

Executive Summary



Tyler Connections: Making the First Year Count was developed through planning over a multi-year period. The process began in 2010 with a broad collection of topics, a College-wide survey, and an analysis of course grades, multi-year retention and engagement data. With fall to fall retention under 60%, many new students are clearly having difficulty reaching their academic goals. Also, the CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) data identified low engagement as a student issue, showing that classroom and subject engagement needed improvement.

This QEP focuses on engagement, student learning, and the College's critical role of supporting first year students. Tyler Connections melds with the mission of John Tyler, providing quality educational opportunities that inspire student success. Tyler Connections seeks to increase student learning, maximize educational opportunities for our diverse student body, integrate learning with student development, and build upon John Tyler's ongoing planning and assessment processes. Tyler Connections consists of a comprehensive communications strategy including student orientation, an informative welcome packet, enhanced faculty advising for new students, and a website designed to help students navigate their first year at Tyler. The College will also begin a professional development program aimed at improving classroom experiences through active learning in first year courses.

The QEP Steering Committee developed four learning outcomes for the QEP. To address these goals, five strategies have been identified. These strategies comprise an integrated and comprehensive approach to improving each student's experience of the first year.

QEP Learning Outcomes and Strategies	
Learning Outcome	Strategy
Experience increased success in first year courses	Implement active learning strategies in courses
Improve first year student retention rates	Orientation program; active learning implementation
Express satisfaction with their first year experience	Revised welcome packet; Orientation program; first-year website content
Communicate with his/her faculty advisor when required and when in need of assistance	Enhanced faculty advising process for new students – SDV 100 requirement to meet faculty advisor; faculty letter to advisees

Timeline

Tyler Connections: Making the first year count

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Implement Orientation Program	“Recommended” programs in Spring-Summer 2013; Participant Training begins; First Year Advisory Board established	Begin Required program Fall 2013; <i>TylerConnect</i> program begins Spring 2013; Participant Training continues; Express Orientation offered starting January 2014	Required Orientation in Fall and Spring; Participant Training; Family Guide developed; <i>TylerConnect</i> continues Fall and Spring		
Faculty Advising	Advising document in development; Faculty Advisee Welcome Letter in development	SDV 100 requirement for advising meeting; Advising document in use; Faculty Advisee Welcome Letter in use; Virtual advising pilot Fall 2013			
Faculty Professional Development – Advising	Advising Training begins Spring 2013	Advising Training			
Faculty Professional Development – Active Learning	Active Learning PD in select courses	Active Learning PD expands to more faculty			
Communication Tools Development	New Student Welcome Packet in development; FY Web content in development	New Student Welcome Packet in use Fall 2013; FY Web content launched Fall 2013	New Student Welcome Packet; Web Content Area		