Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Report represents the work that the institution has undertaken to fulfill the quality improvement requirements of the Open Pathway.

_____ 5/12/2022

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor   Date

Dr. Paul Illich, President

_____

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Southeast Community College

_____

Name of Institution

Lincoln, Nebraska

_____

City and State

The institution uses the template below to complete its Quality Initiative Report. The institution may include a report it has prepared for other purposes if it addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the narrative in the template. This template may be used both for reports on initiatives that have been completed and for initiatives that will continue and for which this report serves as a milestone of accomplishments thus far. The complete report should be no more than 6,000 words.

The report must be submitted by June 1 of Year 9.

Submit the report as a PDF file at hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Pathways/Quality Initiatives" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. The file name of the report should follow this format: QIReport[InstitutionName] [State].pdf (e.g., QIProposalNoNameUniversityMN.pdf). The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Date: 5/12/2022

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Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

> 1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

The purpose of SCC's Quality Initiative (QI) is to improve retention and completion by assisting new students in acquiring and enhancing academic resiliency skills to facilitate the navigation of potential obstacles. A comprehensive 5-year cohort analysis of course-level data revealed that more than 50% of students at Southeast Community College (SCC) received a failing grade while attending the institution. More than half of these students received the failing grade during their first term. These students have much lower retention and completion rates, with less than 5% completing a certificate or degree. The College's QI focused on three strategies to promote and reinforce academic resiliency skills among new students throughout all phases of their first-year experience, including admissions, advising, and early course work.

Initially, the QI proposal was comprised of three strategies:

Strategy #1: Comprehensive professional development training on academic resiliency for faculty, advisors, and student affairs staff who have significant and frequent interactions with new students.

Strategy #2: Engaged learning activities embedded into gateway courses that have the highest number of failing grades. Faculty teaching these courses will embed activities that will engage students in applying academic resiliency skills to facilitate learning of course content.

Strategy #3: Implementation of a software solution, CRM Advise, to allow faculty, advisors, success coaches, and other student affairs staff to utilize analytics to identify at-risk students based on a range of customized qualitative and quantitative parameters. Staff will utilize these data to promote understanding and acceptance of the importance of academic resiliency.

During the implementation of the Quality Initiative, the College proposed that it narrow the scope of the QI to only the first two strategies due to the onset of the pandemic in Spring 2020. Dr. Tom Bordenkircher, SCC's HLC Liaison, approved the removal of strategy #3. Due to the pandemic, the College decided to utilize existing staff to coordinate the implementation of the QI rather than hire an external QI Coordinator. The QI, which was implemented in Spring 2020, continues to be modified and expanded based on quantitative and qualitative analyses. Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, the College made significant and transformative progress on its QI, including:

1. Developed an EI curriculum based on Emotional Intelligence (EI) 2.0 (Bradberry & Greaves (2009), the College's EI-focused climate goal (Goal 9.6), and other literature and materials.
2. Three SCC employees earned Talent Smart's EQ/EI 2.0 certification and trained more than 150 faculty and staff on the four EI 2.0 emotional intelligence skills: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.
3. Completed three comprehensive analyses of grade patterns, success rates, retention rates, and completion rates.
4. Added two objectives to the College's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan that focused on improving emotional intelligence and resiliency skills among students and employees.
5. Redesigned the College's student success course (ACFS 1015) to focus on resiliency, emotional intelligence, and growth mindset.
6. Advisors, faculty, and staff utilized their EI training to promote resiliency among more than 7,500 new students who enrolled at SCC during the implementation of the College's QI.
7. Observed a significant increase in retention rates and significant decreases in dropout and failure rates in courses taught by faculty members who embedded opportunities to apply EI and resiliency skills.
8. Launched a $30 million renovation on its Lincoln Campus that included resiliency and emotional intelligence as design drivers for all student-centric spaces, including the student activities area, study spaces, the Library Resource Center, student advising, and other student gathering areas.
9. Returned to full in-person operations in Fall 2020 to maximize student success and to promote resiliency and emotional intelligence skills.

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Scope and Impact of the Initiative

> 2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative's hypotheses and findings.)

The initial hypothesis of SCC's Quality Initiative was that enhancing resiliency/emotional intelligence skills among students who receive at least one failing grade would lead to higher success, retention, and completion rates. The following section describes the accomplishments associated with each of the six goals that were included in the QI Proposal. Findings that reached statistical significance are noted with the appropriate p value notation.

QI Goal 1: Improve student success, retention, and completion via enhanced resiliency skills (Strategies #1 and #2)

Figure 1.

Pre-QI cohort
Received an F   Did not receive an F

| 47% (N = 3,829) | 53% (N = 4,373) |

QI cohort

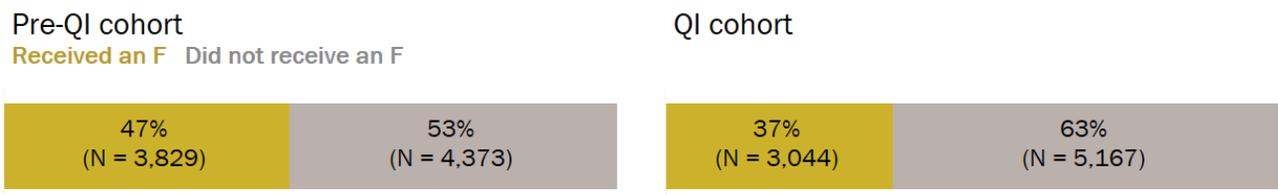| 37% (N = 3,044) | 63% (N = 5,167) |

Figure 1 depicts the percentage of students who received at least one failing grade and the percentage of students who did not receive a failing grade among cohorts of students starting in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 (Pre-QI) and cohorts of students starting in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 (QI). The Pre-QI cohorts were in courses prior to the implementation of the QI, while the QI cohorts were enrolled in courses during the implementation of the QI strategies. Forty percent (40%) of the Pre-QI Cohort had received at least one failing grade (before spring 2018) compared to 32% of the QI Cohort (before summer 2022) [$p < 0.01$]. While the percentage of failing grades was lower among the QI Cohort, it is unclear whether this finding is related to the QI, the pandemic, or other factors. It was not the intent of the QI to lower the percentages of failing grades. Rather, the focus was on improving completion following the receipt of a failing grade. In the following section, the retention and dropout rates of these two cohorts are compared.

Figure 2.

Pre-QI cohort

Retained   52% (n=2,006)
Drop Out   23% (n=897)

QI cohort

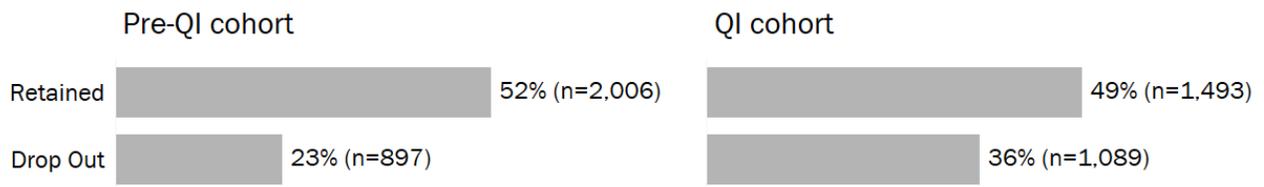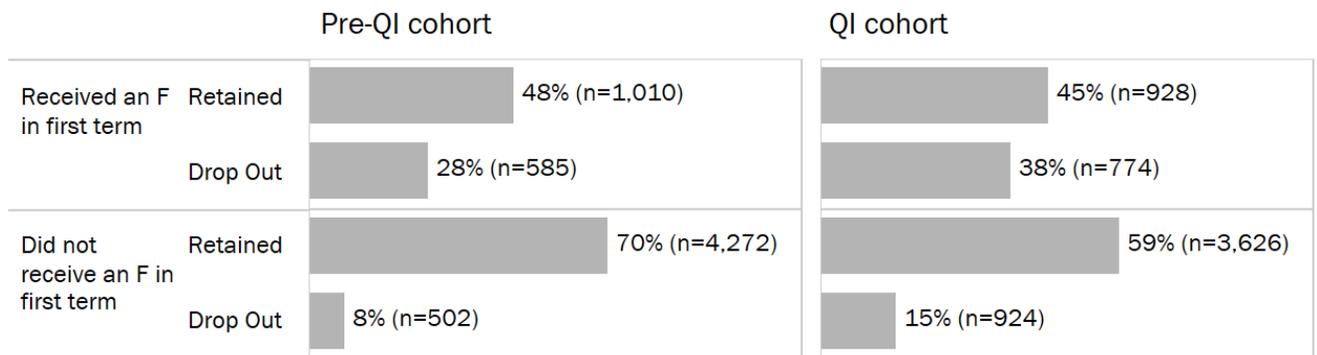Retained   49% (n=1,493)
Drop Out   36% (n=1,089)

Figure 2 depicts the retention and dropout rates of students in the term after they received their first failing grade. The figure compares 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 starting cohorts (Pre-QI) to starting cohorts in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 (QI). Students were considered retained if they enrolled at the College the following term. The retention rate among the QI Cohort was 52% compared to 49% among the pre-QI Cohort ($p < 0.05$). Students were considered to have dropped out if they left the College and did not re-enroll at any point during the cohort period. The dropout rate among the Pre-QI Cohort was 23% compared to 36% for the QI Cohort ($p < 0.01$). Although the retention rates were expected to increase and dropout rates were expected to decrease, the opposite was observed. However, interpretation of the results is complicated by an increase in dropouts due to the pandemic.

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Figure 3.

Pre-QI cohort

Received an F in first term	Retained	48% (n=1,010)
	Drop Out	28% (n=585)
Did not receive an F in first term	Retained	70% (n=4,272)
	Drop Out	8% (n=502)

QI cohort

Received an F in first term	Retained	45% (n=928)
	Drop Out	38% (n=774)
Did not receive an F in first term	Retained	59% (n=3,626)
	Drop Out	15% (n=924)

A second analysis, depicted in Figure 3, was conducted for students who received a failing grade during their first term at the College. The figure compares whether students were retained or dropped out in their second term. The retention rate among the Pre-QI Cohort was 48% compared to 45% among the QI Cohort. The dropout rate among the Pre-QI Cohort was 28% compared to 38% for the QI Cohort ($p < 0.01$). The results from students who did not receive a failing grade were included for context. Although the retention rates were expected to decrease and dropout rates were expected to increase, the opposite was observed. However, interpretation of the results is complicated by an increase in dropouts due to the pandemic.

Figure 4.

Outcome for QI cohort depending on whether F was from QI faculty

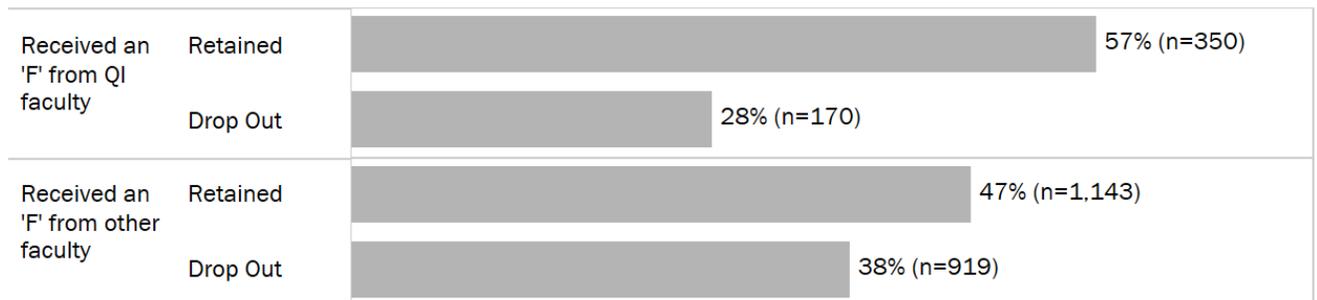|		
Received an 'F' from QI faculty	Retained	57% (n=350)
	Drop Out	28% (n=170)
Received an 'F' from other faculty	Retained	47% (n=1,143)
	Drop Out	38% (n=919)

Figure 4 compares retention and dropout rates among QI Cohort students who received a failing grade in courses taught by faculty who either did (QI) or did not (Non QI) embed EI and resiliency skills in the course design for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 starting cohorts. The figure compares whether students were retained or dropped out in their next term after receiving a failing grade. The retention rate among students who received a failing grade from a QI faculty was 57% compared to 47% for students who received a failing grade from Non QI faculty ($p < 0.01$). The dropout rate among students who received a failing grade from a QI faculty was 28% compared to 38% for students who received a failing grade from Non QI faculty ($p < 0.01$). As expected, retention rates increased and dropout rates decreased among students who received a failing grade in a course taught by faculty who embedded EI and resiliency skills in the course. Unlike the previous analyses of retention and dropout rates, this analysis was limited to a relatively small number of students where exposure to embedded EI and resiliency skills was documented. Although the results appear to be promising, caution should be taken given the complexities introduced by the pandemic.

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QI Goal 2: Improve emotional intelligence skills among faculty, staff, and students (Strategies #1 and #2)

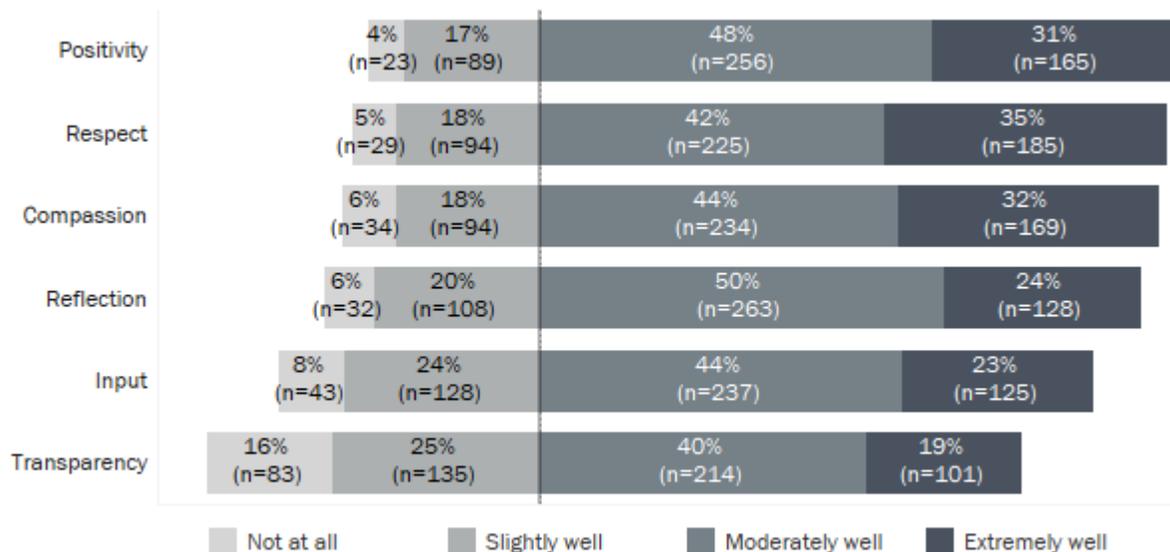Improve emotional intelligence skills among faculty and staff.

The College invested approximately $30,000 to train three fulltime employees on Talent Smart's EI 2.0 certification. The HR Professional Development Coordinator and Dean of Arts & Sciences were trained in February 2020. In February 2022, a developmental mathematics instructor attended the EI 2.0 certification training and will be co-training faculty with the Dean of Arts & Sciences as the College expands the implementation of the EI 2.0 curriculum and engaged learning methods in Summer 2022 and Fall 2022. These certified employees have conducted extensive training with approximately 150 employees to date, including faculty, advisors, student affairs staff, tutors, and administrative assistants who have frequent interactions with new students. The training consists of four EI 2.0 modules: self- awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. This interactive training involves an individual time commitment of 8-10 hours. Of the 150 employees who completed the Level 1 training, approximately 20 of the initial Pilot Team members also completed advanced training on the EI 2.0 curriculum in Spring 2022. The employees trained on resiliency and emotional intelligence implemented action plans to utilize these skills to assist new students in navigating potential challenges and opportunities.

Prior to the implementation of the QI, the College embedded an emotional intelligence and climate goal (Goal 9.6) in its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. This goal is to "maximize a positive and engaging organizational environment by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of others." In alignment with the QI, the College added two objectives to its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan: improve students' ability to overcome challenges through enhanced emotional intelligence and resiliency skills, and to improve faculty and staff proficiency in college and program advising, and resiliency and emotional intelligence skills. For 2020-2021, departments implemented 25 Mission Action Plan (MAP) goals that were linked to these two strategic objectives. The table below includes examples of departmental goals linked to these strategic objectives.

Area/Program	MAP Goal
Student Outreach and Support	Students utilizing counseling and psychology services will successfully manage personal and mental health challenges.
Construction, Electronics, CIT, and Manufacturing	Promote faculty development in engaged learning techniques.
Surgical Technology	Increase NBSTSA CST exam pass rate for all program graduates to 85% on their first attempt.
Arts & Sciences	Expand QI work to implement EQ strategies into staff interactions and with students.

As part of its annual strategic planning week in 2021, the College began formally recognizing individuals who implemented an ambitious project, but "failed" in terms of expected outcomes. The Failure Award is designed to promote resiliency by encouraging calculated risk-taking and by reframing failure as discovery that occurs throughout a successful journey. One of the first recipients of the Failure Award was the College's President, who led an attempt in 2016 to pass a $369 million bond project to modernize nearly all of the College's facilities. Although the proposed bond project failed, the College successfully completed more than $160 million in facilities projects. Although the QI was not initially designed as a strategy to promote implementation of the College's Facilities Master Plan, its focus on resiliency and emotional intelligence served as a broad catalyst for encouraging individual and institutional resiliency.

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Figure 5.

Although the College did not conduct a separate assessment of emotional intelligence among its employees, it regularly surveys its faculty/staff in relation to institutional climate. This survey includes a question related to emotional intelligence skills focusing on the College's climate goal (Goal 9.6). Figure 5 depicts the results from a Faculty/Staff Survey conducted in 2020. Respondents were asked to rate how well the climate of the College matches the Goal 9.6 keywords: input, reflection, positivity, transparency, compassion, and respect. The majority of respondents indicated that the College's climate matches the Goal 9.6 keywords.

Improve emotional intelligence skills among students.
The first QI strategy focused on revising the College's onboarding process for new students by promoting the use of emotional intelligence and resiliency skills as strategies to maximize their academic success. More than 150 SCC employees were trained on the EI 2.0 skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. These employees were selected for training due to their frequent interaction with the more than 7,500 new students that have enrolled at SCC since the implementation of the QI in Spring 2020. The College also revised its student success course (ACFS 1015) in 2020 to include emotional intelligence and resiliency skills within its curriculum. Examples of QI-related ACFS 1015 modules are provided in the table below.

Selected Modules from the College's First Year Experience Student Success Course	Engaged Learning Activities
SCC & You: Together on Your Path to Possible Module 1 is designed to help cultivate that sense of belonging within SCC students.	Communicating With Your Instructor, Communication Practice (clarity of communication, open-ended vs closed-ended questions…).
SCC & You: Steps to Effective Learning Module 2 exposes students to research-based advice for helping them learn challenging material.	Growth Mindset, Preferred Ways of Knowing, Time Use Chart/Time Management, Problem Solving, Study Plan, Mind Maps, Student Learning & Study Skills.
SCC & You: Resiliency When the Road is Rough	Emotional Intelligence, Grit, Growth vs Fixed Mindset, Crossing the Line, Famous Failures/Certificate of Failure, Making Academic

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Module 4 exposes students to research-based advice for helping them deal with stress through stress management and practical coping skills.	Course Corrections, Stress Management, Victim vs Creator Language, Stanford Resilience Project, Overcoming Barriers, Happiness Audit, Listening Skills

More than 1,400 students enrolled in this course since the QI was implemented in Spring 2020.

QI Goal 3: Infuse engaged learning strategies into courses with high failure rates to further the College's Engaged Learning Experience (ELE) initiative (Strategy #2)

The College's second QI strategy focused on embedding application of the EI 2.0 curriculum into classes with high-failure rates. A pilot group of 22 faculty participated by developing course design strategies that integrate the concepts of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management into their courses. This initial group included faculty who taught high failure rate classes, as well as faculty who taught other types of courses. The pilot group met monthly to discuss their experiences with the varying approaches to embedding these emotional intelligence and resiliency concepts into their courses. Participating faculty documented their strategies and student reaction via an online data collection form.

Figure 6.

Trend of failure rate for faculty who received EI 2.0 training
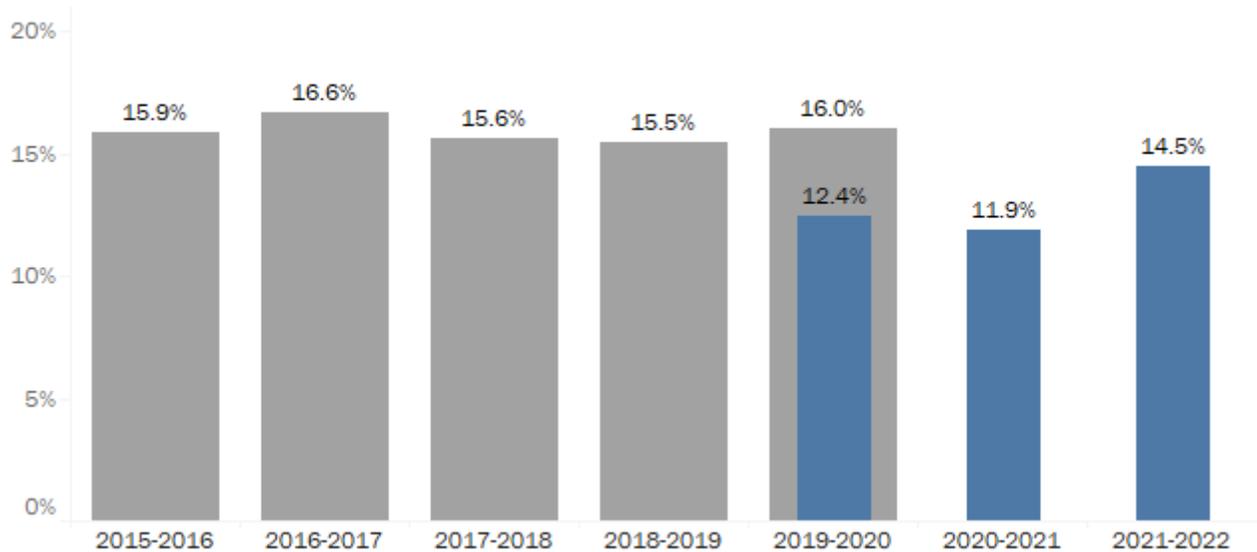Before and **after** the training (starting Spring 2020)

Figure 6 depicts the failure rate among courses taught by 22 faculty who embedded emotional intelligence and resiliency skills in their courses. Failure rates dropped considerably in Spring 2020 when the pilot group first embedded the EI skills within their courses ($p < 0.01$). Due to the pandemic, these faculty were only required to document their QI activities in Spring 2020. Although they were encouraged to continue to embed EI activities within their courses, it is not clear whether the increase in failure rate in 2020-2021 may have been associated with a decline in the number of embedded EI activities.

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Figure 7.

Trend of failure rate in English and Math courses taught by faculty who received EI 2.0 training
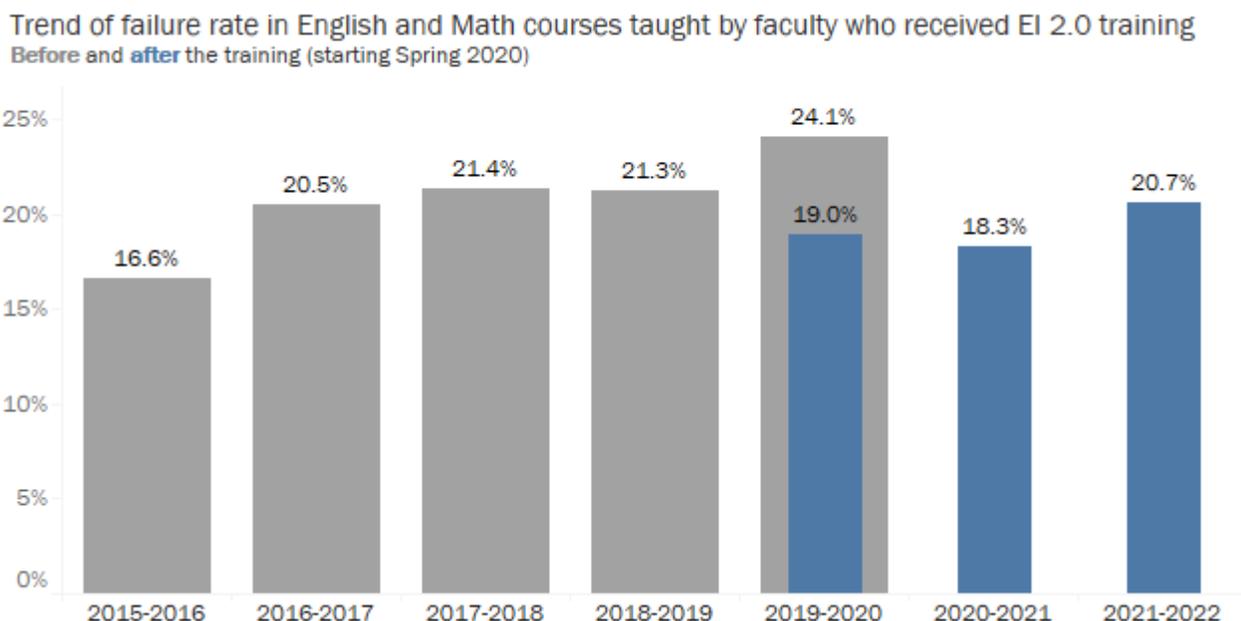Before and **after** the training (starting Spring 2020)

Figure 7 depicts the failure rate among only high-failure rate courses (English and Math) taught by eight faculty who embedded emotional intelligence and resiliency skills in their courses. Failure rates dropped considerably in Spring 2020 when the pilot group first embedded the EI skills within their courses ($p < 0.01$)

QI Goal 4: Strengthen professional development training opportunities and improve employee satisfaction with professional development programming (Strategy #1)

One of the first accomplishments of the QI involved hosting an emotional intelligence training session for all SCC administrative leaders in May 2019. Emotional intelligence trainer, David Katz, presented on the topic of leaders creating an environment that promotes emotional intelligence and resiliency skills among its faculty, staff, and students. The training was very well received, and the Vice President for Instruction invited Katz back to the College for an all-faculty in-service day in August 2019. Later that semester, SCC hosted the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) Annual Conference and again partnered with Katz to train administrators and Board representatives from Nebraska 2-year colleges. This training was attended by more than 100 community college representatives from across Nebraska.

Following David Katz' presentation to NCCA leadership, the College hosted Katz for an advanced emotional intelligence professional development workshop for more than 70 SCC faculty and staff. This voluntary workshop led to the identification of faculty and staff who wanted to serve on the pilot group to apply the EI 2.0 curriculum.

The following training opportunities have been provided throughout the QI timeframe: Emotional Intelligence, Adversity Quotient, Goal 9, StrengthsFinder, and Customer Service. Trainings were attended by employees from all areas of the College.

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Figure 8.

Satisfaction with Professional Development Opportunities
Satisfied Dissatisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

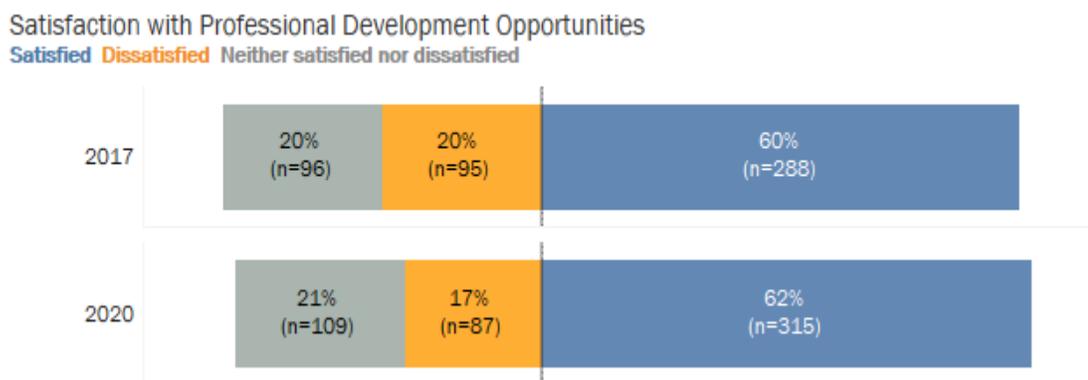|			
2017	20% (n=96)	20% (n=95)	60% (n=288)
2020	21% (n=109)	17% (n=87)	62% (n=315)

Figure 8 depicts satisfaction rates with professional development at the College. Satisfaction rates (percent satisfied or very satisfied) with all professional development opportunities were 60% and 62% based on surveys conducted in 2017 and 2020, respectively.

QI Goal 5: Improve organizational processes that significantly impact students' first term (Strategies #1 and #2)

Incorporation of E.I. in advising curriculum

Based on a comprehensive study of approaches to student advising, the College implemented a new advising model in Spring 2020. The College reorganized existing advising positions and hired several new advisors to create a dual advisor model that ensures students have both a college-level and a program-level advisor throughout their time at the College. Both advisors utilize a revised onboarding and training curriculum that incorporates emotional intelligence and resiliency skills. All new students meet with a college advisor and complete an advising inventory which serves as a tool for advisors to best support student-identified academic and non-academic needs.

Remodel of Lincoln Campus academic and support services space

SCC is in the process of completing a $30 million renovation to its campus in Lincoln, Nebraska. The project will strengthen the College's ability to provide vital student affairs functions, including enrollment services, financial aid, testing services, tutoring, adult education, career services, and library resource services. The project also will centralize student and academic support services to improve student retention and completion and provide needed resources for success. Upon implementation of the QI, the design team for the project was asked to incorporate emotional intelligence and resiliency design drivers into the project. The spaces are being specifically designed to promote resiliency, collaboration, and emotional intelligence among new and returning students.

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

Several changes embedded in institutional operations are described in the table below.

Embedded Changes As a Consequence of the QI
The College's New Student Orientation and New Student Enrollment are now required of all new students. Additionally, all new students are now required to take the student success course (ACFS1015). All three of these programs incorporate resiliency and emotional intelligence concepts.
Emotional intelligence questions were added to the biennial student satisfaction/climate survey.

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Emotional intelligence/Goal 9.6 concepts have been integrated into College policy and procedure via recent systematic reviews and updates. These concepts are now included in all hiring documents, compensation contracts, human resource practices, and new-employee onboarding.
Adopted Emotional Intelligence 2.0 curriculum and trained 150 employees. Approximately 75 faculty members will be trained during the 2022-2023 academic year to embed EI concepts into high-failure rate courses in the Arts & Sciences.
Added HR-sponsored professional development sessions on emotional intelligence, adversity, Goal 9.6, Strength Finders, and customer service.
The College adopted and expanded the use of CRM Advise, a software solution to enable advisors to provide a common platform for case-management support for new students.
The College's crisis management approach is now based on QI emotional intelligence and resiliency skills.

4. Explain any tools, data or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative.

The College created several interactive data tools, reports, and other documents from the work of the QI. These data-related items are described in the table below.

Tools, Data, Reports, and Documents Created from the Work of the QI
The College incorporated emotional intelligence and resiliency questions into its climate survey, advising inventory, and new-student enrollment survey.
The QI budget allowed for the purchase of additional licenses of Tableau Server, the College's institutional data dashboard. This tool supports the College's strategic goals to expand data-informed integrated planning, in addition to equipping a broader group of employees with interactive student-success data.
Three separate reports of retention and completion rates associated with new students who earn at least one failing grade in their first term.
Publication of an article in Planning for Higher Education titled, "Promoting Engagement in Strategic Planning." The article focuses on leveraging the EI and resiliency skills associated with the QI to support strategic planning efforts.
A QI report on baseline levels of emotional intelligence skills among students.
Added the following QI-related goals to the 2020-24 Strategic Plan: "improve students' ability to overcome challenges through enhanced emotional intelligence and resiliency skills, and improve faculty and staff proficiency in college and program advising and resiliency and emotional intelligence skills."
Created multiple Tableau dashboards related to student success, retention, and completion.
Created a video based on the data utilized to develop the QI.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

Southeast Community College has been navigating transformation at all levels of its operations for the last several years, including a quarter-to-semester calendar conversion, expansion of academic programming, construction and renovation of more than $160 million in facilities projects, implementation of a new advising model, the first systematic revision of its policies and procedures in 30 years, and removal of HLC monitoring for the first time in its history. One of the challenges associated with implementing the QI was potential faculty and staff fatigue based on the amount and speed of the College's

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many transformative initiatives. Fortunately, the College's climate goal (Goal 9.6) was designed to create a culture that embraces change. Because Goal 9.6 was implemented in 2015, the College had significant experience with the emotional intelligence and resiliency skills. Each of the keywords within this goal are defined in the table below.

Goal 9.6 Keyword	Description
Positivity	Choosing to view one's circumstances in a realistic but hopeful way that maximizes a successful outcome.
Reflection	Pausing and thinking about one's thoughts and emotions before reacting.
Compassion	Attempting to understand the thoughts, emotions, and circumstances of others without conditions.
Transparency	Accurate communication of information that is interpreted as intended.
Input	Offer one's views and ideas; respectfully challenge assertions of others.

The College initially focused its Goal 9.6 efforts on SCC employees. The QI initiative was designed to extend Goal 9.6 to students. Because the QI EI 2.0 curriculum aligned programmatically with Goal 9.6, QI implementation was well received by SCC employees.

Another potential challenge with the QI involves interpretation of its impact given the tremendous change occurring at the institution. It is not possible to know whether the results observed following the QI were associated with QI strategies or the College's many other initiatives such as the conversion to a semester calendar, new facilities, or its new comprehensive advising model. However, the College is utilizing all available data to establish reasonable assertions to inform current and future decision making in relation to success, retention, and completion data.

The COVID-19 pandemic was one of the primary challenges to implementation of the QI. During the Spring 2020 Semester, the College had to move all classes and services to a virtual environment to comply with local and state directed health measures. The College received permission from its HLC Liaison to limit the focus of its QI to the first two of its three strategies. By narrowing the focus and decelerating the rollout of the QI, the College was able to fully implement its QI despite the challenges associated with the pandemic.

Another challenge with the implementation of the QI was the relatively slow-moving nature of some of the key outcome metrics such as retention and completion. One of the primary goals of the QI is to increase the number of students who are retained and complete a credential at SCC following the receipt of a failing course grade. While the College did assess changes in retention and dropout metrics, the pandemic slowed the implementation of the QI, which reduced the amount of time QI cohorts could be tracked for degree-completion purposes. It will take several years of continued application of the QI strategies to assess the various changes in these metrics that may be associated with QI strategies.

Ironically, the pandemic also proved to be one of the greatest opportunities for the institution. The College was able to leverage the emotional intelligence skills associated with the QI strategies to assist in the return to full operations during the Fall 2020 Semester. Administrators utilized EI skills to isolate navigation of the pandemic and to continue to focus on the College's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, which was launched in Summer 2020. In contrast to national trends, the College's enrollment only declined slightly during the Fall 2020 Semester and was up by 1.4% during the Fall 2021 Semester. The unique focus of the QI created an opportunity for the College to strategically and systematically moderate the fear and anxiety associated with the pandemic.

The most intriguing opportunity is related to the finding that embedding EI and resiliency skills were associated with significant increases in retention rates and significant decreases in dropout and failure rates. The College will attempt to replicate these results with a more comprehensive analysis following the training of all Arts & Sciences faculty on embedding EI and resiliency skills in their courses. This preliminary QI result was pivotal in the decision to continue the QI strategies with the goal of improving retention and completion among new students.

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Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

> 6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.

The Administrative Director of Accreditation, Institutional Assessment, and Planning provided leadership throughout the project. She initially recruited a Core Team to develop QI implementation strategies. This team included the following members: HR/Professional Development Coordinator, Dean of Student Enrollment, and an Associate Dean. When the Associate Dean took a different position in the college, the Dean of Arts & Sciences joined the Core Team. The other key groups involved in the QI and their respective roles are provided in the table below.

Institutional Group	Role and Purpose
Curriculum Team	Responsible for the development of a formal curricula for the professional development training and embedded EI and resiliency strategies to ensure that there was common terminology and a systematic and consistent approach to the curriculum development selection and implementation. The team conducted a literature review and curriculum scan of existing emotional intelligence and resiliency materials before selecting EI 2.0.
Advisory Team (14 members including faculty, student affairs staff, and instructional administrators)	Met weekly during the Fall 2019 Semester to refine the QI curriculum based on EI 2.0 and related materials.
QI Pilot Team (22 faculty and 16 staff)	Expanded the Advisory Team for broader implementation of the QI curriculum. Received intensive training on how to apply the concepts of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Members of the QI Pilot Team implemented the QI strategies as a part of onboarding of new students (QI Strategy #1) or through the embedding of EI and resiliency skills in courses (QI Strategy #2).

The College briefly paused additional QI training in Fall 2020 due to the pandemic. During the Spring 2021 Semester, the College trained more than 120 financial aid, registration, and admissions staff on the QI curriculum.

During Fall 2021, one of the faculty members on the QI Pilot Team accepted the opportunity to expand the EI training to the Math and English departments because of the high failure rates associated with some of their courses. The College sponsored her certification through TalentSmart's EQ/EI 2.0 training. During Spring 2022, she partnered with the Dean of Arts & Sciences to lead an advanced emotional intelligence training with 20 employees from the initial Advisory Team. In May 2022, the faculty QI trainer and Dean of Arts & Sciences will be training additional tutors and transitions staff on EI 2.0. And beginning in Fall 2022, EI 2.0 training will be extended to all faculty in the Arts & Sciences Division.

Feedback from the various groups and individuals involved in the QI has been very positive and informative. One general theme associated with the majority of the feedback is that adoption of an emotionally intelligent and resilient culture is an iterative process that requires ongoing application and systemic infusion into all aspects of an institution's operations.

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7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

One key lesson from the College's QI was that the College's commitment to its climate goal (Goal 9.6) to "maximize a positive and engaging organizational climate by encouraging input, reflective and transparent communication, and compassion and respect toward the views and ideas of other," facilitated the implementation of the two QI strategies. Faculty and staff were already familiar and accepting of the importance of infusing emotional intelligence and resiliency skills in all aspects of the College's operations.

Another key lesson was that students embraced the opportunity to reframe a potential obstacle, such as a failing grade, as an opportunity for improvement. This assertion was supported by qualitative data from advisors, faculty, and other College staff that had frequent interactions with new students. An analysis of student survey data revealed a correlation between Term GPA and self-management scores from an assessment scale based on Bradberry & Greaves (2009).

The table below provides a list of other lessons learned as self-reported by those involved in the QI.

Lessons Learned by Those Involved in the QI
The QI was an excellent first step in developing a student onboarding process that focuses on resiliency and emotional intelligence.
There is substantial variation in baseline levels of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management among students.
The College was able to leverage the QI emotional intelligence and resiliency skills in its navigation of a return to full operations during the pandemic.
The QI strategies created a sense of belongingness and inclusivity among those who directly participated in the EI and resiliency training.
Students expressed their appreciation for the high-contact focus of the QI strategies.

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical and technological resources that supported the initiative.

The College dedicated time to coordinate and implement the QI from the following positions: Administrative Director of Accreditation, Institutional Assessment, and Planning; Administrative Assistant; HR Coordinator; Associate Director for Institutional Research; Institutional Research Analyst; Business Intelligence Developer; Dean of Student Enrollment; and the Dean of Arts & Sciences. The College purchased licenses and other training materials for more than 200 SCC employees in relation to the QI. The table below provides a list of the various resources and associated costs to support the College's QI.

Resource	Cost
In-kind personnel who dedicated a portion of their time to the QI.	$150,000
Miscellaneous supplies	$6,000
Tableau licenses	$6,000
Training/Travel	$27,092
Consultant	$12,000
E.I. 2.0 licenses and training material	$59,110
Total	**$260,202**

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Plans for the Future (or Future Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.

Although it is not possible to establish causality, there was a clear increase in retention rates and decreases in dropout and failure rates among courses taught by the pilot group of instructors who embedded EI and resiliency skills into their course design. Based on these intriguing findings, the Dean of the Arts & Sciences Division will be training all faculty in the division on the EI 2.0 curriculum as part of the goal to embed EI and resiliency skills in all high-failure rate classes within the next two years.

Beginning in Fall 2022, the College will be requiring all new students to enroll in the College's student success course (ACFS 1015), which was redesigned based on the QI EI 2.0 curriculum.

The table below includes other activities and initiatives related to the QI that the College will continue to pursue.

Ongoing Activities and Initiatives Related to the Quality Initiative
Departments will continue to develop goals that link to the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan Goal 2.2 to "improve students' ability to overcome challenges through enhanced emotional intelligence and resiliency skills."
The College will continue to offer professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff in relation to emotional intelligence and resiliency skills.
The Office of Institutional Research will continue to conduct comprehensive analyses of grade, retention, and completion data every two years.
The College will embed questions related to emotional intelligence and resiliency within its biennial student climate survey.
Departments will continue to develop goals that link to the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan Goal 5.5 to "improve faculty and staff proficiency in College and program advising and resiliency and emotional intelligence skills."
The College will continue to onboard new students via emotional intelligence and resiliency skills through its advising, admissions, and registration processes.

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10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

The table below provides a list of practices and artifacts that institutions might find useful.

Practices and Artifacts from SCC's Quality Initiative
Comprehensive study on grade, retention, and completion data among students who had earned at least one failing grade during their time at the College.
QI report on assessment of the following four emotional intelligence skills: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management among SCC students.
An article published in 2020 by the College's President and the SCC Administrative Director of Accreditation, Institutional Assessment, and Planning, that focuses on promoting engagement in strategic planning through emotional intelligence and resiliency skills.
The College's unique strategy of embedding emotional intelligence and resiliency skills in courses with high failure rates.
HLC presentations given in 2021 and 2022 that involve the use of emotional intelligence and resiliency strategy to enhance crisis management, strategic planning, and integrated planning.

The College is willing to share any aspect of the successes, challenges, and future opportunities associated with its Quality Initiative.

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