



Focus on Learning

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Fall 2018 Issue

Office of
Institutional Effectiveness

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Inside This Issue

Bloom Where You Are
Planted! pg. 1-2

Taking on New Roles at
Three Rivers—Faculty
and Staff Contributions pg. 3-4

Are You Talking With
Your Students or At
Them? pg. 5

How the College Store
Helps Students Focus on
Learning pg. 6

Employee Orientation
and Professional
Development pg. 7

Three Rivers
Endowment Trust Grant
Awards pg. 8

Go2Knowledge pg. 9

Bloom Where You Are Planted!

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

During the spring of 2018, Three Rivers College hosted members of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Peer Review Team for a successful on-site decennial accreditation review. The HLC Team had no findings or concerns, and the College met all Federal Compliance Criteria at 100%. This was a significant milestone in the history of the College!

The peer review visit brought together nearly all members of the College to meet with the HLC Peer Review Team. Everyone was well prepared with examples, documentation, and demonstrations of excellence! The mood of the visit became more of a celebrated culmination of many years of hard work, service, and continuous improvement as demonstrated by our dedicated Three Rivers Team!

With a gold medal win and HLC still on our minds, we paused to rest, reflect, and celebrate at the Black River Coliseum in September 2018. The celebration included an evening of dinner with lots of fellowship, great food, dancing, and

camaraderie. It is always important to celebrate a milestone accomplishment and it was a wonderful event to encapsulate an amazing achievement for the College!

Lessons learned from this experience can be found across the College through the innovative uses of technology, the development of quality processes, the codifying of our policies and regulations, using our strategic planning platform to foster continuous improvement and evidence-based decision making, as well as the practice of embedding assessment in all that we improve, to name a few. These practices now define our

culture and how we operate as a College. These efforts were the very things that the Higher Learning Commission validated during their visit and noted as best practices in higher education.

So how did we do it? We took the best of what we had and made it even better. However, this leaves us all with a bit of a challenge as we move forward and ask ourselves the question “what now?” Now that we have been in a mode of change and growth that was driven by our continuous improvement processes, should we rest on our laurels or climb higher?

(Continued on page 2)



Bloom Where You Are Planted!

(Continued from page 1)

While we can all be comforted knowing that the College passed the quality test from HLC, having this knowledge allows us to recognize that we “bloomed where we were planted”! To further this metaphor, we must prepare the soil of our good foundation and sow seeds early in this rich moment to allow new ideas to sprout. Let’s cultivate the soil where our quality just grew through the development of our expertise. This will allow us to foster

creativity and fuse innovation. By focusing our energy on building on our successes, we aspire to new levels of greatness!

Andy Andrews, noted author of *The Traveler’s Gift*, wrote, “Everybody wants to reach the peak, but there is no growth on the top of a mountain. It is in the valley that we slog through the lush grass and rich soil, learning and becoming what enables us to summit life’s next peak.” The HLC decennial visit, and subsequent moments

that define this achievement, have given us quite a spectacular view. At the same time, as dedicated professionals and “battle-tested climbers,” we must now make the choice to climb even higher. There are more fields to prepare so we can take advantage of the opportunities ahead. We are now more confident and better prepared for this journey.

Our quality work was validated by the Higher Learning Commission, and this allows us to raise our bar of expectation, not only by accreditation standards, but for ourselves. It is a proud time to be a part of the Three Rivers College Team!



“All assessment is a perpetual work in progress.”

Linda Suskie

“The common end to which all institutions should strive...is thoughtful, careful, deliberate, integrated, and sustainable assessment systems that can provide actionable evidence to improve student learning.”

Stanley O. Ikenberry

Department Chair

Dr. Leslie Gragg



In April 2012, I was contacted about an adjunct teaching position here at Three Rivers College. I decided to apply

to help supplement my income for continued improvements at my chiropractic office. At that time, I had been a full-time chiropractor for four years and owned my own business for two years. After the first semester of teaching, I realized that was what I had been searching for to help others. I finally felt like I could help people in a way that could lead them to be successful, and I could see the results of that instruction. I have now been a full-time faculty member for over five years and had the opportunity to work with hundreds of students. In the next several years, I would love to

continue contributing to the success of students and help facilitate faculty success while serving as Department Chair. I love advising and working with students, organizing and planning, and helping others reach their goals.

When I think of someone being a leader, whether in the classroom or otherwise, I envision that person having several unique and valuable qualities. To me, being a great leader means you must have a strong work ethic, good character, be passionate yet logical, and have the ability to encourage and guide others, even in times of

hardship. These qualities describe most faculty and staff currently employed at the College. While serving in this new role as Department Chair, I expect to obtain more knowledge and success about how to build and guide successful plans to benefit each division and effectively budget for the needs of the department while being conservative for what funds allow. I hope to help the Department to continue moving forward and find new strategies to improve student learning, increase student engagement, and contribute to the overall success of the College.

Department Chair

Dr. Melissa Davis



Languages, Communication, Fine Arts, and Agriculture. My analytical brain had a hard time processing this combination of words when I was offered a chair position at Three Rivers College. As a former faculty member and department chair of science and math, I knew this experience was going to be interesting, and I jumped at the chance to be challenged. A typical day in the Tinnin Fine Arts Center can consist of a text from the College farm about calves being born while I am listening to the Swing-sations choir rehearse.

Another can include a conversation about poetry while I am preparing a lecture on plant genetics. And even more shocking...who knew all this time my jazz name is Jailhouse Dupree? You can see Mr. White for that explanation.

No one could have prepared me for such a wonderful experience. I am privileged to work every single day with people I admire for their commitment to student learning and dedication to the College. Our department is working daily to provide an environment where students

can learn and grow. Each year we offer many opportunities for engagement including, but not limited to, performing in theater and musical productions, attending lectures and events, showcasing writing and artwork, and attending rodeos and farm days.

A brilliant, yet controversial, scientist of our time wrote a book called "Avoid Boring People: A Lesson from a Life in Science." We hope you will join us in Tinnin for anything but a boring experience.

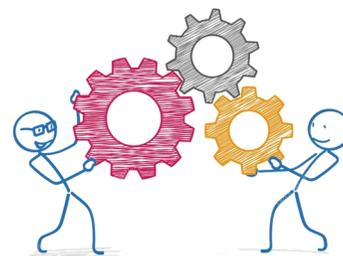
Faculty Assessment Liaison

Judith Davis



As Faculty Assessment Liaison, I collaborate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in assisting faculty as they develop curriculum, work on redesign of courses, and use assessment to gather data about learning outcomes. I serve on the Student Learning Improvement Committee (SLIC) and assist faculty with improving instruction through their assessment results. In addition, we develop trainings

and workshops to support the College's assessment efforts. I am currently assisting with preparing Student Learning Outcome (SLO) reports for publication to the College website. What I have most enjoyed is learning about our assessment process of various programs on campus, as well as the innovative methods and tools our faculty use.



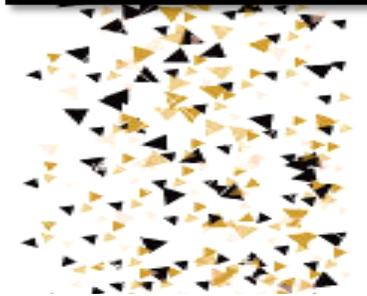
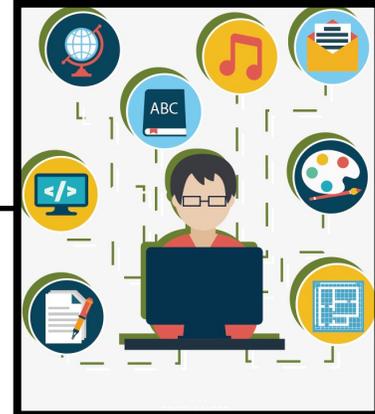
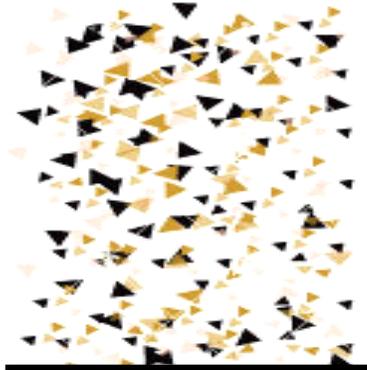
Distance Learning Specialist

Tiechera Samuel



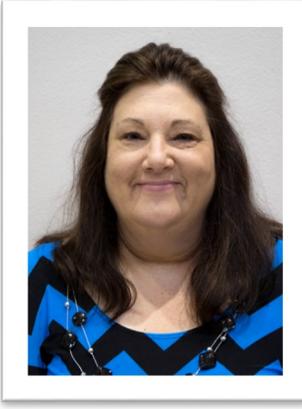
As a Distance Learning Specialist, I will not only help organize and coordinate the college's online efforts, but also assist instructors and course designers with their own online course shells. Currently, we are working with faculty to update courses to meet some of the requirements of the newly released Quality Matters 6th edition. These standards will ensure that students receive the course information through a high-quality delivery method. We have also started a new

process to ensure active instructor interaction within online courses. Studies have shown that the more engaged the instructor is with an online course, the more effective the learning environment. Ensuring that instructors remain actively engaged is crucial to the success of any course. My favorite parts of the position are seeing all of the wonderful courses that have been developed and learning new ways to engage students in the online environment.



Distance Learning Specialist

Faye Sanders

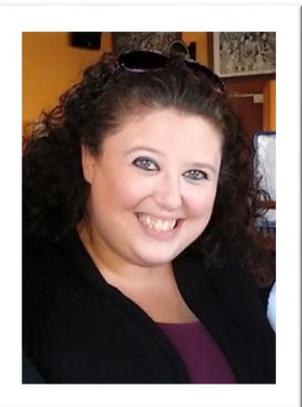


As a Distance Learning Specialist I seek to establish and ensure quality assurance through our online coursework. Our quality assurance process will strengthen our online courses by offering trainings for instructors to meet the new Quality Matters 6th edition rubric standards, increasing instructor-to-learner engagement strategies

utilizing ZOOM (both in online and face-to-face courses), and pursuing continuous improvement of instructional design techniques for online courses. It is the goal of Distance Learning to provide challenging and effective online courses, meeting the ever-changing needs of our students.

Distance Learning Specialist

Margaret Orlando



My experience being a Distance Learning Specialist this year has been very beneficial. I have observed and evaluated many online courses at our college and have seen many faculty members design their courses with the learner in mind. I am very impressed at how creative the online lessons are, and how engaging many courses are for online learners. My goal being a Distance Learning Specialist is to help each faculty member design and deliver their online courses in a manner that is interactive and

helps each student create connections with the course content, their classmates, the instructor, and our Three Rivers College community. It's through these connections that each student will earn a quality education. I hope to help every instructor by offering tools and resources that are already "Quality Matters-ready" to make their job as course designers easier. I have been helping new instructors with learning how to align their course content and calculate time on task so they can learn the beginning stages of

designing lessons that will be Quality Matters-approved. The Distance Learning Specialists have been working together to create trainings to help faculty learn about ADA Compliance. This will help ensure each course considers all types of learners that Three Rivers College serves and will help with diversity and inclusion efforts, as well. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve my colleagues! If you need my help with your course design or course delivery standards, please don't hesitate to contact me at morlando@trcc.edu.

Are You Talking With Your Students or At Them?

Chadrick Parson, Adjunct Instructor - Cisco Networking



Chadrick Parson started teaching at Three Rivers College as an Adjunct Instructor in Fall 2017. He is employed as a Network Administrator and also runs an IT Consulting and Support business.

Being new to the world of teaching, I still find myself questioning on a regular basis if I'm doing things correctly. Am I assigning the correct work? Am I managing our time in class correctly? Most importantly, am I reaching my students? After a few semesters, it feels like I've gone from just trying to make my way through the process, to creating a learning environment that's not just informative with the purpose of passing knowledge, but something that students look forward to. My first classes were stiff and formal, an emulation of what I felt that being an educator was, based on my

experiences in high school and parts of college. I felt as if my job was to present ideas and hope that they were sinking in. Outside of testing and assignments, I wasn't sure how to know that students were truly understanding the material I was presenting. That's when I decided to try a different approach. I found that by completely letting my guard down and just having the class flow organically, students suddenly came alive. Eyes were open, people were engaged in the content regardless of how tedious it might get, and I gained a clear view of who was actually grasping the concepts presented.

Maybe it's because I'm still bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, or maybe it's just letting my own personality be reflected in the class, but the results from students and student retention in my courses have vastly improved just by changing what I thought teaching was. Too often, it seems like we're focused on everyone

being quiet, paying attention, and taking notes. When I removed this preconception from how I managed my classes, I could see that I was onto something. I'm not just at the front of the class to give a lecture. I'm not just there to grade assignments and give out tests. I'm there to hold a group session of people with a shared interest in a subject who don't want to just be talked at. Students want to discuss and interact with the subject in a conversational setting. Initially, I worried that this would lead to full anarchy in the classroom, but quite the opposite happened. Everyone started participating. We all know the look of the glazed over eyes and people sneaking to their phones or pecking away at a keyboard in front of them, but that all went away.

We all have our own styles in education. I've had instructors that I've loved and looked forward to meeting with, but I've also had instructors where I made

sure to bring a thermos of coffee just so I would make it through the class. Maybe it's time we stopped talking at our students and started talking with our students. We'll always have the few that are there just to be there, but by finding a way to connect with your class (whether it be Dad jokes, old memes that they groan at, or just occasionally making loud noises and waving our hands around to keep things exciting), I think instructors will find the results speak for themselves. Let's cut loose, bring cookies to class, wear a themed costume, find new ways to connect with our students who are more and more often a generation that grew up with a smart device in their hands and constant entertainment at their fingertips. Simply presenting information is in the past. Our future is in helping our students connect to, and absorb, the ideas that are going to shape their careers. Let's start ending our classes with a high five instead of a sigh of relief!



How the College Store Helps Students Focus on Learning

Robert Jansen, Director of Retail Operations



Day One Access for Students:

The College Store at Three Rivers College is moving more course materials to “Day One Access.” Day One Access is an approach that strives to provide students access to course materials on the first day of class. This allows our students to start class with their focus on learning, because to learn is why our students are here.

Many students face barriers to learning by having financial aid challenges that prevent them from picking up or accessing the required course materials on the first day of class. With “Day One Access,” those barriers are circumvented.

Inclusive Access, Blackboard, Course Fee:

A total of 15% of our course materials are digital. Inclusive Access is a digital approach to learning that provides Day One Access to publisher content through Blackboard. The College Store has partnered with RedShelf to provide the College centralized billing for all publishers and knowledgeable opt-out assistance for students as needed.

Rental at Registration:

A total of 60% of our course materials are provided to our students as rental books. The College Store’s rental program is still the most affordable approach for course materials at \$45.00 per rental. The average digital material is more than \$90.00 – twice the cost of our typical rental. One of the best ways that we’ve been able to consistently help our students succeed is to allow the rental fee to be processed through their student account. When a student comes into The College Store, all they have to do is show us their printed schedule & ID, and they can check out.

Rental at the Register:

Rental at the Register is a program we developed a few years ago. This program is a bridge program to Rental at Registration, or for books with less than a six-semester lifecycle, or less expensive books. The rental price depends on the retail price of the book, but normally

the rental price is around 50% of the new retail price of the book.

New/Used Textbooks:

Only 25% of our course materials are new or used buy books. For the most part, the titles are usually new, but at the end of the semester we may be able to buy the book back from a student, thus creating a used book for the next semester. We also source as many used books as possible from book wholesalers, so as to help keep the students’ cost to a minimum.

Course Packs:

Another service that The College Store offers is custom course packs. The College Store works closely with XanEdu to help create the course packs such as the Math Notebooks, Chem Lab Manuals, and other instructor-made workbooks for the students to purchase in The College Store. Rather than using a publisher-made manual that you may only use certain parts of, we can utilize this affordable service to create a manual made just for your class. Instructors just need to provide us the workbook they created and we can have it mass printed and bound however is required by the instructor. These course packs vary in

price depending on the size and how they are printed. Currently the most expensive course pack is approximately \$30.00. We also make custom lab and math kits. Custom materials are always a possibility.

Meal Plan Card:

Many studies on food insecurity related to college students have found that 1 in 5 students have faced food insecurity issues in the last 30 days, negatively affecting a student’s ability to focus on their learning needs. Financial aid normally pays out after 30 days from the start of classes. The Meal Plan Card bridges the gap between when classes start and when financial aid pays out. The Meal Plan Card provides food, groceries, and fuel so student can focus on learning and get to class.



Employee Orientation and Professional Development

Kristina McDaniel, Director of Human Resources

As a result of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, it became evident that there was a need for a revised employee orientation program. Feedback from the committee prompted focus group interviews to gather information on the program. The Office of Human Resources used responses from those interviews and worked with the Cabinet and supervisors to draft a program stretching over the course of a year and covering many topics thought best to benefit new employees and their departments. This program began in September 2015 for the fiscal year 2016. In an effort to provide professional development college-wide, all orientation sessions were opened to anyone with an interest or need to attend. As of December 2018, 42 employees have completed the program.

The College orientation program has continued to grow and develop over the last three years. Each session provides a variety of topics that are relevant to the processes and procedures of the College. Topics range from strategic planning, assessment, policies and procedures, benefits, Title IX, FERPA, customer service, depart-

ment overviews, and campus safety. Feedback is gathered from each participant upon completion of a session. In addition, participants are surveyed at completion of the program. The survey results are reviewed to determine if adjustments need to be made and what those changes might include.

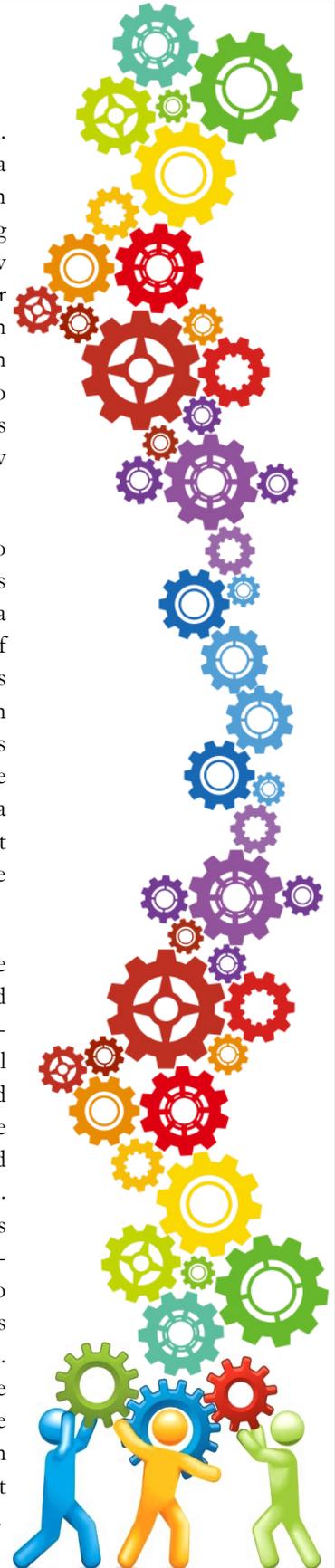
Since the program started in 2015, we have revised how we present policies, the order of the program, the length of each session, and the length of the program. All revisions to the program have been based on survey results and comments from participants.

One of the most notable changes was to condense the program from eight sessions over the course of a year to four sessions over the course of a semester. The most prevalent comment from participants was "I wish I would have known this information sooner." The information was relevant and meaningful; we just needed to get it to new employees in a more timely manner. Human Resources attempted to change the order of programming based on feedback to meet the timing issues. However, orientation feedback focused on concerns over

the length of the program. Based on the surveys, a shortened orientation schedule took effect starting September 2018. The new schedule consists of four sessions that will repeat each semester. Feedback from participants will begin to show if the four sessions still meet the needs of new employees.

As part of the effort to ensure new employees receive the information in a timely manner, the Office of Distance Learning Services records each orientation session. This allows participants to view the information if they miss a session and not have to wait for the schedule to circle back around.

The New Employee Orientation has changed each year based on employee feedback and will continue to evolve and change as requested. Some content has been added and some content removed. The presenters are members of faculty, staff, and administration who are working to ensure relevant material is provided to new employees. With firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of the College, our presenters can serve as one of the best resources to new colleagues.



Three Rivers Endowment Trust Grant Awards

The Three Rivers Endowment Trust awarded the following project grants for the 2019 Fiscal Year, totaling \$5,500.

The deadline for submission was January 31, 2019, for funding to be used by June 15, 2019.

THREE RIVERS
ENDOWMENT
TRUST



Professional Adult CPR-AED Training Manikins with CPR monitor

Requested by: Amanda Taylor

Request

Students entering the Nursing and Allied Health programs at Three Rivers College must hold a current CPR certification. On average, Continuing Education certifies 60 students a year for \$50.00 per student. Offering this service allows us to keep the training in-house instead of sending potential students to other institutions. The current manikins used by the Continuing Education Department do not meet the new AHA visible/audible feedback requirement to assess rate and depth of compressions. In order to offer Basic Life Support for the health care professionals, new manikins must be purchased.

Dissecting Microscopes- Life Sciences

Requested by: Dr. Kathy Prejean

Request

In order for life science students to reach their course and module student learning outcomes, they must be able to perform labs using microscopes to observe life and preserved specimens. Acquiring state-of-the-art student dissecting microscopes is critical to improve student learning. The microscopes have a life expectancy of over 10 years and will better educate students moving into the Gen Ed, Nursing, and Allied Health programs during that time.

Professional Development Opportunity Conference on the Young Years

Requested by: Heather Cornman

Request

Travel to Conference on the Young Years to attend the conference and the Missouri Community College Collaboration meeting at Tan-Tar-A Resort on March 7-9, 2019. The Missouri Community College Collaboration group aims to provide students seeking a career in early childhood opportunities to transfer seamlessly within these participating institutions through articulation of credit for two foundational ECE courses, namely Foundations of Early Childhood Education and Nutrition, Health, and Safety.

Surface Pro 6

Requested by: Kevin Wheeler

Request

To encourage student engagement, the math department would like to have more students participate in classroom discussions. Students come to class with questions, and instructors spend much time asking them to explain what they tried. With the Surface Pro 6, students would be able to display their work without ever leaving their desk. The instructor would not be rooted to the front of the classroom but would be able to walk around the classroom freely and still write on the board. Students will be more engaged because they will be able to show everybody their work, in their handwriting, and get feedback immediately.

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