Thinking Critically about Service Excellence

On July 24, 2015, North Campus President, Dr. Avis Proctor hosted a retreat for a team of Academic and Student Affairs personnel. One of the agenda items focused on student learning with an emphasis on BC’s Quality Enhancement Plan. To avoid being a “talking head,” the QEP District Director, Dr. Barbara Rodriguez, demonstrated how QEP faculty engage students in active learning strategies to enhance students’ learning of critical thinking skills. As commonly expressed, making content relevant is paramount in the 21st century classroom, which could also apply to a retreat on a Friday during the summer. A topic relevant to North Campus leadership and personnel is service excellence.

Service excellence is described as the way an institution creates and maintains relationships with those it serves through the institution, research, and community outreach. Moreover, service excellence focuses on how well an institution integrates the student into its social and academic life.

During the session, participants were asked to engage in a Think-Pair-Square-Share activity using the Critical Thinking Concepts & Tools mini-guide. The prompt for the activity was to select a service you/your department provides to students. Based on that service, identify a strategy to elevate the service to “excellence” status. Not only were participants thinking critically, they were able to develop strategies to support the College’s 2015-2016 strategic plan.

“Brought Down the House”

In front of a packed conference room, Drs. Michelle Jackson and Barbara Rodriguez discussed learning experiences created by QEP faculty of Economics, English, Religion, and Sociology and how these assignments fostered lower and higher-order thinking. During the Q&A, attendees were eager to learn more about the nuts and bolts of BC’s QEP.

To learn more about the QEP, visit www.broward.edu/qep or to ask questions, email qep@broward.edu

No way of thinking or doing, however ancient, can be trusted without proof. — Henry David Thoreau

Matt Rocco, J.D.  
QEP Taskforce Member Reflection

At Broward College, I work with companies to provide training solutions for their workforce needs and I constantly hear there is a “skills gap” with employees in the area of “soft skills,” particularly critical thinking and problem solving. By improving critical thinking, students can quickly identify issues, recognize the relevant solution to the issue, apply the solution to the facts of the situation and then come to a resolution more efficiently. From the QEP initiative, this will allow students to improve skills required by employers and make them more marketable job candidates.