area by providing Quick Start services, Work Ready certification, customized services for business and industry, and continuing education.

**Goal 3: Improve the Visibility, Recognized Value, and Support of Technical Education, Adult Education, and Workforce Training in Our Service Area.**

South Georgia Technical College will contribute to the economic prosperity, quality of life and "education culture" of our service delivery area through the availability of continuing education, community involvement, and public awareness of the benefits of technical and adult education.

**Goal 4: Enhance South Georgia Tech's Organizational Development and Internal Workforce.**

South Georgia Technical College seeks to meet the expectations of citizens and businesses in our service area for quality technical education, adult literacy, and economic development programs with dedicated, qualified employees.

**Goal 5: Enhance Student Learning and Achievement**

South Georgia Technical College will provide quality instruction and services to prepare SGTC graduates to be productive and dependable employees in their chosen profession.

(South Georgia Technical College, 2016)







## INTRODUCTION

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) is implementing a Quality Enhancement Plan for the next five years that will align with the mission of the college which is workforce development. The plan will also include the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The QEP topic that was selected is also deep rooted in institutional planning related to data from IE reports, minutes, and analysis. It involves broad-based effort from a variety of key individuals and groups on campus, as well as stakeholders like advisory board members, industry partners and students. It will focus on student success in the areas of increasing retention, and graduation rates of Technical Certificates of Credit (TCC), diplomas and degrees while decreasing official and unofficial withdrawal rates. The institution hopes to achieve this by strengthening two widely identified core soft skills, communicating effectively and setting S.M.A.R.T goals. This topic was identified by broad based support and was given the theme of Ready, Set, J.E.T (Jobs, Education, Training) to align with the school's aviation history. The following pages of this QEP report will:

Describe the process used to develop the QEP

Justify the focus on SMART goals and Effective Communication

Describe the identified student success outcomes

Describe specific actions to be taken

Describe the organizational structure, resources, and timeline for the plan



**READY • SET • J.E.T.!**

**SGTC Q.E.P.**

**J** **OB**  
**E** **DU**  
**T** **RA**

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## PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP THE QEP

Evidence of the involvement of all appropriate campus constituencies (providing support for compliance with CS 3.3.2 “includes a broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development...of the QEP”)

Evidence of a clearly defined topic is directly related to prior institutional planning which had involved a broad-based effort. Plans were then developed by key individuals and/or groups on campus.

## TOPIC DEVELOPMENT

SGTC utilized a holistic perspective and broad-based support to choose the QEP topic. The leadership team considered the potential impact the QEP would have on student success and how faculty and staff could contribute to student success. A faculty member/ program advisor was selected as the QEP Director and led the process with the assistance of the Director of Institutional Effectiveness/SACSCOC Liaison to ensure the process was connected to the different areas of the college that contribute to student success.

Additionally, it was essential that the topic could be supported by research. The selection and development process led to a topic with a foundation of retention to support student success. The selection process included background information about the QEP’s purpose and evaluation criteria for selecting a topic. Data for the QEP topic was gathered from information and assessment data provided by student success teams: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Program Advisory Committees. Student representatives were also involved in the topic selection.

SGTC began laying the foundation for the QEP in the fall of 2023. Katrice Martin, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Grants Coordinator/SACSCOC Liaison, sent invitations to SGTC faculty and staff to serve on the QEP committee (Appendix A). This invitation included a brief overview of the necessity of developing the QEP beyond SACSCOC accreditation, the QEP process, and the commitment to the committee. The committee convened on August 29, 2023. There were a variety of faculty/program advisors and staff who were invited to join the committee. Staff from Financial Aid, Admissions, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs, as well as students, were all specifically selected to join the committee since this was an institutional initiative. The committee did undergo some changes as some people left the institution through other opportunities or retirement.

*2 See Appendix A for email invite and a list of faculty and staff that made up our committee.*

*3 SACS Core Requirement 2.12*



During this initial meeting, Ms. Martin discussed the QEP process in more detail and asked the committee to consider the pressing issues impacting SGTC students. This committee was comprised of various members of SGTC faculty and staff who interacted with students at different points in their college experience. The members attending represented both the Americus and Cordele campuses. The committee members that accepted the invitation to join included 10 instructors (majority of the committee), the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the Registrar, Financial Aid Director, an Administrative Dean, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, the Director of Administrative Services, Retention Specialist, Librarian, Administrative Assistant for Basic Law Enforcement who is also a student at the college, and the Student Support and Accessibility Services Coordinator. The group provided a diverse group that represented the different departments that contributed to student success. This group would also ensure the goal of the QEP was student success. Below is a chart of the QEP committee members to date:

<b>SGTC QEP COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>	
Teresa McCook	QEP Director/ Criminal Justice Faculty and Program Advisor
Katrice Martin	Director IE, Grants Coordinator and Dean of General Education
Allyson King	Librarian
Jennifer Robinson	Student Support and Accessibility Services Coordinator
Joshua Curtin	Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs
Brandon Gross	Horticulture Faculty and Program Advisor/ Americus
Sherri Bass	Medical Assisting Faculty and Program Advisor/ Americus
Rose Leggett	Math Instructor
Wanda Bishop	Criminal Justice Faculty and Program Advisor/ Crisp County Campus
Tammy Hamilton	Accounting Faculty and Program Advisor/ Crisp County Campus
Jeff Shepard	Electrical Construction Faculty and Program Advisor/ Crisp County Campus
Mary Cross	Marketing Faculty and Program Advisor/ Americus Campus
Dorothea McKenzie	Cosmetology Faculty and Program Advisor/ Americus Campus
Ludwig Watzlowick	Culinary Arts Faculty and Program Advisor/ Americus
Brett Murray	Academic Affairs Dean/ QEP Co- Director
Danyel Tobias	Administrative Services Director
Kari Bodrey	Registrar
Kelly Everette	Financial Aid Director
Melissa Grantham	Administrative Assistant Basic Law Enforcement/ Student of SGTC

During the initial meeting August of 2023, Ms. Martin explained the QEP requirement and general parameters. It was emphasized that the group was not seeking a topic merely to fulfill a requirement, but on a focused course of action that would benefit students.

During QEP meetings, SGTC faculty and staff discussed some of the difficulties students faced, concluding that many students are ill-prepared to navigate college. The committee discussed issues students faced through an academic and student affairs lens; in addition to academic deficits, college students also struggle to navigate ancillary departments. As one of two technical colleges that offer housing, the QEP committee agreed that it was beneficial to retain the students who chose to complete their college experience at SGTC. This initial meeting was a brainstorming session to identify ways to retain students, address academics, and prepare students for the workforce.

A variety of suggested topics were discussed during the first meeting. These were selected from recurring discussion that presented themselves in surveys, and meetings from stakeholders with various relationships to the college such as: College leadership, program advisory committees, high school administrators, industry partners, parents, staff, faculty, and students. The topics from this session are listed below:

#### **QEP Possible Topic Suggestions:**

- **Soft skills-** Through discussion, the committee recognized students lacked the soft skills to be successful in college and as an employee. Katrice Martin also included data from needs assessment meetings with community partners; secondary school personnel and employers also agreed that soft skills are severely lacking. Soft skills can include communication, adaptability, problem-solving, time management, and creativity.
- **Advisement-** The committee suggested that better advisement can help improve student retention. However, instructors, who are assigned as advisors in their program areas, were concerned about the time commitment of advising and teaching. Instructors on the committee reported that they traditionally advise their students by utilizing the curriculum sheet as a guide to registration, adjusting when students failed classes, did not return for the semester, or changed programs.
- **Job skills-** As a technical college, workforce development is key to SGTC's goals and strategic plan. After discussing the necessary job skills students would need to be successful, the committee concluded the job skills impacted by this plan would be mostly soft skills.
- **Work ethics-** SGTC utilizes Work ethics grades to prepare students for the expectations of an employer. There are ten criteria (attendance, character, teamwork, appearance, attitude, productivity, organizational skills, communication, cooperation, and respect) that students are graded on. The grades range from 0-3 with 0 being "not present" and 3 "exceeding the expectation". The committee agreed that the work ethics criteria related to both job skills and soft skills.
- **TCC's-** Technical Certificates of Credit are earned by students as they progress through their program. The committee discussed awarding TCCs as a motivator for students to continue their program of instruction. Further, earning a TCC can allow some students to enter the workforce before the completion of a degree or diploma. The committee agreed that incorporating TCCs into the QEP could support motivation, retention, and workforce development.
- **Communication-** Communication is a soft skill that the committee believes directly impedes student success. Students often lack the communication skills necessary to navigate college and the workforce. Even though communication could be included in soft skills, the committee chose communication to be one of the soft skills the QEP focused on.

Discussions relating to the necessary job skills students would need to be successful, the committee concluded the job skills students most shared were among the soft skills. These soft skills, specifically communication skills, were issues both faculty and staff experienced when working with students. Instructors on the committee pointed out that during advisory board meetings, community partners inquired about how soft skills were incorporated into the curriculum. The grading structure includes a work ethic grade, hence, there was discussion on what soft skills were part of the work ethic criteria. Job skills varied from program to program, and the group believed it would provide more broad coverage to focus on soft skills rather than overall job skills.



There was an agreement that advisement contributed to student success, but that advisement alone did not address the pressing concern of soft skills. The Registrar shared frustration that some program advisors needed help with a more structured advisement process to ensure students earn one or more Technical Certificates of Credit (TCCs) from their programs.

The lack of effective communication skills among new students garnered a lot of feedback from the group. The group agreed that ineffective communication was at the root of many of the barriers students face. This sentiment has been echoed from industry partners who employed SGTC's students, as well as from advisory board members who also provided internship opportunities for students.

All of the topics discussed during this first meeting were pertinent to improving student success at SGTC. The discussions centered on selecting a topic that would benefit more students in a positive way while also staying true to the mission of the college, which is workforce development.

A recommendation was made by the committee to prepare and distribute a survey to gather input from faculty and staff. The committee believed a campus-wide email would increase motivation for supporting the QEP topic. The topics were condensed into the most relevant ones that had the most to gain for the students and the institution.

## TOPIC SELECTION

Evidence of topic that is creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student success (providing for compliance with CR 2.12 "focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning")

### Faculty and staff survey

On September 13, 2023, a survey was sent out to faculty and staff for their input on the QEP topic. The survey question is listed below:

#### *Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Input Survey*

The QEP committee is looking for feedback on what instructors would like to see as the next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) here at SGTC for the next 5 years. Please respond to this survey, as this would affect how you will implement the new QEP into your courses.

#### Question Title

\* 1. What QEP topic would you like to see for the next 5 years implemented into instruction throughout your courses.

- **Holistic Advisement:** This would involve a more holistic approach (a start to finish process of the whole student) to the advisement process. This would include looking at a Sustained, Strategic, Integrated, Proactive, Personalized approach. Advisors would be trained on how to complete this process.
- **Job Skills/Career Skills/Soft Skills/ Power Skills etc.:** It doesn't matter what you call them, instructors would look at ways integrate these skills to prepare a marketable and hireable workforce for the future. Some of the skills that we are referring to would include: Communication, Customer Service, Leadership, Collaboration, Problem Solving, Personal Learning & Mastery, Achievement Focus, and Cultural and Social Intelligence.
- **Technical Certificate of Credits or TCC's:** This topic would allow for students to learn about and apply for additional TCC's and what they are for and how they would use them after graduation.
- **Other** (please specify)

From the survey responses, soft skills overwhelmingly received the most responses.

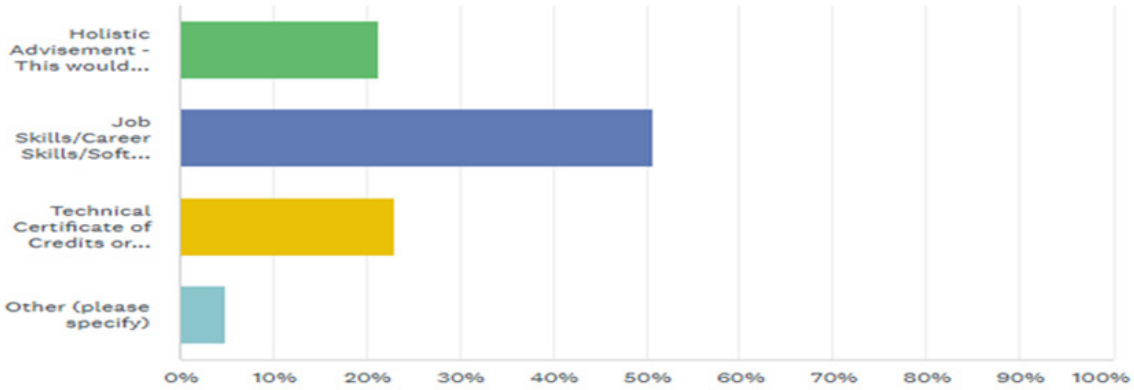
Out of 58 respondents, 21.31% picked holistic advisement, 50.82% selected Job Skills/ Career Skills/ Soft Skills/ Power Skills, 22.95% selected Technical Certificates of Credit or TCCs and 4.92% selected another topic.

*See Appendix for survey results and meeting minutes.*



# What QEP topic would you like to see for the next 5 years implemented into instruction throughout your courses.

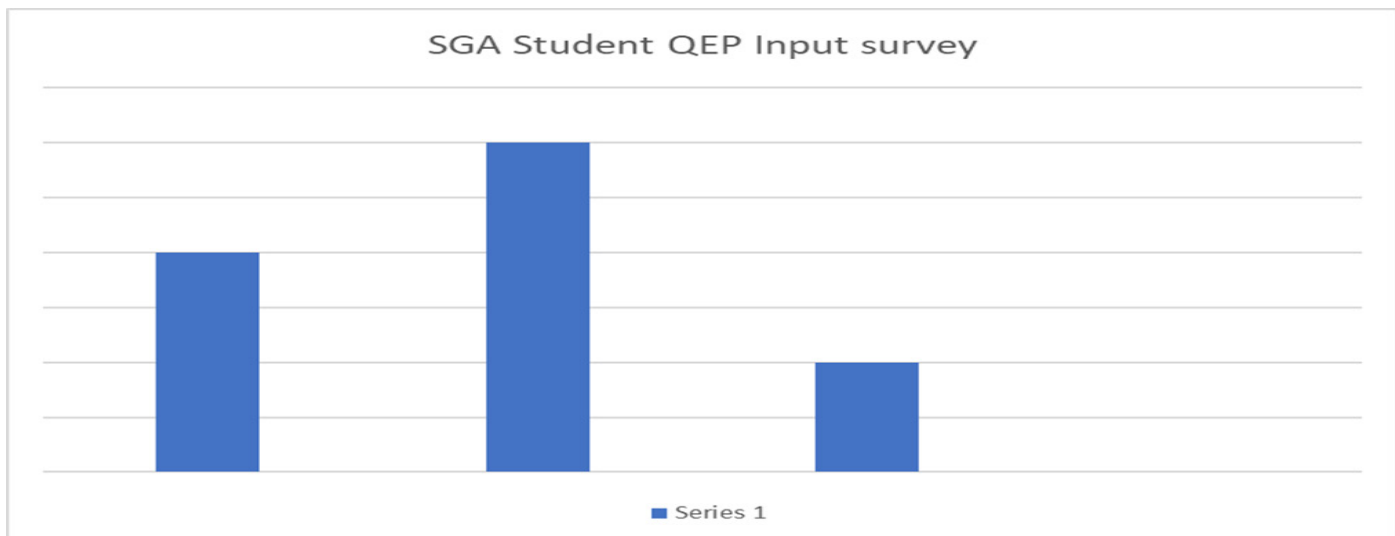
Answered: 61 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Holistic Advisement - This would involve a more holistic approach (a start to finish process of the whole student) to the advisement process. This would include looking at a Sustained, Strategic, Integrated, Proactive, Personalized approach. Advisors would be trained on how to complete this process.	21.31% 13
Job Skills/Career Skills/Soft Skills/ Power Skills etc. It doesn't matter what you call them, instructors would look at ways integrate these skills to prepare a marketable and hireable workforce for the future. Some of the skills that we are referring to would include: Communication, Customer Service, Leadership, Collaboration, Problem Solving, Personal Learning & Mastery, Achievement Focus, and Cultural and Social Intelligence.	50.82% 31
Technical Certificate of Credits or TCC's. This topic would allow for students to learn about and apply for additional TCC's and what they are for and how they would use them after graduation.	22.95% 14
Other (please specify)	Responses 4.92% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

## Student Survey

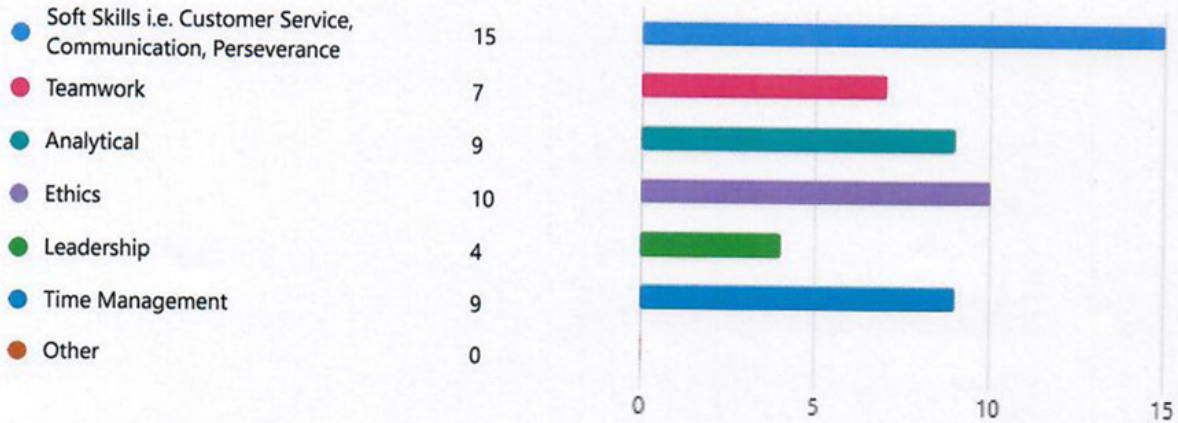
Representatives from the Student Government Association (SGA) were also given a survey to choose which topic they felt was most relevant to their success as students. The SGA committee is comprised of two students from each program area on campus, providing a wide selection of viewpoints. The committee felt that this would be an effective way to survey students since each program area would be covered. From their results, soft skills were also the topic chosen most often.



## Community Partner Survey

In confirmation of support for the topic selected, results from a survey sent out to community partners also reiterated the findings in that community partners concerning CTE programs in the area (i.e. schools, industry, and social service providers) also overwhelmingly said that soft skills (customer service, communication, and perseverance) were essential for students to be successful in their chosen careers and that these skills were in the top three priorities for workforce development, career and technical education or labor and industry for the next five years. It was noted that improving communication was definitely needed for SGTC's student body to be successful.

13. What skills do you think are essential for student success in their chosen careers?



16. What would be your top three priorities for either workforce training, career and technical education, or labor and industry for the next five years

17  
Responses

Latest Responses

"\*Hands on Mentorship \*Grants to fund needed technology \*Com... "  
 "Soft skills - communication, customer service, etc. Increased resou... "  
 "1) Talk with the MANAGERS of our businesses 2) Make sure the st... "

...

6 respondents (35%) answered soft skills for this question.





The QEP topic now had campus wide engagement and community input to justify that the topic was needed to help improve the success rates of SGTC students.

The committee met on October 12, 2023, to discuss the results of the surveys that were given. Soft skills were selected by the majority of the campus as the area of focus to improve student learning and student success according to our campus wide survey.

The committee selected a topic, but the focus of the subtopics was still incomplete. The committee worked to decide which soft skills the QEP should focus on since soft skills cover a variety of areas of potential focus. Before defining student success outcomes, a more focused selection of what soft skills to emphasize had to be decided. The committee continued to brainstorm possible topics following a review of the U.S. Department of Education QEP requirements. The committee decided to survey the committee members to reach a consensus on the soft skills and to plan for the rollout to the campus.

Among the suggestions of possible soft skills to be focused on included the following:

Self-motivation

Initiative = attendance, participation, timeliness, perseverance

Measurement = TCC's = retention.

Communication.

Problem-solving

Blackboard vs. Tik Tok

Adaptability

S.M.A.R.T. goals

Customer Service

Cultural Diversity

Stress Management.



After several more discussions, the members decided to send out a campus wide survey to determine/define the topic further. All agreed this would be the best opportunity to allow the whole campus to be involved again and for all to have input for the topic. It was noted again that this needed to be a campus-wide decision. Surveys were prepared and distributed to aid in narrowing the topic focus.

The surveys were distributed and based on the responses, the soft skills that were selected to focus on were S.M.A.R.T. Goals, Effective Communication, and Problem Solving.

The committee met on November 9, 2023, and reviewed the survey results, which identified SMART Goal Setting, Problem Solving, and Effective Communication as necessary soft skills for student success. While problem-solving skills were considered an important soft skill for students, the committee failed to identify a means to measure this skill. The committee agreed to create a voluntary QEP course in Blackboard and to offer campus programming to promote the QEP. Some campus programming options included a vision board party and campus workshops to aid in sharing the program with the entire student body.

The committee concluded two soft skills, effective communication and setting goals were the most important soft skills to contribute to student success based on the feedback from faculty, staff, and industry partners. Effective communication techniques and





S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time bound) goals aligned with SGTC's mission and strategic plan of workforce development, while offering broad appeal to students and potential employers.

Effective communication requires identifying the communication process as well as using the appropriate communication channels for productive communication. Effective communication is a necessity in the classroom, advisement, and other areas of support for students such as financial aid. Students who listen, participate, and ask appropriate questions are more likely to be more successful in college (Dahmani et al., 2024). This information will be presented through the Blackboard module as well as printed materials around campus and in classrooms showing students the proper way to communicate their needs.

Goal setting is a process to help students reach their long-term and short-term goals. In working to prepare material for goal setting, the decision was made to be specific for the words used the acronym S.M.A.R.T since there were variations; Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Action-Oriented, Realistic, Time-bound was the accepted variation. Decisions had to be made to implement the QEP, how to assess the results and how to raise awareness campus-wide to have the best chance at success.

The S.M.A.R.T. goal acronym is a simple and effective way to increase student self-efficacy in completing their programs. This information will be presented to the students in varied formats through Blackboard online courses and directed information delivered through instructors both in class and during advisement. Print and other media will also be utilized to remind and engage with students. The committee also identified that in order for students to be able to set good measurable academic goals, program advisors also needed to become more well versed in advising. This will give the students a path on how to set goals to complete their academic programs. This skill of being able to set goals would not only translate in the college setting, but it will also help students transition into their industry careers.

## **DESCRIPTION OF INITIAL QEP TRIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

The QEP committee spent a great deal of time trying to determine the best way to implement the QEP. Since the campus has a variety of TCC's, diplomas, and degrees, there is not a required class that all students must take to complete their programs. Much of the discussion centered on how to measure soft skills. One suggestion was to create a 0-credit course in Blackboard and campus programming. While there was much discussion on measurable activities, the committee unanimously agreed that the activities could not be a one-time occurrence. To be effective, the committee agreed consistent programming and measures had to be implemented for the QEP to be effective. All students, in person, online, and hybrid, would all be enrolled in the QEP course for goal setting and effective communication.

Teresa McCook, the QEP Director met with Teresa Jolly, the Blackboard Point of Contact and solicited her for advice on how to implement the class for all students. Mrs. Jolly contacted the Georgia Virtual Technical Connection (GVTC) representatives to approve the classes. The class will be set up as a Blackboard organization, also known as a Blackboard Community, is a virtual space within Blackboard that functions similarly to a course but is not tied to a specific academic term or automatically populated with student enrollments. Organizations are designed for various groups, such as clubs, committees, departments and other non-course-related entities, to facilitate communication, content sharing, and collaboration.

Each registered student at SGTC would have the opportunity to complete the free online course dedicated to effective communication and S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Within the QEP committee, two sub-committees were formed to create the class content, one for creating content for S.M.A.R.T. goals module and one the effective communication module. John Wilson, the librarian at the time of this meeting, advised the sub-committees that the library already had content that could be used for both courses.

EBSCO Learning is a resource available to SGTC faculty, staff, and students but is not widely used on campus. Mr. Wilson mentioned that EBSCO Learning is already set up as tutorials that the students can complete and earn completion certificates. Utilizing this resource would make it easier for students to access the content for the QEP, as well as providing access to other EBSCO Learning Material. Implementing these tutorials would benefit students for the QEP course as well as showcase the library as a student resource. Mr. Wilson gave a tutorial on accessing the material and the committee agreed that the EBSCO Learning material met the criteria for teaching effective communication and goal setting. John Wilson, Teresa McCook, and Teresa Jolly worked together to complete the online QEP course. The committee realized a pre-test and a post-test would provide data for student learning.



The online course was designed in Blackboard Ultra, which is the learning management system used for online courses. Students would log in with their same credentials to access the courses under Organizations. The instructors were given directors on how to instructor their students to access the course (Appendix B). The QEP director instructs Mrs. Jolly to open the course once students are enrolled. The instructions for completing the course direct the students to the link to the EBSCO Learning site and how to access each module. There are two modules for the course; module 1 is S.M.A.R.T. Goals and module 2 is Effective Communication.

Two modules, with pretests and post tests, were appropriate because the committee agreed that the course should be informative, but not cumbersome and too long. Figure 1 is a representation of how the course will look in Blackboard once students log in. Figure 2 is one of the modules are set up and the flow for the course.

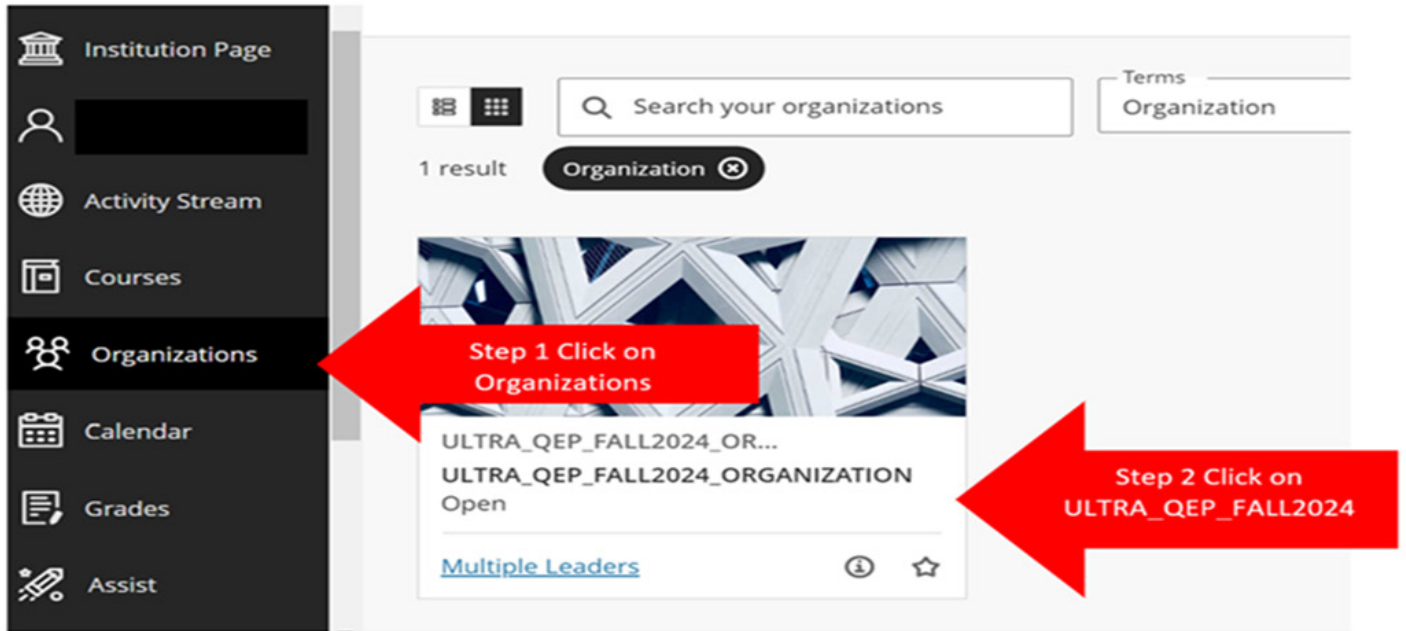
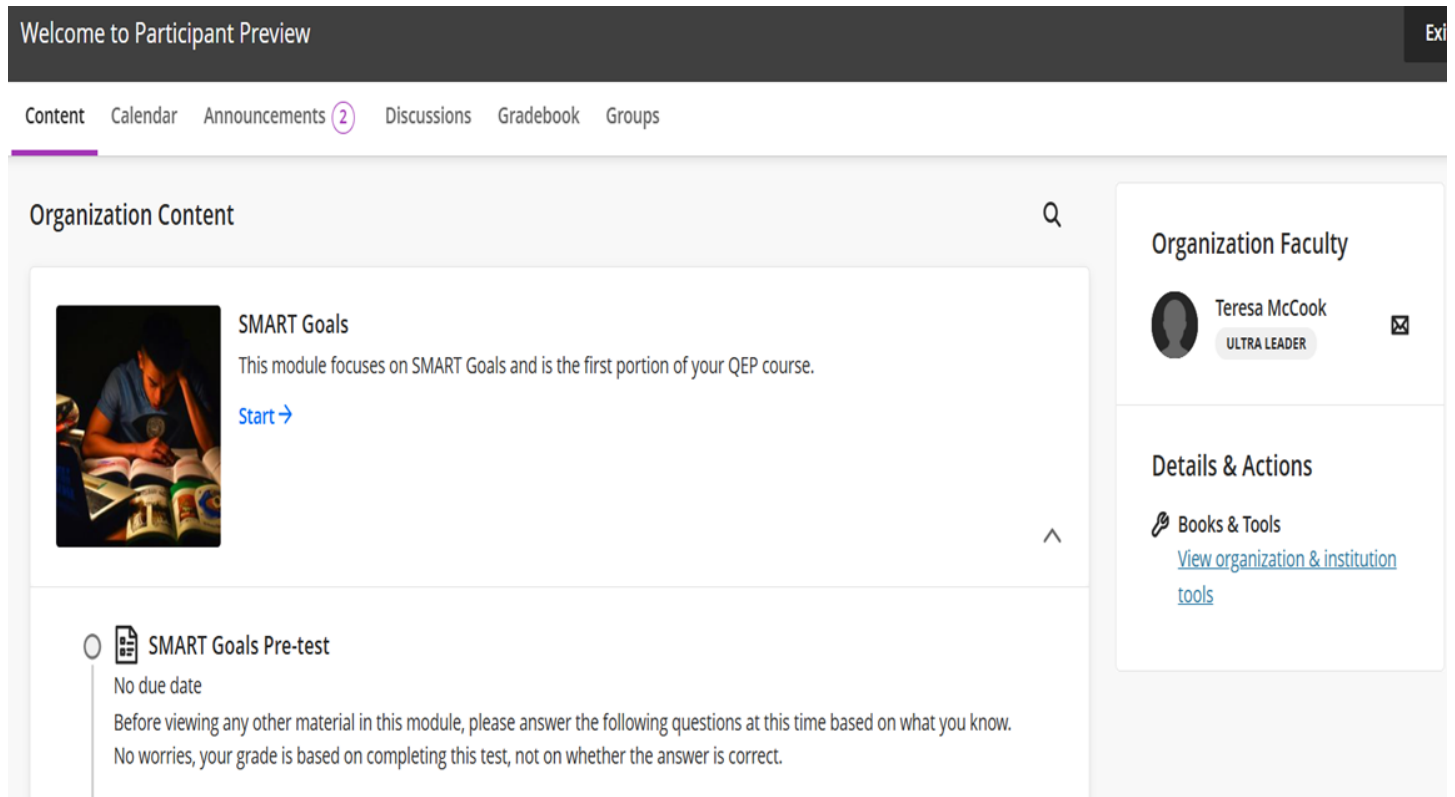
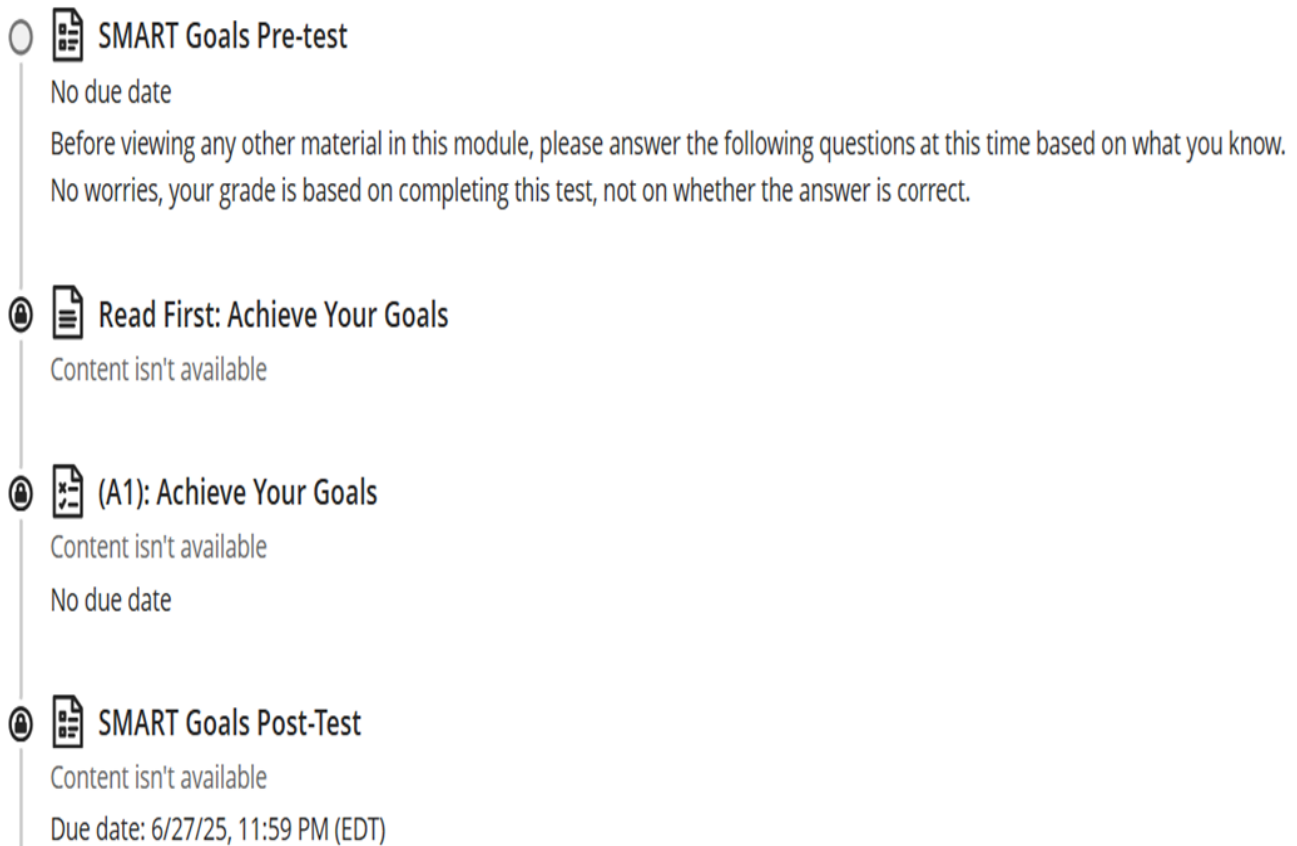


Figure 1





**Figure 2**

After completing both modules, the students can earn a certificate of completion that can be printed. Students are encouraged to print these certificates to add to their resumes/portfolios for future use. At the end of each module, students will also complete surveys. These surveys will help the committee evaluate the course to ensure the content is beneficial and if any improvements are necessary.

### **Initial Rollout of QEP to Faculty and Staff**

The committee decided that these soft skills were areas that could be focused on across the campus. From orientation to advisement to completing their graduation requirements, students could benefit from our focus on ensuring that they knew how to adopt these soft skills and be successful. Following discussion, the committee decided to narrow its focus to goal setting and effective communication. The group concluded that problem-solving was too broad a topic and difficult to apply an objective measure, therefore the decision was made to focus on the first two for this QEP.

Teresa McCook (Criminal Justice Instructor) was named the QEP director and Brett Murray (Academic Dean/Basic Law Enforcement Director) was named co-director. Student Jesse Cadenhead and Melissa Grantham were named the student representatives. Mr. Cadenhead agreed the QEP topic was necessary but was unsure how to motivate students to complete QEP activities.

The QEP committee was then tasked with naming the QEP topic for the campus rollout, branding, and marketing. The QEP committee agreed to the name Ready, Set, J.E.T (Jobs, Education, and Training)! aligning with SGTC's aviation history and brand. On November 30, 2023, the committee drafted a script for a role play to introduce the QEP topic to the campus. Other discussions revealed that in addition to the focus on soft skills, the committee was able to agree that the promotion of TCCs could serve as motivation for students since this would be a short-term goal for many students as it related to their program of study.

Registrar Kari Bodrey presented a simplified revised graduation application process (Appendix C) TCC application process (Appendix D), and encouraged instructors to ensure students applied for TCCs. Katrice Martin and Kari Bodrey planned to meet with all instructors to review the TCC application to ensure advisors and students were able to set short-term goals to obtain TCCs for their program, which included knowing and being aware that a student qualified for a TCC. This would not only check off a goal on a student's list, but it would be motivation for them to continue towards graduation. The committee continued to plan how to roll out the QEP topic to the faculty and staff. The committee proposed to take faculty and staff on a "flight" to introduce them to the topic to honor SGTC's aviation history. Various members of the committee played roles in the skit and SGTC's marketing department aided in putting together a short video to be played at the next Faculty/Staff Development (Appendix E). The QEP was introduced to the Cordele campus on April 10, 2024, and to the Americus on April 17th. This was a fun and engaging way to introduce the QEP to both campuses.

After the video, the committee members were able to answer questions from faculty and staff. This seems to have been a positive way to generate campus wide engagement and get both campuses on board to "Ready, Set, J.E.T.! into helping students transition into jobs, education, and training. Dedicating a roll out on each campus allowed for more time for questions and answers to further the understanding of the QEP and how it contributes to student success.

Faculty and staff members in attendance received their own "ticket" as they prepared to take-off on the QEP "flight" (Appendix F). Faculty and staff were given gifts to reinforce the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! acronym. There was a lot of positive engagement and feedback from faculty and staff, which indicated both campuses were now ready for take-off.

### Initial QEP Rollout to Students

Before the QEP was implemented, the committee wanted to research how students felt about their current goals and communication skills, a survey was created to present to students at the January 2024 registration date (Appendix G). The information gathered from this survey would help the committee gather pre-QEP data. This survey was given to the students as they came for Spring 2024 Orientation and/or Registration as these students would be the first to take the QEP course.

A few suggestions of possible questions for the students to answer included:

1. Do you have a clear timeline of how long it will take you to complete your program here at SGTC?
2. Do you at this time understand the skills required to communicate effectively in your field of work?
3. How would you rate your communication skills?
4. Do you have a career goal?

Chart 1 shows that students were asked if they had a clear understanding of how long it would take them to complete their program of study at SGTC. 44% percent of students stated they were aware of how long it would take them to complete their program of study while 57% said that they didn't know or weren't sure if they knew.

Do you have a clear timeline of how long it will take you to complete your program here at SGTC?

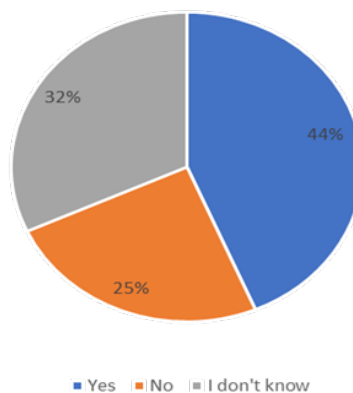
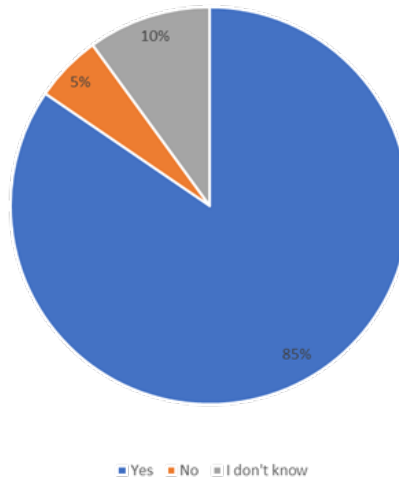


Chart 1



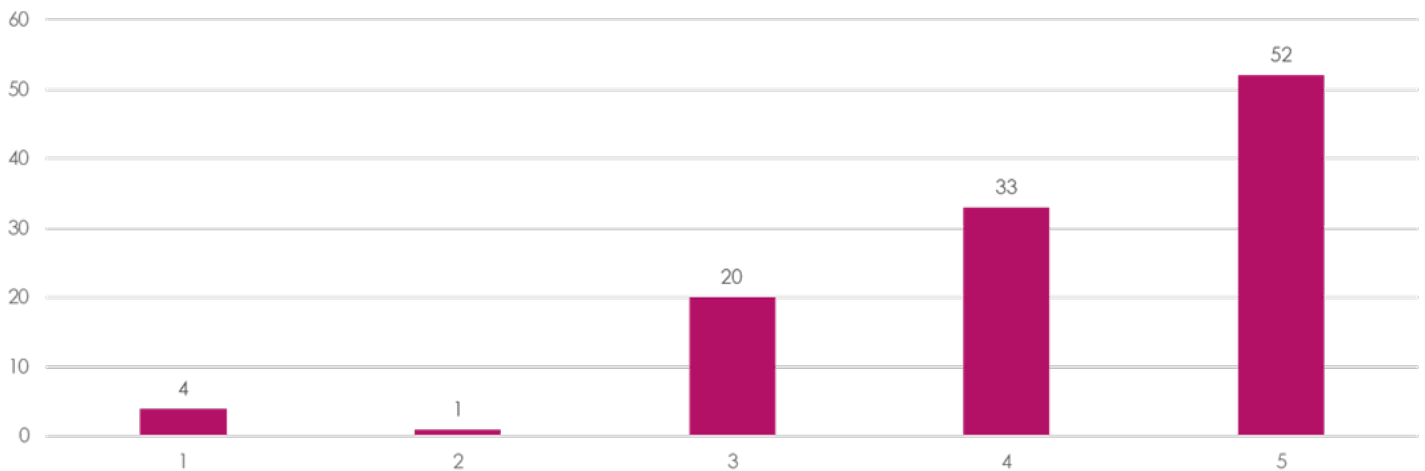
Charts 2 and 3 show that when students were then asked about their communication abilities, 85% of survey respondents indicated that they understand the skills required to communicate effectively in their career. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 not being confident and 5 being confident, a large majority of the students ranked their communication and customers skills at a 5.

Do you, at this current time, understand the skills required to communicate effectively in the career that you have chosen?



**Chart 2**

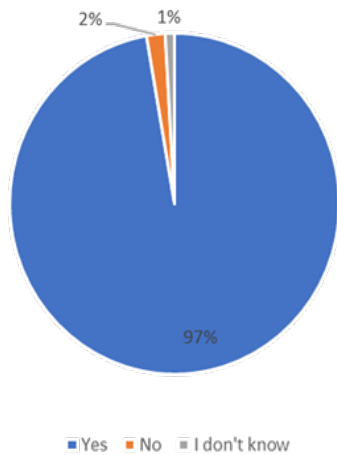
On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being Not Confident and 5 being Very Confident, how confident are you in your professional communication/ customer service skills?



**Chart 3**

In chart 4 shown on the next page, nearly all students, 97% of respondents, felt improving communication skills would benefit them in their careers.

Do you think improving your communication skills will help you achieve your career goals?



**Chart 4**

It was clear from this process that focusing on soft skills, specifically goal setting and effective communication skills, was the best way to ensure SGTC's student success for the next five years.

There is certainly some disconnect in that area between what students think they know and what they know. The results of our survey mimic the ones in the article COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO STUDENT PERCEPTIONS by Carol S. Wright Ashley A. Hall (2025) where a report that was published by Fast Company showed recent graduates were confident in their skills in that 87% of recent graduates feel well prepared to hit the ground running after earning their diplomas, only half of hiring managers agree with them. Students have much more confidence in their communication skills than their skills actually reveal. SGTC hopes to close the gap with this QEP.

The Blackboard course was open to students in summer 2024. Since summer usually enrolls a smaller number of students, the committee felt like this was a good time to test run the course. Fall 2024 was the second semester that all students had access to the course. Surveys were added to the end of the course to get feedback from students. The surveys were conducted during these two semesters to gauge students' opinion on the material in the course, the length of the course and whether or not the course was useful (Appendix H).

From these initial course runs, it was discovered that the students were going in to complete the pretests for both modules but not following through to complete the modules. The QEP director revised the course so that students had to complete the assignments to move onto the next assignment.

## DESIRED STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES

**Evidence:** QEP is clearly focused on outcomes related to student learning and/or student success. Outcomes are specific and measurable. Baseline data is present, and targets for improvement are identified. Outcomes are specific and clearly related to student learning and/or student success. Assessments are directly related to measurable outcomes. Institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are identified and appropriately supported.

**Evidence:** Outcomes are specific and clearly related to student learning and/or student success. Assessments are directly related to measurable outcomes. Institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are identified and appropriately supported.

SGTC has identified the need to improve communication and S.M.A.R.T. Goal setting as the topic for the QEP for the next five years. Through the improvement of these skills, SGTC plans to increase student success by showing students better ways to communicate enhance student success by providing students with better communication strategies, which is expected to lead to a decrease in both official and unofficial withdrawals and increasing retention. The goal is to measure student success by monitoring completion rates, retention, and unofficial withdrawals. The student success measures are listed as follows:

**Student Success Measure #1:** The QEP will achieve a minimum annual increase of 1 percentage point in fall-to-fall student retention rates over the five-year implementation period, resulting in a cumulative increase of at least 5 percentage points by the end of the QEP cycle.

**Baseline:** According to 2024 IPEDS data, retention rate for first to second year retention rates of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates:

Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 is 65% for full time students.

### Performance Targets:

- Year 1: Retention increases by at least 1 percentage point over baseline = 66%
- Year 2: Additional 1 percentage point increase (2% cumulative) = 67%
- Year 3: Additional 1 percentage point increase (3% cumulative) = 68%
- Year 4: Additional 1 percentage point increase (4% cumulative) = 69%
- Year 5: Additional 1 percentage point increase (5% cumulative total) = 70%

### Assessment Strategy:

- Baseline retention rate will be established using the academic year prior to QEP implementation
- Retention will be measured fall-to-fall among full-time credential-seeking students
- Disaggregated data (e.g., by program, demographics, participation in QEP interventions) will be analyzed annually to monitor impact and equity

**Student Success Measure #2:** The QEP will achieve an annual reduction of at least 0.5 percentage point in the combined rate of official and unofficial student withdrawals over the five-year implementation period, resulting in a cumulative decrease of at least 2.5 percentage points by the end of the QEP cycle.

For the Academic Year 2024, total unofficial and official withdrawals were at 231.

Fall 2023 = 97,

Spring 2024 = 96,

Summer 2024 = 38.

When averaged together, this gives a baseline of an average of 77, which is an average of 5.34%.

### Performance Targets: Unofficial and Official Withdrawals

- Year 1: Reduce combined withdrawal rate by  $\geq 0.5$  percentage point from baseline =4.84%
- Year 2: Reduce by an additional 0.5 point ( $\geq 1\%$  cumulative) =4.34%
- Year 3: Reduce by an additional 0.5 point ( $\geq 1.5\%$  cumulative) = 3.84%
- Year 4: Reduce by an additional 0.5 point ( $\geq 2\%$  cumulative) =3.34%
- Year 5: Reduce by an additional 0.5 point ( $\geq 2.5\%$  cumulative total) = 2.84%

### Clarifying Definitions:

- Official Withdrawal: Student-initiated withdrawal processed through institutional procedures
- Unofficial Withdrawal: Student ceases attendance without formal withdrawal process (often identified via attendance or grade reports)

### Assessment Strategy:

- Establish a baseline withdrawal rate (average of official and unofficial withdrawals over three semesters or one full academic term) from the academic year prior to QEP implementation
- Track term-to-term withdrawal trends for QEP-participating students for yearly average
- Disaggregate data by student demographics, program area, and QEP intervention exposure
- Use student feedback and faculty input to identify causes and modify strategies

**Student Success Measure # 3:** The QEP will achieve a minimum 1 percentage point annual increase in graduation rates for Technical Certificates of Credit (TCCs), diplomas, and associate degrees over the five-year implementation period, resulting in a cumulative increase of at least 5 percentage points in credential completion by the end of the QEP cycle.

For the Academic Year 2024, Unduplicated Graduates = 973, Awards Conferred (Duplicated) Certificate = 1,483, Diploma = 249, Degree = 134 for a total of 1,866

### Performance Targets (Credential-Specific):

Credential Type	Baseline Year	Target Year 1	Target Year 2	Target Year 3	Target Year 4	Target Year 5
Technical Certificates	80%	81%	82%	83%	84%	85%
Diplomas	14%	15%	16%	17%	18%	19%
Associate Degrees	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%	13%
Unduplicated Graduates	53%	54%	55%	56%	57%	58%

### Assessment Strategy:

- Graduation rates will be tracked by credential type, disaggregated by program and student population
- Year-over-year data comparisons will identify trends and gaps
- Participation in QEP activities (SMART goal setting, communication coaching, etc.) will be correlated with credential completion
- Qualitative feedback (student focus groups, exit interviews) will be used to supplement quantitative analysis

Responsible parties for assessment: During the summer semester of each year of the QEP, the Registrar, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and the QEP Director will gather assessment data. The data will be analyzed by the leadership team, advisory board members, and the QEP committee to determine if any changes should be made to QEP activities.







## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND BEST PRACTICES**

### **QEP TOPIC- READY, SET, J.E.T.!**

To support the college's mission and strategic plan, SGTC has chosen the theme of Ready, Set, J.E.T.! (Jobs, Education, and Training). The QEP committee decided on an aviation theme for the QEP to honor SGTC's proud aviation history. Ready, Set, J.E.T.! will focus on two soft skills, S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Effective Communication, to enable students to earn TCCS, degrees, and/or diplomas. Ultimately, the QEP will develop soft skills to help students "land" at their desired destination by obtaining their dream job, continuing their education at a university or training for new skills needed in the workforce. The Ready, Set, J.E.T. QEP initiative will help improve student success while enrolled at SGTC and prepare students with some of the soft skills needed to navigate the workforce.

Forty seven percent of SGTC students are first-generation college students; this population faces many challenges in college. First-generation college students do not have the luxury of calling a family member to ask questions about college. One aspect of the QEP is to help students communicate their needs in the classroom, and with campus resources and support such as admissions, the registrar's office, and financial aid. According to LaBouef et al. (2025), first-generation students are less likely to complete their program because of the lack of support and knowledge of campus resources. Investing in effective communication can serve as a motivation for students to remain in class by ensuring students know how to effectively communicate their needs. Teaching students to effectively communicate, students can be connected to campus support and resources to alleviate barriers to completion.

With students learning how to set S.M.A.R.T. goals and effectively communicate, it would not only improve their goals as students, but it would also give them the knowledge to be successful in their careers, since goal setting and effective communication are also what makes great employees. This improves overall student success not only in the classroom, but also in the workplace. Since SGTC's mission is workforce development, it all goes hand and hand.

The SGTC Leadership team and QEP Committee wanted a QEP that would benefit the most students possible. Through this QEP all students who are currently enrolled for the semester will be enrolled in the course presented in the Blackboard Learning Management System. Instructors are also encouraged to offer time for lesson completion and points for students who complete the QEP classes while in their classes. Incentives will be offered to students who complete the classes and earn all certificates. The QEP topics selected are supported by research showing that these skills are needed for students today.

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

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## **GOAL SETTING**

Goal-setting theory posits that setting specific, achievable, and time-limited goals can lead to increased effectiveness, success, and achievement (Shi Jie, 2025). Goal setting essentially serves as a road map for determining the steps to reach a specified destination. In the college environment, the obvious long-term goal of college students is graduation; however, to reach this goal, short-term goals such as passing all tests in a class or devoting time to study are stepping stones to the goal of graduating. Stone and San Roman (2024) maintained that goal setting is an effective tool in completing college courses, but understanding the ‘why’ of the goal is equally important. Determining why a goal is important can serve as motivation and build self-efficacy in students.

Dembo (2000) further discussed the importance of goal setting for students; “Goals help us become aware of our values and help us determine what we are willing to do. As a result, they influence our attitudes, motivation, and learning” (p. 65). According to Poe et al. (2021), goal setting promotes a growth mindset, as setting and achieving goals can build accountability, motivation, and confidence. Further, Hematian et al. (2017) found that goal setting can promote academic achievement through self-directed learning and problem-solving. Students can develop problem-solving skills as they learn to navigate challenges and barriers.

Despite the research (Hematian et al., 2017; Dembo, 2000; Poe et al., 2021; Stone & San Roman, 2024; Shi Jie, 2025) advocating the benefits of goal setting on academic achievement, many higher education institutions are not utilizing goal setting as a retention tool. Tuffley and Antonio (2013) found that goal setting has been linked to increased retention, as students with a purpose and a goal are more motivated to complete their course of study. These students were also more likely to seek help when faced with barriers to achieving their goals. Promoting goal setting as a campus resource through advising, workshops, and other campus activities can increase student retention (Tuffley & Antonio, 2023). By teaching students to set goals and work towards achieving them, this will lead to better retention and graduation rates, as they will have checkpoints in their academic plans to help them stay on track. Students will see their progression from enrollment to earning TCCs, which will keep them on the path to their ultimate goal: earning a diploma or degree.

## **ENSURING BEST PRACTICES**

One of the key components of SGTC’s Ready, Set, J.E.T.! QEP is to ensure all faculty and staff are instrumental in promoting effective communication and S.M.A.R.T. goals. The development of the QEP topic highlighted the barriers students encountered in the classroom, interacting with SGTC staff, and current and future employers. Workforce development was at the center of Ready, Set, J.E.T.! as SGTC faculty and staff acknowledged the need for effective communication and goal development inside and outside the classroom. Students should be able to meet industry standards specific to their programs while also developing invaluable soft skills. Collaboration among campus faculty and staff is the foundation of creating a positive campus culture that promotes the QEP topic

### **BEST PRACTICES: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

*“Communication is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening, and understanding”-Louis Allen*

To successfully engage in a modernized, global world, effective communication is a necessity. According to Singh (2022), effective communication includes sharing and receiving information in a clear, concise, and understandable communication style. The exchange of ideas, beliefs, and thoughts from multiple sources can build cultural competency, improve academic success, support social engagement, and develop soft skills that will be beneficial in the workforce (Noor, 2024). Effective communication deficits in higher education can lead to academic struggles, the failure to obtain, understand, and retain critical information, and a lack of confidence in social and academic interactions.

Technical colleges were designed to contribute to the nation’s workforce by providing technical skills and training based on industry standards (Bhurtal, 2015). While technical education has seen much success in contributing to the workforce



by developing highly skilled and qualified workers, students are often lacking in soft skills such as communication. In a 2019 study conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management, 54% of employers stated they had difficulty attracting and retaining quality candidates who possess soft skills (Wilkie, 2019). As more work, even trade/blue-collar jobs, incorporate more technology and automated processes, employers are seeking employees who can problem-solve, think critically, and communicate effectively.

Many college students, particularly first-year students, have not developed the autonomy to effectively communicate with college faculty and staff. Ideally, students will arrive on college campuses with knowledge of how to communicate effectively to some degree, but this is not always the case. Students are often ill-prepared to communicate with college faculty and staff because they are unfamiliar with who they should contact, the best method of communication, and when they should contact college faculty and staff. Further, college students may feel intimidated by faculty and staff which can result in a lack of communication. Approximately 54% of college-aged students (18-23) are less likely to check their email while email is the preferred communication method for colleges leading to important information not reaching the student (Straumsheim, 2016). Just as students are missing critical information from college faculty and staff, students also lack the knowledge of how, when, and what to communicate with faculty and staff, classmates, and even parents.

Colleges that prioritize effective communication can see increases in student success and retention. According to Singh (2022), communication requires speaking, listening, and understanding to be effective; this means that both students and faculty and staff must be well-versed in effective communication. Utilizing multiple channels for communication (email, text, class announcements, and flyers) can increase students' access to information. Faculty and staff must engage in professional development and trainings to model appropriate communication. Further, faculty and staff must incorporate effective communication into their interactions with students. Workshops that focus on communication skills, mock interviews, and modeling the classroom after the workplace (i.e., establishing how students should communicate with instructors) are some of the ways colleges can prioritize effective communication.

### **BEST PRACTICES: S.M.A.R.T. GOALS**

While some college retention efforts fall squarely on faculty and staff (i.e., offering varying class times or grants and scholarships), students also have to have a stake in their academic success and retention. With educational psychology and behavioral economics as a foundation, Clark et al. (2017) posited that goal setting can serve as the motivation for students to improve their self-control in reaching their educational goals. Bryce et al. (2021) explained that educational motivation is not always intrinsic, and students often need guidance to develop attainable goals. College can be a culture shock for some students as the need to be more independent can be overwhelming. Coming from high school, some students are not prepared for the level of self-regulation needed to be successful in college as college demands a higher degree of autonomy and responsibility (Wolter & Brady, 2021). Balancing obligations (school, work, family, clubs and organizations) can be challenging for students who lack self-regulation.

According to Dotson (2016), goal setting is “the process of establishing a direction for learning” (p. 44). Essentially, goal setting is creating a plan for academic success. Academic challenges and failures can be related to not having goals or not having clearly defined goals. Students can also face challenges if their goals are not assessed and monitored frequently, there is less of a chance they will be reached (Dotson, 2016). Further, students who have not learned self-regulation can also struggle with setting and meeting goals. Goal setting is one of the foundations of self-regulated learning and has been linked to increased academic success (Bernacki et al., 2024). Bernacki et al. (2024) stated self-regulated learning is “a set of learning processes that predict performance and achievement” (p. 2). It requires identifying an outcome or goal, identifying the barriers to achievement, employing available resources, monitoring progress, and revising the goal. The independence of college can be difficult for some students, but self-regulation can be taught with support from college faculty and staff.

Bernacki et al. (2024) explained that when goals are clear, relevant, and timely, they have a greater chance of reaching them. S.M.A.R.T. goals are a goal-setting framework that identifies goals as specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely (Eads, 2024). Using this acronym allows students to identify their goals and develop a plan for reaching their goals. This goal-setting framework has been proven (Dotson, 2016; Bernacki et al., 2024) to increase academic success as it provides a simplistic and organized process of identifying a result and how to achieve it. Additionally, the S.M.A.R.T. goal framework can be a visual representation of what the student wants to achieve; writing the goal and seeing it can increase the likelihood that it will be achieved (Bernacki et al., 2024).

Self-regulated learning is not always inherent to students and will require guidance and support. College faculty and staff should create and capitalize on opportunities for students to learn self-regulation. Clear expectations and reasonable chances to improve (i.e., no penalization for one late assignment) can support students' learning self-regulation, which can increase retention. Goal-setting activities, such as workshops, should be frequent to ensure students are on track to reach their goals. Academic advising can also help students with goal setting, revising goals, and providing resources and support to reach goals (Dotson, 2016). Students also have to be motivated to reach their goals and build self-regulation. College faculty and staff are instrumental in teaching self-regulation by establishing deadlines, asserting clear expectations, and supporting students who have difficulties.

### **BEST PRACTICES: BUILDING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION**

Colleges and universities create vision and mission statements to guide planning, campus goals, staffing, and other activities related to the success of the college (Muckinskas & Clark, 2022). The culture on a college campus should reflect the vision and mission and is the responsibility of everyone, from the office of the president to the maintenance staff. Eze (2016) maintained a positive campus culture can provide a foundation for academic success, more proficient teaching and learning, improved campus engagement, and increased retention. A positive campus culture does not happen organically, but rather, it requires modeling from campus leadership, intentional planning, activities, and faculty and staff buy-in to create a campus that supports the success of the whole student.

Because it is the responsibility of all college personnel to build and model the campus culture, collaboration among faculty and staff is a necessity. Far too often, faculty (academics/teaching) and staff (ancillary duties) operate in silos or even with disregard for the other. However, for students to be successful, faculty and staff have to build strong collaborative partnerships within the college and community. Ebenbach (2017) maintained that every role on a college campus should have the same central motivation: student success. For this reason, faculty and staff need to collaborate to build a campus environment that supports student success. A culture of collaboration between faculty and staff can support the whole student, recognizing that students need more than academic support to be successful college students.

College faculty and staff collaboration can be as simple as sharing information, understanding academic policies and procedures, and being familiar with the available support services on campus. Staff should ensure student support services are easily accessible to students and known to faculty. Faculty should rely on staff to attend to the non-academic needs of the student. Campus collaboration can look like faculty and staff collaborative teams to improve campus culture, sharing information about any changes to existing or new support services, seeking faculty and staff input in policy and procedure decisions, and professional development that prioritizes the roles of both faculty and staff.

One of the focuses of the committee will center upon more effective advisement of students for their program areas. Faculty will be trained in how to better advise students through sequencing classes to prioritize earning TCCs in guiding them towards completion of diplomas and degrees. This will better help those program advisors to help their students set their S.M.A.R.T academic goals for going through the steps of finishing their credentials here at SGTC.

Several research studies (Jagielska, 2022; Düzenli, 2023; Chardannes, 2025) suggested that younger generations, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, may have a stronger focus on achievement and recognition than previous generations. This means that their motivation to push forward to complete something requires some acknowledgement or reward. Showing progress in receiving TCCs will motivate students to continue and aid in retaining them to continue towards their diploma and degree. The program advisors will set up short-term and long-term goals with students to work towards completing their credentials, like a road map for school. When students apply and receive their TCC certificate credential, it will encourage them to keep striving until they achieve their diploma or degree. It will provide validation that checking off one of their goals is worth continuing.

In giving them the proper instruction in what S.M.A.R.T. goals are and how to set them, students will be more likely to achieve their goals inside and outside of the classroom (Poe et al., 2021). The use of setting S.M.A.R.T. goals in advisement could also extend to other areas on campus, such as our retention efforts, completion of admission procedures, completing financial aid applications, completing TCC's, increasing graduation rates, and increasing overall student success in their studies and careers. Students will be able to set short-term goals, such as passing College Algebra, that feed into the ultimate goal of completing their program.

Learning effective communication can also be taught inside and outside the classroom. Gen Z learners are the generation who grew up with technology; unlike previous generations, Gen Z was born into a technological society. In this respect,

technology is an integral part of their lives. This is one of the reasons this generation experiences communication barriers. Teaching effectively communication can aid the technological generation with essential skills to help them navigate college life. Effective communication can alleviate communication barriers by teaching students how to talk to their instructors when they need help or are having issues in class, how to discuss financial aid concerns, ways to discuss graduation or credits with the Registrar, or will learning how to talk to admissions to fill out a change of program form. Through these lessons, students will gain skills that will transfer to the workplace to communicate with employers, customers, or clients.

The implementation of the online QEP course would have tutorials to help students navigate through learning about these two topics further. Weekly announcements within the course and student emails can be utilized to educate students on these topics as well. Marketing can help with posters and banners showing students not only the objectives of the QEP, but also show them ways to effectively communicate with their instructors and the various departments around campus that they may encounter in order to get the information that they need to be successful at this level in their lives. All of these will be utilized to ensure the whole campus and community are aware of what our goal is to achieve with this QEP.

Student activities of creating vision boards will teach students to have a vision for what they want their futures to look like and the goals that they need to take to reach them. Workshops will be held to further explain goal setting and effective communication concepts to students.

By the year 2030, students will have the necessary tools (knowledge and strategies) to demonstrate their ability to set their own S.M.A.R.T. goals and how to effectively communicate to improve student learning and continue their success.

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By the year 2030, students will have the necessary tools (knowledge and strategies) to demonstrate their ability to set their own S.M.A.R.T. goals and how to effectively communicate to improve student learning and continue their success.









## ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

The QEP committee wants to use several tools to reinforce and educate students on effective communication and setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals. Creating a QEP course on communication, and S.M.A.R.T. goals, hosting workshops, implementing classroom activities, providing media and print, and training on proper instruction/advisement for instructors are all ways that the QEP committee plans to utilize to improve students' success. Using these tools and resources, SGTC can prepare students to be better equipped to navigate college and be prepared for the workforce. These are soft skills that are foundational to student success as students prepare to enter the workforce.

### 1. *Create and Enroll students in the QEP Course*

The committee has created a zero-credit hour course in the Blackboard Learning Management System where students will have modules and dedicated lessons on setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals and communicating effectively. After completion of the modules, students will earn certificates that they can put with their job applications to show that they have training in those skills (Appendix I)

Students will complete the QEP course and earn five certificates:

- Communicating with Your Professor
- Attitude and Teamwork
- Achieve Your Goals
- Effective Classroom Listening
- Verbal Communication at Work

### 2. *Supplement Course*

The QEP Course material will be supplemented through classroom discussions and lesson with their program instructors. Workshops and student activities will also be provided to students.

### 3. *Provide Professional Development to Faculty*

Faculty will undergo various training for advisement techniques and with helping their students to communicate better and set short term and long term goals.

- Faculty Development and Training Outcome – Through the development and training of faculty in proper advisement best practices to increase retention and completion rates for students, student success will increase.
- Faculty will receive training in academic advisement to equip them to help students develop short-term and long-term academic goals. This three-phase training will also focus on how instructors offer classes during the academic year. The committee did consider establishing student learning outcomes initially, but as we began to focus on the topic more, it was felt that these student success measures would benefit students and the overall campus much more, according to the mission of the institution, which is workforce development.

### 4. *Market the QEP*

Marketing and promotion of the QEP will happen each semester in an effort to encourage students to complete the course and for faculty to stress to students to complete the course.

### 5. *Assess the QEP*

Assessment data for retention, graduation, and withdrawals will be collected each summer semester in order to make improvements to the QEP activities. Course participations and course surveys will also be analyzed at this time.

### 6. *Make improvements*

After data is collected, the QEP will meet to discuss and analyze results and suggest improvements going forward to ensure student success measures.

Signage will be placed in classrooms and areas around campus, such as financial aid and admissions, to remind students how to communicate with college faculty and staff (Appendix J). This signage will have examples of what and how students may need to communicate to ensure their needs are met. These reminders will help to reinforce the need for effective communication in mitigating barriers to program completion and reducing unofficial withdrawals. Signage with the QEP logo and key words will also be displayed as banners around campus to remind students, faculty, staff and community members of what the QEP is and what it stands for.

Faculty will be educated through scheduled professional development days and directed media (email and print material) to engage faculty in promoting effective communication and goal setting for students. Faculty should be creative in intertwining communication and goal setting into their lessons and using teachable moments to reinforce the QEP goals. They will also work with their advisory boards to gain insight into how these skills are translated into the workplace and how faculty can incorporate these skills into instruction. As program advisors, faculty will also have professional development for advisement best practices to promote goal setting for students to progress to graduation. Program advisors will be aware of their curriculum to ensure students are registered for classes in a sequence to earn TCCs.

## **SUPPORTING THE PLAN**

**Effective communication workshops:** Campus-wide buy-in from all faculty and staff is necessary to successfully promote the QEP. As part of the implementation of the QEP, the committee has hosted workshops to reinforce the information in the Blackboard courses. Jennifer Robinson and Tammy Hamilton presented effective communication workshops on the Americus and Cordele campuses, respectively (Appendix K). Approximately 45 students attended the workshops held in September 2024, which aimed to give a practical application of effective communication with instructors, staff, and family and friends. The speakers discussed active listening, formal and informal communication, communicating through body language, and what ineffective communication looks like. The speakers used a variety of activities in the sessions, including role-playing, scenarios, and discussions. These workshops will be offered every semester to continue to promote effective communication.

**Goal-setting workshops:** In January 2025, a vision board/S.M.A.R.T. Goals party was planned and executed by Student Affairs/Student Activities. A brief tutorial on S.M.A.R.T. goals helped students to have a plan to reach their goals. For this activity, students were informed that they could utilize S.M.A.R.T. goals for academic performance, health, or reaching career goals. Students used pictures and words to make a S.M.A.R.T. goal vision board to create a visual representation of their goals.

## **PROMOTING THE PLAN**

As the aim of the QEP is campus-wide buy-in for the success of the plan, the committee met with students to direct them to the Blackboard QEP course. During the fall semester of 2024, several members of the committee met with students on campus by passing out “QEP Flight Tickets” and QEP stress-relieving Jets to reiterate the Ready, Set, J.E.T. theme to as they exited the Cafeteria in Americus; students on the Cordele campus also received their “QEP Flight Ticket” (Appendix L). Students were able to ask questions about the QEP and the online course.

QEP communication with the students was achieved through announcements and emails in the Blackboard Ultra Fall QEP course. Emails were also sent to all faculty and staff to announce that the online course was open to encourage students to complete the modules. As an incentive to gain more participation in completing the online course, students could email certificates of completion to their instructor to be entered into a raffle for a basket of school supplies, hygiene products, and home goods. Incentivizing participation in completing the QEP course can help increase course completion and engage students in the learning. Bi-weekly emails were sent to the students to remind them to complete the QEP course to be entered into the raffle. Professional development was provided to all faculty and staff during the Spring 025 semester to reiterate the importance of incorporating the QEP topics in the classroom.

Other initiatives that will be used to promote campus-wide engagement include:

- Send bi-weekly email blasts and tips to remind students to communicate and set S.M.A.R.T goals
- Provide course completion updates at faculty/staff, senior staff, and Board of Directors meetings
- Publish success stories on the website, social media pages, and local newspapers
- Provide a link to the QEP on SGTC’s website to update and highlight any information pertaining to the QEP



- Encourage participation and completion in the QEP Organization Course thru Blackboard
- Post information to SGTC's website and social media accounts about the QEP
- Continue to develop promotional items (i.e., pens, cups, lanyards, etc.)
- Offer student workshops during the semester

## **ADMINISTRATION OF THE QEP**

**Evidence:** Process of identifying the topic and developing the QEP engaged appropriate constituencies. Stake-holders are informed and somewhat engaged in the implementation process.

### **QEP Committee**

To ensure the success of the QEP, the QEP Director and the QEP committee will guide the development of the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! initiative. The committee will be responsible for surveying students and faculty for ideas on improving the course, workshops, and student activities. Members of the team will also be responsible for data collection related to assessing the student success measures. Members of the QEP committee will also be involved in hosting, attending, providing feedback on student activities, and suggesting changes to increase student, faculty, and staff support.

The QEP committee hopes to create more student, community, and faculty/staff engagement in the future of this QEP. The QEP committee will work together to actively promote the Ready, Set, J.E.T. initiative. The committee began introducing the QEP during Summer 2024 semester. The main objective for this term was rolling out the online QEP course that was developed. Since Summer semester generally has a smaller enrollment, the committee felt that it would be a good time to test run the online course. This way, if there were any modifications that needed to be made, the committee would have time to make those changes before the official fall semester trial run kickoff.

Early in the summer course, the committee realized that more involvement was needed from students and faculty/staff, and small changes needed to be made to the course. Plans were discussed during summer semester to implement more activities and workshops during the fall semester and to have a "kick-off" for the students to gain more attention and answer any questions that the students or faculty/staff may have in regard to the QEP. It was also noted of more ways that instructors could appeal to their students to complete the course. Since the QEP is being pushed heavily, faculty are stepping up to bring new ideas to the table to promote the course (Appendix M).

It will be the responsibility of the QEP committee to provide guidance, support, and advocacy for the QEP SGTC faculty, staff, and students, as well as community partners and stakeholders. Table 1 summarizes the broad-based involvement of various stakeholders of SGTC. Appropriate constituencies and stakeholders include:

### **The Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team of SGTC is well informed of the QEP and the budgetary and personnel requirements to make it a success in the next five years. SGTC will count on the Leadership Team which consists of the President and his President's Cabinet (Vice Presidents of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Institutional Advancement, Operations, AVP/ Dean of Academic Affairs over Crisp County Campus, Athletic Director, Director of Business and Industry Services, and Career Services Director) to solicit institutional, financial and campus support for the QEP initiatives.

### **Deans of Academic Affairs**

Academic deans will be tasked with influencing and encouraging faculty to incorporate effective communication and goal setting into their lessons. Academic deans will also ensure that faculty are promoting the completion of the QEP course. Academic deans can also serve as the liaison for faculty and the QEP committee to address issues and concerns, as well as provide suggestions and best practices.

### **Program Advisory Board Members**

Each program area is required to have a program advisory board that meets twice a year. Advisory boards are industry partners and provide internships and work opportunities for SGTC students. Being in the industry, advisory boards are well-versed in industry needs, including the skills that students are lacking in the workforce. In this respect, advisory boards are the eyes and ears of the industry, with a wealth of knowledge of skills needed in the workforce. Advisory board insights can inform on QEP activities.

## Student Engagement

Student success is at the center of the QEP, as well as the mission and vision of SGTC; student engagement in the QEP is essential to its success. Student feedback on QEP activities and suggestions for more student engagement can guide QEP activities. Students will complete the course all one semester, but students are allowed to go back in and redo the course if needed and look at the tutorials again. They can also look at similar or newly created tutorials on the topics. Allowing the previous participating students to continue to implement this initiative provides a more in-depth expansion to reach a larger percentage of the student population and utilization of the strategies that they will learn from taking this online course. This knowledge will help students succeed in their program area and improve our student success outcomes.

## FACULTY/STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Faculty and staff support is integral to the overall success of the QEP. Faculty and staff have the most contact with students and more opportunities to reinforce the QEP goals. Faculty and staff can make suggestions for QEP activities, encourage students to complete the QEP course, and promote the QEP in their classrooms and departments. The QEP committee will rely on faculty and staff to provide feedback for improvement and to host programming and workshops to improve communication and goal setting.

Constituents	Activity	Role in QEP
Leadership Team	Informed Leadership of QEP and budgetary requirements	Support QEP by influencing community and institutional support for the QEP
Deans of Academic Affairs	Invite Dean to participate on the QEP committee  Dean is selected as co-chair of committee	Influence and encourage program instructors to stay abreast of the QEP and implement strategies to get faculty to involve more students in completing the QEP course.  Offer insight about instructional and motivational approaches
Advisory Committees	Input for topic solicited from minutes of advisory board minutes.  Program Advisors will ask Program Advisors to include QEP in yearly Program of Work with the advisory board members	Offer insight about industry practices/ expectations/needs  Offer insight into deficit in soft skills application in the workplace.

Students	<p>Surveyed SGA members on initial QEP topic</p> <p>Distributed QEP student survey</p> <p>QEP campus kick off at the cafeteria to inform students of the QEP</p> <p>Email blasts to students to complete the QEP course and participate in student activities and workshops geared towards QEP topics</p>	<p>Offer insight about goal setting and effective communication needs</p> <p>Provide suggestions for QEP activities</p> <p>Provide suggestions for ways to promote the QEP</p>
Faculty/Staff	<p>Surveyed Faculty on initial QEP topic</p> <p>Invited faculty and staff to participate on the QEP committee</p> <p>Provided informational Sessions and Professional Development to discuss QEP</p> <p>QEP campus wide kickoff</p>	<p>Offer insight about instructional approaches</p> <p>Office insight about departmental approaches and needs</p> <p>Display QEP marketing items</p>
Library	<p>Invited Librarian to be a part of the QEP committee</p>	<p>Provided additional resources</p> <p>Highlight the QEP in the library</p> <p>Work with committee to ensure preferred resources on the courses are available.</p>

Additionally, to create faculty/staff engagement, the QEP committee will continue to promote the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! initiative through:

### **INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS**

QEP committee members will attend program area meetings such as department and Academic Program Advisory Committee meetings to discuss the initiative, provide a progress report, and share success stories.

### **CAMPUS-WIDE MARKETING**

Each semester a Campus-wide Kickoff will occur highlighting the focus and significance of SGTC’s QEP, sharing success and encouraging faculty/staff participation: an on-going educational process to ensure future constituents are familiar with the goal and objectives of the QEP.

In addition to the designed banners (Appendix N), flyers, brochures, and posters were created by the QEP committee and marketing department. To make the QEP more noticeable and attractive to students, ACE, SGTC’s mascot, and the J.E.T. theme will be utilized in QEP marketing strategies to ensure SGTC students and service areas are aware of the QEP and its implications. Other marketing activities will be utilized to promote the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! initiative:

- Push the QEP course at the resource fair in the fall semesters
- Blast Biweekly e-mail and provide updates at faculty/staff, senior staff and Board of Directors’ meetings



- Publish success stories on SGTC’s website and released to local newspapers
- Provide a link on the SGTC website to update and highlight any information pertaining to the QEP
- Post information to SGTC’s website and social media pages
- Continually develop promotional items

This will ensure that there will be continual communication with constituents about the value to students and the larger community.

## **TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

Continuous training and support in the form of professional development will equip faculty and staff with the tools needed to ensure the success of the QEP. Because activities cannot be one and one, the QEP committee will develop training, support, and workshops for best practices to implement effective communication and goal setting into the fabric of SGTC teaching, learning, and student interactions.

### **Library**

The campus librarians have been great resources for the QEP committee and SGTC campuses. The library has provided resources to SGTC students related to the QEP that could also be utilized for classes. Similarly, the library can provide EBSCO Learning resources to instructors to incorporate into teaching and learning. Librarians can also encourage students who frequent the library to complete the QEP course.

### **Continuous Improvement**

The final objective of the plan is to see continuous improvement. Using data from the previous year, the QEP committee established a baseline for all of the student success measures. At the end of each year, SGTC hopes to see at least a 1% increase in retention and graduation rates, resulting in a 5% increase overall for the five years of the project. SGTC also hopes to see a 0.5% reduction in withdrawal rates, with a 2.5% decrease overall for the five years of the project.

The committee will work to continuously improve the class, workshops, student activities, and training for faculty and staff to improve outcomes. The QEP Director, Co-Director, and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness will analyze survey data to see which programs and student populations are facing barriers to program completion.







## TIMELINE

Below is a detailed timeline of activities with specific tasks for Years Zero through Five of the QEP. Activities for implementing the QEP are divided into the components of pre-implementation, QEP goal setting and effective communication activities, and assessment activities.

Pre-implementation and ongoing activities are activities that were completed in year zero to begin building the foundation for the QEP and to promote the objectives and outcomes of the plan. These activities consisted of researching the topic thoroughly and designing a plan based best practices research, identifying the appropriate instructional activities and assessments, and the resources for faculty to implement the QEP skills into their courses. The results of the pre-implementation process included the creation of the QEP Blackboard course, workshops, student activities, and incentives to increase participation. These activities will be ongoing throughout the life cycle of the QEP.

*Ready Set J.E.T.* skills implementation are activities that will prepare faculty and staff to implement the soft skills of goal setting and effective communication. These activities will be initiated with faculty and staff input and professional development for best practices to implement the completion of the QEP. Advising professional development will also ensure program advisors have the tools, resources, and knowledge required to advise students in setting and achieving short-term and long-term academic goals. Signage in classrooms, departments, and offices will serve as reinforcement for effective communication and goal setting. S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication workshops will be held multiple times throughout the semester to improve these soft skills. Bi-weekly email blasts will be sent to students with reminders about goal setting, effective communication, and completing the QEP course on Blackboard.

Assessment activities are activities that will be used to take periodic measures of student success outcomes in the soft skills implementation. Students will complete pre-tests and post-tests in the Blackboard course to evaluate their knowledge before and after the completion of the modules. The impact on retention and student success will occur through tracking TCC applications and official and unofficial withdrawals.

## QEP TIMELINE

### ***Topic Development***

Fall 2023

- Establish QEP Committee
- Analyze Data
- Send Surveys to Stakeholders
- QEP Meetings
- Topic Selected

Spring 2024

- Introduce the QEP to all faculty and staff
- Consult with instructors on the best way to implement S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Effective Communication for the students
- Create Advisement Checklist for Instructors to use in their programs
- Create QEP class online for all students to complete
- Vision Board Workshop

Summer 2024

- Consult with instructors on the best way to implement S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Effective Communication in the classroom
- Pilot QEP course to mitigate barriers and challenges to completion
- QEP Blackboard surveys
- Work with all instructors on intentional advising and discuss checklist

### ***Year 0***

Fall 2024



- QEP Blackboard course continues with revisions from summer
- Students are enrolled in online course for S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication. Pre-tests and Post-tests to be completed
- Class surveys are given
- QEP Kick-Off, introduce the QEP to all students and explain the course
- Goal Setting Workshops
- Effective Communication Workshops

#### Spring 2025

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff

#### Summer 2025

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Consult with faculty on professional development needs regarding QEP in the upcoming months
- Check data for retention, unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation data

### **Year 1**

#### Fall 2025

- SACSCOC visit
- Topic approval
- Implement SACSCOC recommendations and/or changes to QEP
- First official rollout of QEP and Blackboard class
- Bi-weekly email blast to students and faculty
- Workshops on S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Professional Development for faculty

#### Spring 2026

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned to program with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff
- Revisit advising for instructors- Phase II

#### Summer 2026

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP course to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of Faculty and Staff



- Student success measures will be run and evaluated for the first time by the Registrar, the Director of IE and the QEP Director

## **Year 2**

### Fall 2026

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff

### Spring 2027

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Check data for retention, unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation data (Refocus and discussion of results and improvement)

### Summer 2027

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP course to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops for both topics
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of Faculty and Staff
- Registrar, Director of IE and QEP Director check data for retention, official and unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation date for year three.
- Adjust as needed

## **Year 3**

### Fall 2027

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP course to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of Faculty and Staff
- Weekly email blast to students
- Vision Board Student Activity

### Spring 2028

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff

#### Summer 2028

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Registrar, Director of IE and QEP Director check data for retention, unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation data for year three.
- Adjust as needed

#### **Year 4**

##### Fall 2028

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP course to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of Faculty and Staff
- Weekly email blast to students
- Vision Board Student Activity

##### Spring 2029

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff

##### Summer 2029

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Registrar, Director of IE and QEP Director check data for retention, unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation data for year four
- Make adjustments as needed

#### **Year 5**

##### Fall 2029

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP course to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of Faculty and Staff
- Weekly email blast to students
- Vision Board Student Activity

## Spring 2030

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Class room activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Professional Development of faculty and staff

## Summer 2030

- All students enrolled in QEP course
- Introduce QEP class to new/returning students
- Monitor QEP course
- Classroom activities aligned with S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective communication
- Workshops
- Student Activities
- Registrar, Director of IE and QEP Director check data for retention, unofficial withdrawals, TCC and graduation data for year five

## YEAR 0

### Phase I: Orientation/Introduction

Students were introduced to the online QEP course during the Summer of 2024 to determine any necessary adjustments or changes. During this term, SGTC had an enrollment of 1,024 students. The course was not mandatory, but students were encouraged to take part in it. The committee quickly realized that without an incentive, students were not motivated to complete the course. By the end of the semester, a total of 327 students (198 for S.M.A.R.T. goals and 129 for effective communication) were introduced to the modules, but students did not complete the Blackboard course. The committee realized students were able to complete the pre- and post-tests, but were not required to complete the modules. Because the summer semester has fewer students, the committee was able to gain valuable feedback on the course setup and make changes for the Spring Semester.

In the Spring term of 2024, faculty and staff were introduced to the QEP, which increased the support and promotion of the plan. During this semester, 77 students completed the S.M.A.R.T. goals module, and 44 completed the effective communication module.

Also, during the Spring semester of 2024, Kari Bodrey, the Registrar and QEP Committee member, and Katrice Martin, Institutional Effectiveness Director, met with all faculty members to advise them on the new processes for applying for graduation and TCCs. These one-on-one meetings allowed for a more personalized and program-tailored understanding of how to advise students in these processes (Appendix O).

### Phase II: Second Test Implementation

Fall semester 2024 kicked off the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! QEP initiative. Since the fall semester is usually the biggest semester for the college, the committee could evaluate student engagement, participation, and completion of the QEP class in Blackboard. 1,741 students were assigned to the Fall QEP course online. To drive more students to the class, QEP committee members handed out "Flight tickets" and other QEP material to students to direct them to the class. Committee members explained the QE, how to access the QEP course online, and encouraged students to complete the course. Approximately 300 students were included in this kickoff event, which allowed the committee to be visible to students and ask questions about the QEP.

During the Fall semester, 224 students began the module for S.M.A.R.T. goals, and 202 began the effective communication module. Completion numbers were low, but the committee realized some of the students were returning students from the summer semester. The Blackboard Learning Management System does not allow for the removal of students who have already taken the course; the committee advised students that they are free to take the course as many times as they want, but they are only required to complete the course once.



Effective communication workshops were also held on both campuses to reinforce effective communication skills. These workshops hosted approximately 50 students across both campuses and received positive feedback. However, the committee discussed ways to reach more students, such as changing the time and/or location of the workshops.

During SGTC's TechForce luncheon, the annual internal fundraising event, faculty and staff participated in games such as Jeopardy to strengthen faculty and staff understanding of the QEP topic and goals. Emails were also sent out throughout the semester to encourage and remind faculty/staff and students about the QEP.

The spring semester of 2025 saw a repeat of the online QEP course being offered to students. However, the rollout of the updated Blackboard ULTRA required changes to the QEP course. The course was now designed for students to follow the course progression, beginning with the pre-test, completing the assigned modules, and finishing with the post-test. Students would not be able to advance to the next module until the previous one was completed. In Spring 2025, 1678 students enrolled in the course. 203 students began the goal-setting module, and 182 began the effective communication module.

Completion numbers remained low, and the committee agreed to incentivize the completion of the modules. To enter the raffle for the prize, the student had to show proof to their instructor that they had completed the modules with the certificates at the end of each module. The instructor would then submit that student's name QEP Director. This incentive did seem to encourage quite a few to complete the course near the end of the semester. Workshops were also held again on effective communication on both campuses, with around 20-25 students attending. Again, the time and location of the workshops seemed to be a hindrance to attending.

The activities in year 0 highlighted the need to analyze the data and continue to make changes to the course and other QEP activities. Suggestions or recommendations will be made to ensure QEP student success goals are being met. Evaluating the data is one of the ways SGTC will see an increase in student success measures.



## RESOURCES

**Evidence:** QEP narrative and budget provide sufficient information to demonstrate institutional capability. Human and financial resources to support the first two years of the plan are firmly committed. The institution has an appropriate plan to fund the completion of the QEP.

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) has a sound financial base and demonstrates financial stability to support the mission of the College and the scope of its programs and services. This is demonstrated by the audited financial reports, steady enrollment trends and growing assets.

The sound financial resources and financial base are supported by the annual budget allocation from the Georgia General Assembly to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). The TCSG Commissioner presents the budget for the Georgia General Assembly to the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia and then to President's Council. Each of the 22 Colleges receive an initial state allocation. State funds are allocated using a formula that incorporates sizes of the college's facilities, enrollment data and other defined factors. State funds are allocated into operating and personnel categories.

In addition to funds allocated by TCSG, SGTC generates revenue through tuition, fees, bookstore sales, and dormitory and cafeteria revenue and from continuing education and business industry services. The College also seeks revenue through various grant opportunities. These grants are federal, state and local grants that may be renewed annually or more frequently. All of the various revenue streams are consolidated into the annual budget and are presented to the SGTC Local Board of Directors for review annually.

An adequate budget has been allocated to the QEP for it to be successful over the five years of the plan., As SGTC is committed to utilizing available resources to best serve the mission and strategic plan of the college, state, federal, and local funding will be used to fund the QEP, both in its personnel and operating expense structure.

## INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

South Georgia Technical College prepares annual financial statements compliant with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). These statements include a Statement of Net Position; Statement of Revenue, Expenditure and Changes in Net Position; and Statement of Cash Flow.

The Georgia Department of Audits performs audits for the SGTC financial statements in accordance with the standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. SGTC had a college audit for FY2024. For fiscal years in which SGTC did not have a college audit, SGTC's financial statements are audited as part of the Technical College System of Georgia's annual audit. SGTC has had a clean audit history with no audit finding or questioned costs.

## BUDGET

An adequate budget has been allocated to the QEP for it to be very successful over the five-year period. State, federal, and local funding will be used to fund the QEP, both in its personnel and operating expense structure.

Category	FY24 2023-2024	FY25 2024-2025	FY26 2025-2026	FY27 2026-2027	FY28 2027-2028	FY29 2028-2029	Total Budgeted QEP Expenses
Director's Salary & Benefits	5,300.00	23,602.00	24,074.00	24,556.00	25,047.00	25,548.00	128,127.00
Assistant Director's Salary & Benefits		8,424.00	8,592.00	8,764.00	8,940.00	9,118.00	43,838.00
QEP Liaison Salary & Benefits	12,760.00	28,187.00	14,375.00	14,663.00	14,956.00	15,255.00	100,196.00
Software Subscriptions-Laserfiche (25% of Subscription)		4,225.00	4,225.00	4,225.00	4,225.00	4,225.00	21,125.00
Marketing	2,000.00	25,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	47,000.00
Staff Development	2,495.00	2,395.00	4,095.00	4,095.00	4,095.00	4,095.00	21,270.00
Publications & Printing	500.00	3,000.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	13,500.00
Supplies & Materials	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	11,000.00
Contingency (~10% of Budget)	2,500.00	10,000.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,750.00	38,750.00
Total Per Fiscal Year	26,555.00	106,833.00	71,361.00	72,303.00	73,263.00	74,491.00	424,806.00

## SALARIES

Money has been allocated for SGTC faculty and staff who will assume extra duties as part of the QEP initiative. Half of the QEP Director's salary is accounted for in the budget. The QEP Director is a full-time Criminal Justice Instructor. Half of her salary, \$128,127 for the five years, is allocated towards her QEP duties. She has been given a reduction of classes to accommodate her additional QEP duties. The QEP Assistant Director's salary and the Director of IE, who is also the SACSCOC Liaison, are also allocated for this budget. They will be responsible for some of the administrative duties and assessment for the QEP. Total salaries allotment for the QEP is \$272,161.

**Software Subscription** for Laserfiche for the five years is being allocated at 25% of the cost for this subscription. This software is used by the Registrar to pull reports for other state requirements. The same software system will be used by the QEP to pull reports related to graduation credentials as one of the Student Success measures. The total amount allocated for the QEP for this software services is \$21,125.00.

**Marketing** line item for the five years of the QEP is \$47,000. This cost will cover marketing materials for the QEP in the form of banners, brochures, promotional materials, incentives for students to encourage participation in the workshops, QEP course, and student activities.

**Staff development** cost is a line item for the QEP budget. Faculty and staff will need professional development yearly on the QEP to keep them engaged in the process. Faculty will also need professional development in best advisement practices in order to help students with defining their academic goals at the college.

**The Publication and Printing** line item is \$13,500 for the five years of the QEP. This line item will cover the cost of printing materials for the classrooms and offices that will provide communication examples to students on how to effectively communicate their needs to continue in school.

**Supplies and Materials** for the five years of the project come to \$11,000. This line item will be used to purchase supplies and materials for workshops and student activities associated with the QEP to engage students outside of the course.

There is a contingency **line item for 10% of the overall budget. This line item is included for unexpected expenses that may arise that the committee or SGTC didn't account for as it relates to the QEP.**

## INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITY

South Georgia Technical College has committed sufficient human and financial resources to initiate, implement, and complete the Ready, Set, J.E.T.! QEP initiative. The College administration views the QEP as a shared opportunity to which both campuses should contribute. Around 20 faculty and staff are involved in the QEP committee. Faculty and staff perform committee duties on a voluntary basis and as a part of their regular duties. Some faculty release time has been given for these voluntary duties where appropriate. Committee participation is acknowledged by the College on each participating faculty and staff member's annual performance evaluation. Voluntary participation in this and other committees is highly appreciated by the faculty and staff.

### Space Commitments

The SGTC Ready, Set, J.E.T.! initiative requires no use of additional space beyond setting up rooms for meetings or workshops, which is part of the College's day-to-day routine. Classroom 129 of the Griffin Building has been assigned by the College to be used as the designated meeting room for the QEP meetings. Materials and other incidentals will be stored in the closet in room 129. No aspect of the implementation will require use of the college's physical resources beyond that which is required on a daily basis for the common business of the campus.

SGTC is committed to making the QEP of Ready, Set J.E.T. (Jobs, Education, Training) successful in helping students to be successful in their academic and industry goals. By concentrating on specific soft skills like setting S.M.A.R.T. goals and learning to communicate effectively, SGTC is dedicated to preparing students for the current and the future. Through dedicated efforts to teach students about goal setting, the college endeavors to increase retention and graduation rates. Displaying examples of how to communicate effectively, SGTC hopes that this will give students the tools to be able to express their needs to their instructors, employers, and other staff on campus, which will ultimately cut down on withdrawal rates.

In conclusion, the Ready, Set J.E.T. QEP is ready to take off in true SGTC fashion to fulfill its mission of workforce development.



## **ROLES AND DESCRIPTIONS**

### **QEP Committee Members**

Katrice Martin, Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Grants Coordinator

Teresa McCook, QEP Director & Criminal Justice Instructor/Advisor

Brett Murray, Co-director QEP & Dean of Academic Affairs

Joshua Curtin, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs

Kari Bodrey, Registrar

Kelly Everett, Director of Financial Aid

Jennifer Robinson, Special Services Coordinator

Dr. Deo Cochran-Sherrod, Retention & Coaching Specialist

Danyell Reid, Admin Services Director

Allyson King, Librarian

Sheri Bass, Medical Assisting Instructor/Advisor

Wanda Bishop, Criminal Justice Instructor/Advisor

Mary Cross, Marketing Instructor/Advisor

Brandon Gross, Horticulture Instructor/Advisor

Tammy Hamilton, Accounting Instructor/Advisor

Rose Leggett, Mathematics Instructor

Dorothy McKenzie, Cosmetology Instructor/Advisor

Jeff Sheppard, Electrical Systems Technology Instructor/Advisor

Nicole Turner, BAT Instructor/Advisor

Ludwig Watzlowick, Culinary Arts Instructor/Advisor

Melissa Grantham, LEA Administrative Assistant/Student Representative

Jessie Cadenhead, Student Government President, Student Representative

John Wilson, Previous Librarian





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# APPENDICES



I am extending an invitation to you to be on the committee to help with this process where we have to:

1. Select a topic
2. Define the Outcomes
3. Research the Topic
4. Identify the Actions to be Implemented
5. Establish a Timeline for Implementation
6. Organize for Success
7. Assess the Success of the QEP
8. Prepare the QEP for Submission (it does not have to be fully completed by the time they come to visit, but they do need to see the process/progress)

The topics for the QEP can include a variety of areas that focus on student learning and success such as student engagement, retention, and degree completion, enhancing the academic climate for student learning, enhancing critical thinking, writing and math skills, innovative teaching, and learning strategies, targeting completion in gateway courses, etc.

Please let me know if you want to be involved in this process or if you wish to decline the invitation. I am hoping to have the first meeting in late August.

Thanks for all for your help with this and all that you do to make sure that our students here are successful. I am looking forward to working with you all 😊.

Thanks,

*Katrice*

<image002.jpg>

Good, Better, Best. Never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best - St. Jerome



## Spring 2025 Ultra QEP Course information

Students access the course like they are going to Blackboard. This course is under **Organizations** on the left hand side of the page.

When they click on the course, they will see two modules. *S.M.A.R.T. Goals* and *Effective Communication*. Each module is to be completed one step at a time in order. Both have a Pre-Test, Post Test, and an Exit Survey.

These directions are provided in the course for the students before each tutorial. There are five tutorials that the students complete and they have the opportunity to earn a certificate for each tutorial. These can be saved for future employment portfolios.

This is an example of the directions that the students are given. See below:

### Read First: How to Access the “Achieve Your Goals” Tutorial

Hello, and thank you for participating in this SGTC QEP activity. In this session, you will be completing a tutorial on how to “Achieve Your Goals.”

Alright, let’s learn goal-setting strategies for success!

1. First, you will need to click on the link “Achieve Your Goals” in this Blackboard Module.
2. Second, you’ll need to sign in to your account. Click the “Sign in/Register” link.

South Georgia Technical College EBSCOlearning

Home Sign In/Register Contact

Welcome to PrepSTEP® for Colleges

Find Tests, Tutorials, eBooks...

Core Math and Science Skills  
Build your skills in these essential subject areas.

Core English Skills  
Strengthen your reading and writing skills.

College Success Skills  
Tools for navigating campus, your courses, and life.

Career Preparation  
Achieve your job and career goals and get ready for future success.

3. At this time, you will need to login to your account. To do this, click “Access through your institution”

Sign In Select Your Language: Engl

Sign in to your account below.

Username:

Password:

Forgot Password? [Login](#)

Or

Access through your institution

Sign In with Google

New User?

[Register](#)

[Why do I have to register?](#)




Click Me

- You may be asked to “Find your institution.” No problem, just type: South Georgia Technical College. Make sure to spell out the full name. The computer won’t recognize SGTC or South GA. As you type, you may see our icon emerge. If it does, feel free to click anytime.

Sign in to EBSCO LearningExpress Platform

Find your institution

Examples: Institute of Technology, sue@uni.edu, ASU.

-  South Georgia State College
-  South Georgia Technical College
-  Georgia Southwestern State University

Click Me

- Once you find SGTC and select it, you’ll be directed to “Open Athens.” Select “Students” if you are a student. Select “Staff” if you are a faculty or staff member.

OpenAthens

Choose how to sign in

- Staff**  
Sign in at South Georgia Technical College
- Students**  
Sign in at South Georgia Technical College
- OpenAthens**  
Sign in with an OpenAthens account


By using this site you agree to us setting cookies. Please see our [privacy and cookie information](#).

Powered by OpenAthens

Click Me

- Now, enter your SGTC email and password
- Once you’re signed in, you will be directed to the “PrepSTEP for Colleges” homepage. Click on “College Success Skills.” A dropdown menu will appear. Click on “Organizational Strategies” in this dropdown.

Welcome to PrepSTEP® for Colleges

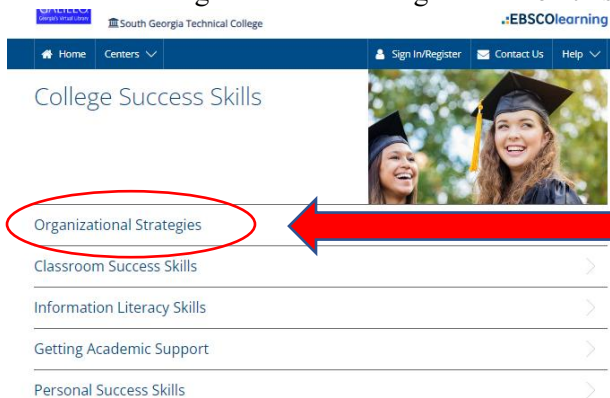
Find Tests, Tutorials, eBooks... 



Click Here first for dropdown

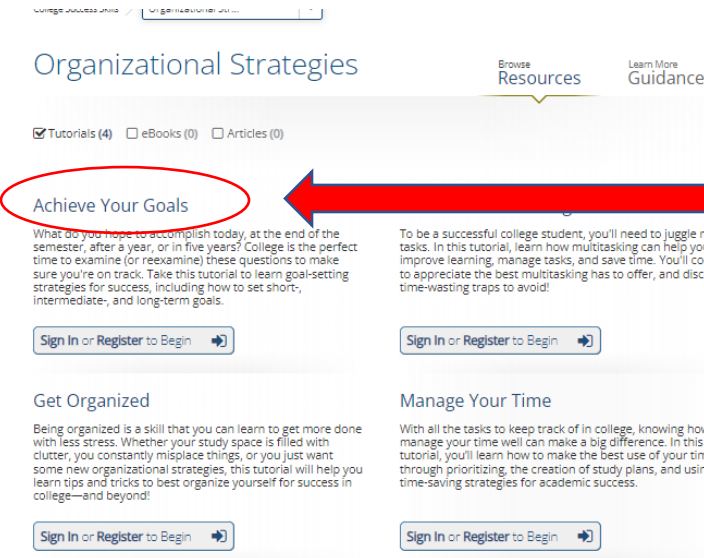
Next, click "Organizational Strategies"

8. After clicking the link, you will be directed to the "College Success Skills" page. You'll need to click on the "Organizational Strategies" link on this page as well.



Click Me

9. Once you have clicked, you'll be directed to the "Organization Strategies" page. Once there, click "Achieve Your Goals."



Click Me

10. Complete the tutorial. Once 100% finished, click on "Score My Test."  
11. Take a look at your score. View the answers. Once finished, click on "Completion Certificate."  
12. Type your name and hit submit. Type your real name. Save these for Employment Portfolios.





13. Congratulations! Now, take a picture of your certificate with your smartphone or hit the Print Screen (prt.sc) key on your computer or laptop and save the image as a png or jpeg.
14. Once you have that picture, upload it by clicking the "Upload Files" link within the assignment. You should see Attach files box emerge. Drag your picture into the box and drop. Hit submit.

Good luck! And if you have any issues logging into GALILEO as instructed from the above directions, please contact Librarian, Allyson King at [Allyson.king@southgatech.edu](mailto:Allyson.king@southgatech.edu).

Students can now go to the next module, **Effective Communication** and complete the next tutorials in order. They include the following if you would like to continue looking in **Galileo** and see for yourself.

- Under **College Success Skills**, see **Classroom Success Skills** and then click on "**Effective Classroom Listening**". Complete the tutorial. Completion = certificate earned.
- Next see **Career Preparation** and then **Build Workplace Skills**. See Workplace Professionalism Tutorial on "**Attitude and Teamwork**". Completion = certificate earned
- The next step is completing the tutorial on "**Communicating with your Professor**". It is found under **College Success Skills** and then click on **Getting Academic Support**, look for Communicating with Your Professor. Completion = certificate earned
- The last tutorial is under **Career Preparation**. Go to **Build Workplace Skills**. Then click on Verbal Communication. Look for "**Verbal Communication at Work**" tutorial. Completion = certificate earned.

Feel free to look around Galileo. You may find that there are other tutorials or information to help you in your program. See Ms. King for more information regarding Galileo.

Thank you for encouraging your students to complete this QEP during the semester. Each one helps us move forward in our goal.



# Graduation Application Instructions



Scan the QR Code



<https://www.southgatech.edu/admissions/registrar/graduation/>

Please see your advisor to check your graduation eligibility

**STEP 1**

Fill in your personal information



02



**STEP 2**

Choose Your Program

03

**STEP 3**



Choose your credential (diploma or degree)

**STEP 4**

Complete the graduate survey and graduation acknowledgements



04

05



**STEP 5**

Click Submit when finished

**STEP 6**  
You're finished!



06

Students will receive an email evaluation within 2 weeks of submitting the application. Students will receive emails throughout the semester regarding the graduation ceremony.

Once final grades are submitted and there are no holds on the account, a digital copy of the diploma/degree will be sent to the email provided and the physical copy will be mailed to the address provided within 15 - 20 business days after processing.

Questions? Call Registrar at 229-931-2700 or email [registrar@southgatech.edu](mailto:registrar@southgatech.edu)



# Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) Application Instructions

Scan the QR Code



<https://portal.laserfiche.com/f0087/forms/TCCApplication>

Please see your advisor to check your TCC eligibility

**STEP 1**

Fill in your personal information



01

02



**STEP 2**

Choose Your Program

**STEP 3**



Choose your TCC from the provided list

03

**STEP 4**

Click the Add button to submit additional TCCs



04

05



**STEP 5**

Click Submit when finished

You're Done! Congratulations



06

You will receive a digital copy of the TCC(s) to the email provided and the physical copy will be mailed to the address provided within 15 - 20 business days after processing.

Completed TCCs will receive communication within 2 weeks. TCCs with classes in progress will receive communication within 2 weeks of the beginning of the following semester.

Questions? Call Registrar at 229-931-2700 or email [registrar@southgatech.edu](mailto:registrar@southgatech.edu)



## Appendix E

Going with the Jet/flight/takeoff theme...

Here are some pre-boarding, pre-flight, captain, and landing announcements. Rather than 'flight attendants' speaking, I think we should make video, that way we can be passengers and not have to play more than one part. We can change whatever words to make it make more sense.

After landing, the instructor can deplane and meet with a student who is unsure about starting college. Then the captain (you!) can be a narrator and introduce the theme and S.M.A.R.T goals, walking the instructor through how to help the student write S.M.A.R.T goals.

### Pre-boarding:

Good morning. This is the pre-boarding announcement for flight 1948 to South Georgia Technical College on Ready, Set, J.E.T. Airlines. We are now inviting those passengers with a passion for helping and a dedication to workforce development to begin boarding at this time. Please have your boarding pass and **excitement ready**. Thank you.

*We can create a boarding pass to give to all instructors. The boarding pass can be a card with our logo and theme and S.M.A.R.T. goals. Passengers can board the plane with their boarding pass.*

### Pre-Flight:

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome onboard Flight 1948 with service from **uncertainty to thriving**. We are currently third in line for take-off and are expected to be in the air in approximately seven minutes time. We ask that you please fasten your seatbelts at this time and secure all **questions** underneath your seat or in the overhead compartments. We also ask that your seats and table trays are in the upright position for take-off. Please turn off all personal electronic devices, including laptops and cell phones. Thank you for choosing Ready, Set, J.E.T. Airlines. Enjoy your flight.

### Captain's Announcement:

Good afternoon passengers. This is your captain speaking. First, I'd like to welcome everyone on Ready, Set, J.E.T. Flight 1947. We are currently cruising at an altitude of 33,000 feet at an airspeed of 400 miles per hour. The time is 1:25 pm. The weather looks good and with the tailwind on our side, we expect to land at South Georgia Tech Parkway approximately 10 minutes ahead of schedule. The outlook at South Georgia Tech is *promising* with a high chance of **success**. We should get a great view of the city as we descend. The cabin crew will be coming around to offer you support for our student's success. I'll talk to you again before we reach our destination. Until then, sit back, relax, and enjoy the rest of the flight.

*Announcement about beginning decent*

### Landing announcement:

Ready, Set, J.E.T. Airlines would like to give you a warm welcome to South Georgia Tech, where the local time is currently 16:00. We hope you have enjoyed the flight with us today. We will be arriving at Terminal 2, and for customers with checked luggage, a reminder that our flight number today is 1948. When we do arrive at the stand, please be careful when opening the overhead compartment, as items may have moved during the flight. Finally, thank you for flying with Ready, Set, J.E.T. Airlines, especially our **invaluable** instructors and our **supportive** staff, your loyalty is greatly appreciated.

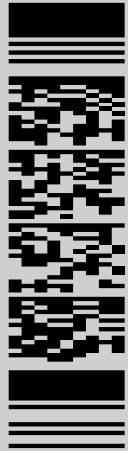
In between announcements, we can include different things like pictures and videos around campus (registration days, other events) and on-campus resources (WIOA, Foundations, VA, Special pops, etc.)

I can see it in my head but don't know if I am explaining it well lol



# BOARDING PASS

ECONOMY +



Name

**QUALITY ENHANCEMENT  
PLAN**

FLIGHT

**1234**

DATE

**5 SEPT**

SEAT

**1A**

From

**S.M.A.R.T. GOALS**

To

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

GATE

**A03**

BOARDING TIME

**11:08AM**

TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE SGTC QEP, LOG INTO  
BLACKBOARD AND LOOK UNDER ORGANIZATIONS.  
THE QEP WILL BE LISTED HERE.

NAME

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT  
PLAN

FROM

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

TO

EFFECTIVE  
COMMUNICATION



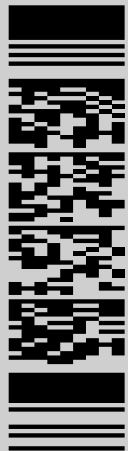
0 35545 62336 78 1

SOUTH G.A.TECH AIRLINES



# BOARDING PASS

ECONOMY +



Name

**QUALITY ENHANCEMENT  
PLAN**

FLIGHT

**1234**

DATE

**5 SEPT**

SEAT

**1B**

From

**S.M.A.R.T. GOALS**

To

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

GATE

**A03**

BOARDING TIME

**11:08AM**

TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE SGTC QEP, LOG INTO  
BLACKBOARD AND LOOK UNDER ORGANIZATIONS.  
THE QEP WILL BE LISTED HERE.

NAME

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT  
PLAN

FROM

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

TO

EFFECTIVE  
COMMUNICATION



0 35545 62336 78 1

SOUTH G.A.TECH AIRLINES



Appendix G

Responses Overview

Active

Responses

**131**

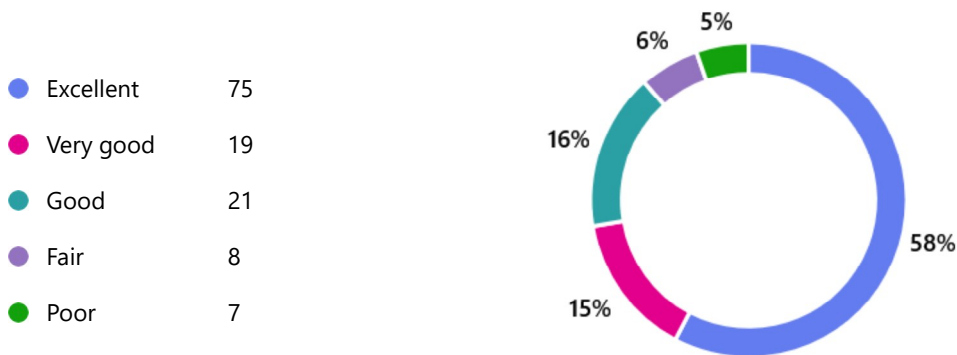
Average Time

**00:47**

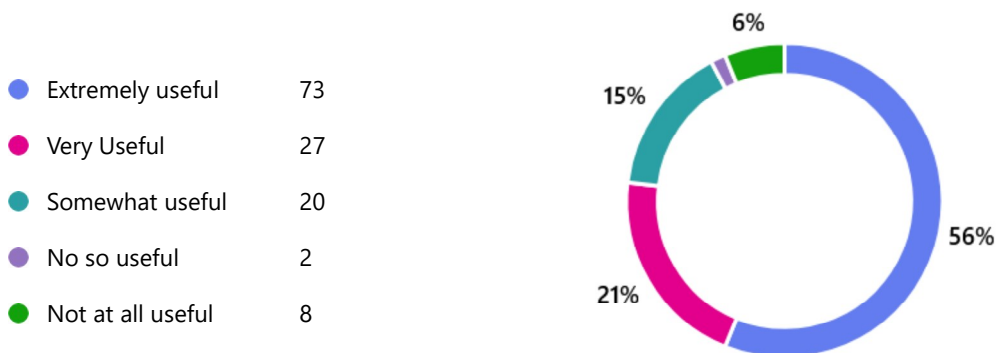
Duration

**435** Days

1. Overall, how would you rate the Effective Communication course?

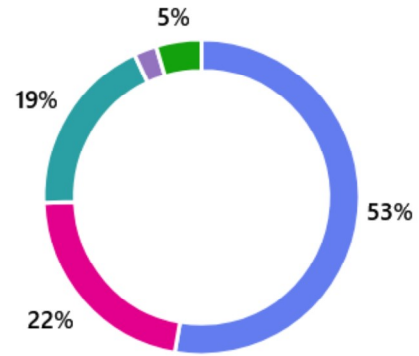


2. How useful were the tutorials?



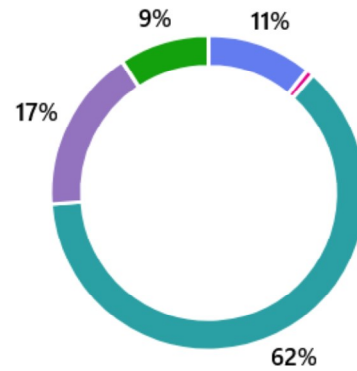
3. How helpful were the assignments and reading materials to your understanding of the material?

● Extremely helpful	68
● Very helpful	28
● Somewhat helpful	24
● Not so helpful	3
● Not at all helpful	6



4. What did you think about the length of the Effective Communication course? Was it manageable?

● Much too short	14
● Too short	1
● Just right	81
● Too long	22
● Much too long	12



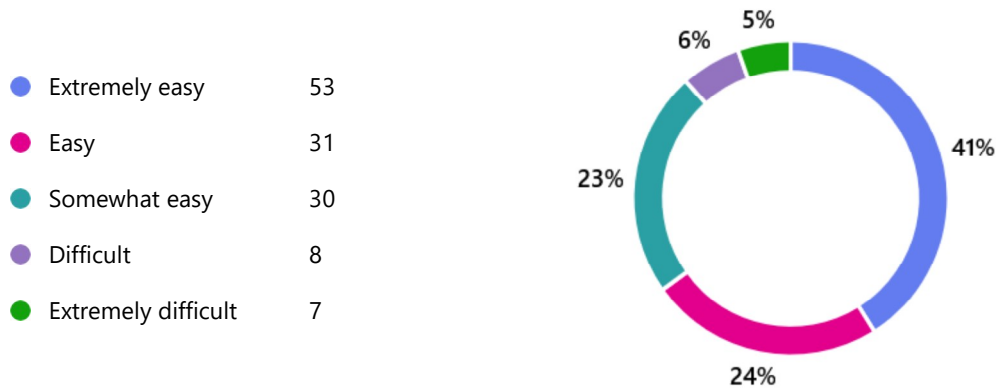
5. On a scale of 1-10, one being not at all and ten being most useful, how useful was the material to you in the Effective Communication course?

**119**  
Responses

Latest Responses  
 "8"  
 "10 being most useful"  
 "10"  
 ...

41 respondents (34%) answered 10 for this question.

6. How easy was it to navigate through the Effective Communication Course?



7. What changes, if any would you like to see made to the Effective Communication course?

86  
Responses

Latest Responses

- "Nothing"
- "none"
- "none"
- ...

24 respondents (28%) answered none for this question.





## Responses Overview

Active

Responses

**77**

Average Time

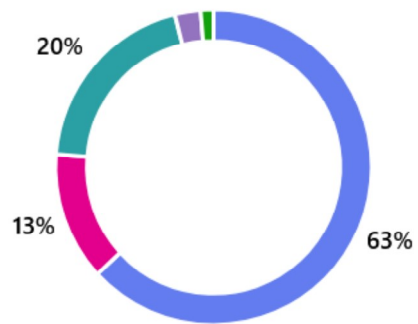
**00:57**

Duration

**435** Days

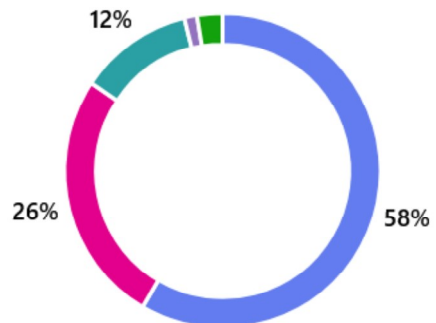
1. Overall, how would you rate the SMART Goals course?

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Excellent	48
<span style="color: magenta;">●</span> Very good	10
<span style="color: teal;">●</span> Good	15
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> Fair	2
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Poor	1



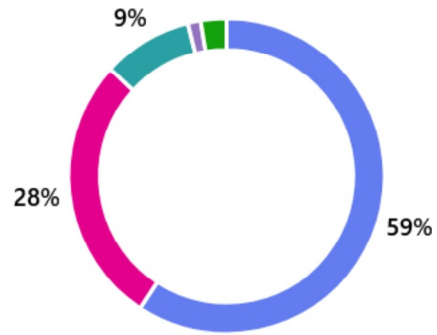
2. How useful was the tutorial?

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Extremely useful	45
<span style="color: magenta;">●</span> Very Useful	20
<span style="color: teal;">●</span> Somewhat useful	9
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> No so useful	1
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Not at all useful	2



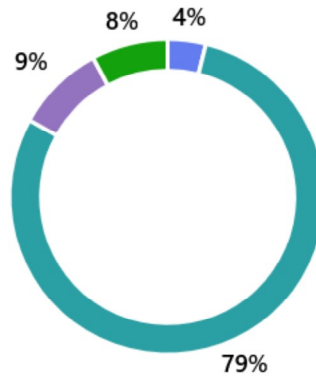
3. How helpful were the assignments and reading materials to your understanding of the material?

● Extremely helpful	45
● Very helpful	21
● Somewhat helpful	7
● Not so helpful	1
● Not at all helpful	2



4. What did you think about the length of the SMART Goals course? Was it manageable?

● Much too short	3
● Too short	0
● Just right	61
● Too long	7
● Much too long	6



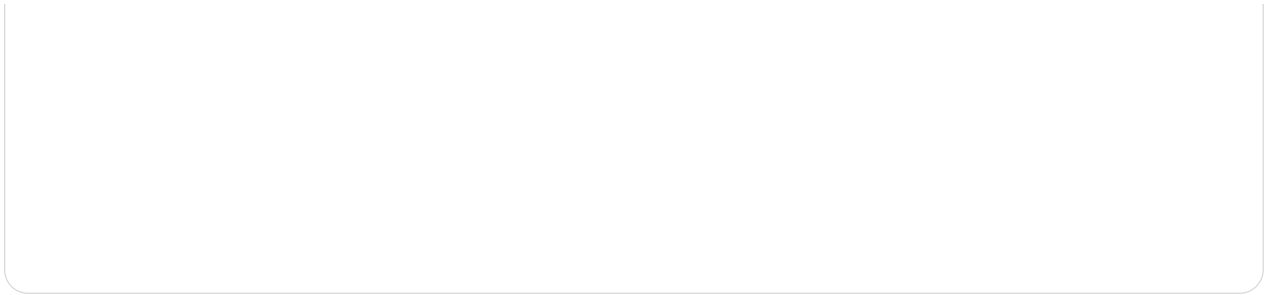
5. On a scale of 1-10, one being not at all and ten being most useful, how useful was the material to you in the SMART Goals course?

**74**  
Responses

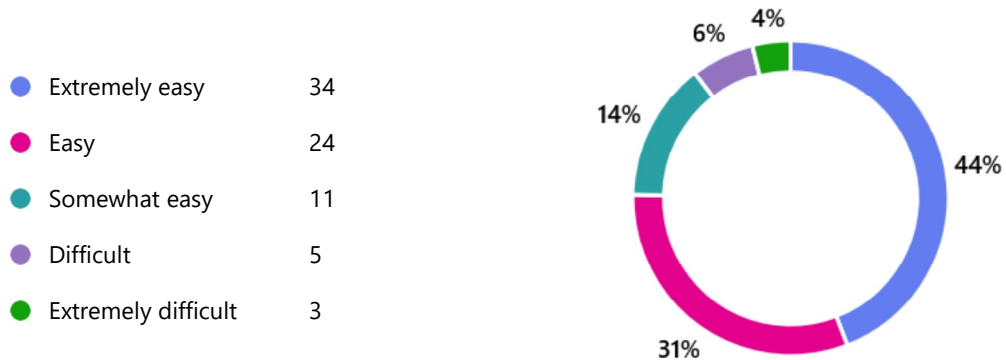
Latest Responses

- "8"
- "8"
- "10"
- ...

38 respondents (51%) answered 10 for this question.



6. How easy was it to navigate through the SMART Goals Course?



7. What changes, if any would you like to see made to the SMART Goals course?

57 Responses

Latest Responses  
"It was good"  
"nothing changes"  
...

11 respondents (19%) answered None for this question.

instructions course is good Debra Merrell Blackboard  
 not changes study fine goals course Better  
 No changes **None** changes

Appendix H



## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

To verify

**Joe Singletary**

has successfully completed

**Achieve Your Goals**

course presented by EBSCOlearning.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Laddin'.

General Manager, EBSCOlearning

08/31/24

Date of Course Completion

EMPOWERING FUTURES, ENSURING SUCCESS





## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

To verify

**Joe Singletary**

has successfully completed

**Communicating with Your Professor**

course presented by EBSCOlearning.

*Michael Laddin*

General Manager, EBSCOlearning

08/31/24

Date of Course Completion

EMPOWERING FUTURES, ENSURING SUCCESS

# NEED TO KNOW?

SGTC QEP • Ready, Set, J.E.T.! • Communication Skills



**1. “What’s the best way to contact you if I have a question?”**

*Knowing how and when to reach out shows you’re taking charge of your learning.*

**2. “Can you help me understand the expectations for this assignment?”**

*Never be afraid to ask for clarification—it shows you care about doing your best.*

**3. “How can I improve my performance in this class?”**

*This question opens the door to feedback, tips, and resources that can help you grow.*

**4. “Are there any resources (like tutoring or workshops) you recommend?”**

*It shows you’re looking for support and willing to use tools for success.*

**5. “Can we go over my grade together so I understand where I stand?”**

*Understanding your progress helps you stay on track and focused on improvement.*



Help your students soar to success by keeping lines of communication open and encouraging them to reach out to you with any questions or concerns!



[SGTC News](#) > [SGTC Conducts Communication Workshop on Cordele Campus](#)

## SGTC Conducts Communication Workshop On Cordele Campus

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024



STUDENTS AT SGTC'S CRISP COUNTY CENTER PARTICIPATE IN A ROLE-PLAYING EXERCISE DURING A RECENT WORKSHOP ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

South Georgia Technical College's Cordele campus held a Q.E.P. (Quality Enhancement Plan) workshop focusing on the importance of Effective Communication and the various ways communication has an impact on people's lives. The event was held in the LaPorte Auditorium at the SGTC Crisp County Center and was designed to focus on the soft skills students need to be successful in the workplace.

Tammy Hamilton, Accounting Instructor and Q.E.P. committee member, led the workshop. Hamilton opened the session with the simple question "What is Effective Communication" to engage students in the theme of the event.

Communication is categorized into four main types: verbal, nonverbal, written, and visual. Students in the workshop participated in role playing exercises to explore the different types of communication and how important communication is to daily life.

For more information about workshops on the Cordele Campus, please contact Charlene Williams at 229.271.4048 or [cwilliams@southgatech.edu](mailto:cwilliams@southgatech.edu).

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[SGTC News](#) > [SGTC Students Learn Goal-Setting Strategies in S.M.A.R.T. Goals Workshop](#)

# SGTC Students Learn Goal-Setting Strategies In S.M.A.R.T. Goals Workshop

FEBRUARY 13, 2025



SPECIAL SERVICES COORDINATOR JENNIFER ROBINSON LEADS A RECENT GOAL-SETTING WORKSHOP FOR SGTC STUDENTS.

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) students recently participated in a S.M.A.R.T. Goals workshop led by Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Robinson as part of the college's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Ready, Set, J.E.T! (Jobs, Education, and Training).

The workshop focused on soft skills essential for workforce success, with an emphasis on effective communication and goal setting. Students learned how to apply the S.M.A.R.T. framework, which encourages setting goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound. Through real-world examples, Robinson helped participants visualize their personal, academic, and career goals while demonstrating how structured goal-setting can lead to success.

South Georgia Technical College offers over 200 programs designed to prepare students for rewarding careers. Learn more at [www.southgatech.edu](http://www.southgatech.edu).

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[SGTC News](#) > [SGTC helps students set goals with Vision Board party.](#)

## SGTC Helps Students Set Goals With Vision Board Party

FEBRUARY 2, 2024



SGTC STUDENTS ARE SHOWN ABOVE WORKING ON CREATING THEIR GOALS AND VISIONS AT THE STUDENT AFFAIRS VISION BOARD PARTY RECENTLY. THE ACTIVITY WAS ALSO HELD IN SUPPORT OF SGTC'S SACSCOC QEP.

The South Georgia Technical College Student Affairs department hosted a Goal Setting & Vision Board Party for students recently in the Hicks Hall Student Center area from 6 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. This was designed to help promote SGTC's Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) "Ready, Set, J.E.T.," which stands for Jobs, Education and Technical Training.

"The SGTC Quality Enhancement Plan is designed to focus on the soft skills students need in the workplace to become successful," said SGTC QEP and Grants Coordinator Katice Martin. "Learning to set S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) goals and follow through with them, utilizing the vision board activity, should promote effective communication and help them improve their customer service, listening skills, and overall communication process.

SGTC Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and QEP member Josh Curtin coordinated with Martin and the QEP team to plan this activity. "The purpose of this student activity is to encourage students to have a vision and a goal for themselves. This activity allows them to be creative and put their goals and visions down in a photo or word format and take it back with them. Hopefully the 'vision board' will serve as a reminder for them about where they want to be and what they want to do over the next few weeks, months, or years," said Curtin, who added that it was also fun for the students.

The students were given magazines, markers, poster board, and other materials and allowed to develop a vision that would remind them of the goals that they were setting for themselves.

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[SGTC News](#) > [SGTC QEP Committee Offers Online Course and Workshop for Students](#)

## SGTC QEP Committee Offers Online Course And Workshop For Students

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024



TERESA MCCOOK (LEFT) AND JENNIFER ROBINSON INFORM SGTC STUDENTS ABOUT A FREE ONLINE COURSE ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

South Georgia Technical College is implementing several initiatives for the college's QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) effort for 2024-2025. Recently, members of the SGTC QEP committee launched a free online course for students and conducted a workshop on effective communication strategies.

The free course is titled Ultra QEP FALL 2024 Organization, and is designed to help students learn how to effectively communicate and set S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound) goals. The students can earn certificates for each module completed and these can be utilized in their portfolios for future employment opportunities. The students are encouraged to complete the course during the fall semester. It is designed to be short, but helpful for all students.

The theme for SGTC's QEP effort is "Ready, Set, J.E.T. (Jobs, Education, and Training)", and committee members Teresa McCook, Criminal Justice instructor, and Jennifer Robinson, Special Services Coordinator, recently handed out "boarding passes" to students and instructions on how to access the course. They also gave the students jet-shaped stress relievers imprinted with the "Ready, Set, J.E.T." slogan.

Students with questions or concerns regarding the QEP FALL 2024 course should feel free to contact Teresa McCook at [QEP@southgatech.edu](mailto:QEP@southgatech.edu) or call 229-931-6940.

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Jennifer Robinson (left) conducts a workshop for SGTC students on the topic of effective communication.

In addition to the launch of the online course, the QEP committee also offered a workshop for students on effective communication techniques in which Robinson discussed the differences between effective and ineffective communication and why effective communication matters. She also gave practical examples of how to communicate effectively with different people on a college campus.

South Georgia Technical College constantly strives to enhance the quality of the more than 200 programs offered across the Americus and Cordele campuses. Learn more at [www.southgatech.edu](http://www.southgatech.edu) and apply now for fall c-term and earn a full semester of credit in just eight weeks. C-term classes begin October 16.

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They were also asked to create a plan on how they were going to reach those goals.

SGTC Student Affairs also provided the students with free snacks, and soft drinks in addition to the materials to create the vision boards.

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## TCC Idea

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**From** Bodrey, Kari <kbodrey@southgatech.edu>

**Date** Tue 8/5/2025 11:40 AM

**To** QEP Committee <qepcommittee@southgatech.onmicrosoft.com>

**Cc** Wisham, Jason <jWisham2@southgatech.edu>

 1 attachment (171 KB)

ASTT TCC.pdf;

Good morning team,

Jason Wisham brought me the attached document for his 3 program TCCs. He was using the theme of ready, set, graduate using red, yellow and green to highlight each TCC. Of course, I am old and blind, so the yellow is hard for me to see, but we discussed making the yellow a deeper shade. He plans to put this on his bulletin board along with the TCC and graduation instruction flyers. He will sign and have the student sign on the line under each TCC when they apply. This might not work for everyone, but perhaps it can be adjusted to make sense for the other programs.

I just thought I would share this great idea!

Thanks,  
Kari

**Kari P. Bodrey**

**Registrar**

South Georgia Technical College  
900 South GA Tech Parkway  
Americus, GA 31709

p: 229-931-2700  
f: 229-931-5001  
e: kbodrey@southgatech.edu

---

**FW: New message from Holly Coleman**

---

**From** Cowan, Carol <ccowan@southgatech.edu>

**Date** Mon 7/21/2025 8:04 AM

**To** Martin, Katrice <ktaylor@southgatech.edu>; Murray, Brett <bmurray@southgatech.edu>; McCook, Teresa <tmccook@southgatech.edu>

**Cc** Coleman, Holly <hcolema1@student.southgatech.edu>

This student is not able to access QEP – I have made it a requirement for my graduate students every semester. Can someone please advise?

**From:** Holly Coleman via Remind <chat+d43c122f-de04-4769-8193-a4bf3ea8f07e@mail.remind.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, July 20, 2025 8:05 AM

**To:** Cowan, Carol <ccowan@southgatech.edu>

**Subject:** New message from Holly Coleman



Holly Coleman

Direct message to you

---

I can't access any of the QEP courses it says content not available for all of them

[Reply to Holly Coleman](#)

Or reply to the email

---

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**READY • SET • J.E.T.!**

**SGTC Q.E.P.**



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**ING**

**[www.southgatech.edu](http://www.southgatech.edu)**



Cosmetology Advising Meeting

April 4, 2024 @2:30 p.m.

Present

Dorthea McKenzie, Cosmetology Instructor

Katrice Martin, Director of Institutional Effectiveness

Kari Bodrey, Registrar

Meeting started at 2:30 pm . Katrice Martin went over the QEP and the S.M.A.R.T. Goals component which teaches students how to set goals related to the S.M.A.R.T. philosophy. Finishing up their program of study is a way to teach students how to set those goals for themselves and to stick with those goals throughout the program. TCCs are a great way to set up short term goals for students to progress them through their program, to retain them and ultimately graduate them because earning the TCC is a great motivational tool. She also went through the purpose of the meeting which was to see what advising devices were in place to track students through their program and TCCs progression.

Ms. Mckenzie went through her advising technique and showed their advising sheet. Kari Bodrey went over the curriculum sheet and the various TCCs that could be gained throughout the program and discussed with the instructors of how their students could be registered for core classes and how to apply for TCCs through the website. Students do not have to wait until the end of the semester to apply for TCCs. If the instructor sees where the student is eligible to apply, he or she can have the student fill out the form at the beginning of the semester and they will be evaluated at the end of the semester.

Ms. Mckenzie asked about a Shampoo Specialist TCC. She said that they may also be motivation for students to stay with the program because they may be able to be employed with that TCC. That will give them a chance to earn money while they are in the program. Ms. Martin mentioned that she would look into it and see what would be required to get the TCC.

Ms. Martin also asked Ms. McKenzie if she had any questions about her PERKINS Grant Performance Improvement Plan concerning graduation rate and Under represented genders numbers.

She didn't understand the perimeters for how graduation rate was generated. Ms. Martin explained it according to PERKINS standards. Ms. McKenzie also stated that the cost of the kit may be a barrier to retaining students. She also mentioned that for under represented genders that Barbering was attracted a lot of her students after they graduate and maybe she could recruit some males from there in the same way, but that it was hard to attract males to Cosmetology in general.

Ms. Mckenzie was given an advising folder with their curriculum and flyers to hang in the classroom with a QR code to the TCC application.

The meeting ended at 3:05 p.m.