Creating a Culture of Excellence In Higher Education

January 28-29, 2019

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Claflin University

Excellence

Good

Average

SCA R
South Carolina Association for Institutional Research

Bridget P. Dewees, PhD
Performance Excellence is my Passion

☑ **2005 South Carolina Champion for Excellence Recipient**

☑ **Chair, SC Quality Forum 5yrs**

☑ **30 years of Higher Education Administration**

☑ **20 years of Performance Excellence Experience**

- **National Baldrige Examiner 4yrs**
- **SC Board of Judges- Governor's Quality Award**

Claflin University Service Excellence Initiative

Liberal Arts HBCU

Enrollment: approx. 2200
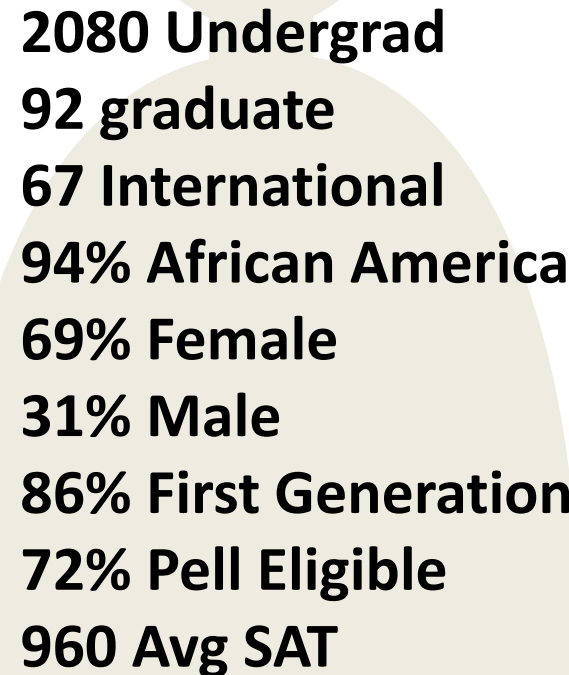
Orangeburg, South Carolina

www.claflin.edu

Do you know your customers?

2080 Undergrad

92 graduate

67 International

94% African American

69% Female

31% Male

86% First Generation

72% Pell Eligible

960 Avg SAT

** only 30% say Claflin is their first choice

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Build Culture of Excellence on existing Values

Commitment to:

- **Excellence**
- **Valuing People**
- **Being Student Centered**
- **Exemplary Educational Programs**
- **Fiscal Accountability**

Quality Starts at the Top!

President-- #1 Cheerleader:

- Shares the culture of excellence philosophy at Faculty/Staff Institutes
- Shares monthly with senior leaders
- Shares Service Excellence in New employee orientation

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2011 Student Success Initiative (other SSI)

- **Six Teams/ Initiatives**
- **Redesigned Claflin's approach to managing student success**
- **Three Overarching Goals**
  - **Improve Retention and Graduation**
  - **Improve Student Learning**
  - **Improve Stakeholder Satisfaction/engagement**

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2011 Kick Off Student Success Initiative

Service Excellence Process	
	Early Alert
	Panther STEPS/ QEP
	Advising
	Learning Community
	Financial Analysis

Service Excellence 2011 Team

One Representative from:

- Institutional Effectiveness
- Faculty
- Facilities
- HR
- Student Services
- Fiscal

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Service Excellence Goals

1. Create a service excellence program that increases consistency and quality throughout the University.

2. Develop a Claflin culture of service excellence

Panther Service Pledge

- **Adopted July 2012**
- **Our service commitment to you:**

"We will greet you professionally, listen effectively, and respond quickly."

Mouse Pads and Campus Posters

THE PANTHER SERVICE *Commitment*

*O*ur Service Commitment to you:

"We will greet you professionally, listen effectively, and respond quickly."

Service Excellence Defined

𝒢reet Professionally:
- We will greet our customers in a courteous and professional manner.
- We will interact with each other in a courteous and professional manner.
- We will hold ourselves and each other accountable for addressing inappropriate comments and behavior.

𝓛isten Effectively:
- We will listen effectively to our customers' requests and promptly take the necessary actions to assist them.
- We will keep our customers informed of unexpected delays in service.
- We will work to resolve issues with co-workers and other departments by discussing problems directly and working toward agreed upon solutions.

𝓡espond Quickly:
- We will inform our customers of normal process time, when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will touch base with our customers to update them as to where we are in the process.
- We will respond to website questions/requests within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- We will respond within 24 hours of normal process time to let them know when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will finish our encounters with our customers in a courteous and professional way.

𝒯elephone Protocol:
- "Good morning or good afternoon, office of (your office), this is (your name), may I help you?"

Establish a Continuous Improvement Cycle

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- Internal Assessment– SSI/ Focus Groups
- Identify improvement initiatives
- Develop indicators of success/ measures
- Implement initiatives
- Use results to create a culture of excellence

Student Satisfaction Inventory

- **Primary assessment tool for service excellence 2007-present**
- **Administered every other year**
- **Used in departmental annual reports**
- **Used in SACS assessment cycle**
- **Used campus items to expand on in house assessments or priorities**
- **KPI on Strategic Plan**

Student Satisfaction Inventory

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- **Academic Advising**
- **Instructional Effectiveness**
- **Safety and Security**
- **Recruitment and Financial Aid**
- **Campus Climate**
- **Concern for Individual**
- **Campus Support Services**
- **Registration Effectiveness**
- **Student Centeredness**
- **Service Excellence**
- **Campus Life**
- **Responsiveness to Diverse populations**

Phase I- Completed

- **Worked with Noel Levitz consultants**
- **Presented ideas to senior leaders**
- **Developed our Core Team**
- **Shared Service Pledge**
- **Kick off with Fiscal Affairs, IT**

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Service Excellence Is More Than a Great Attitude

It's having the right skills to be successful
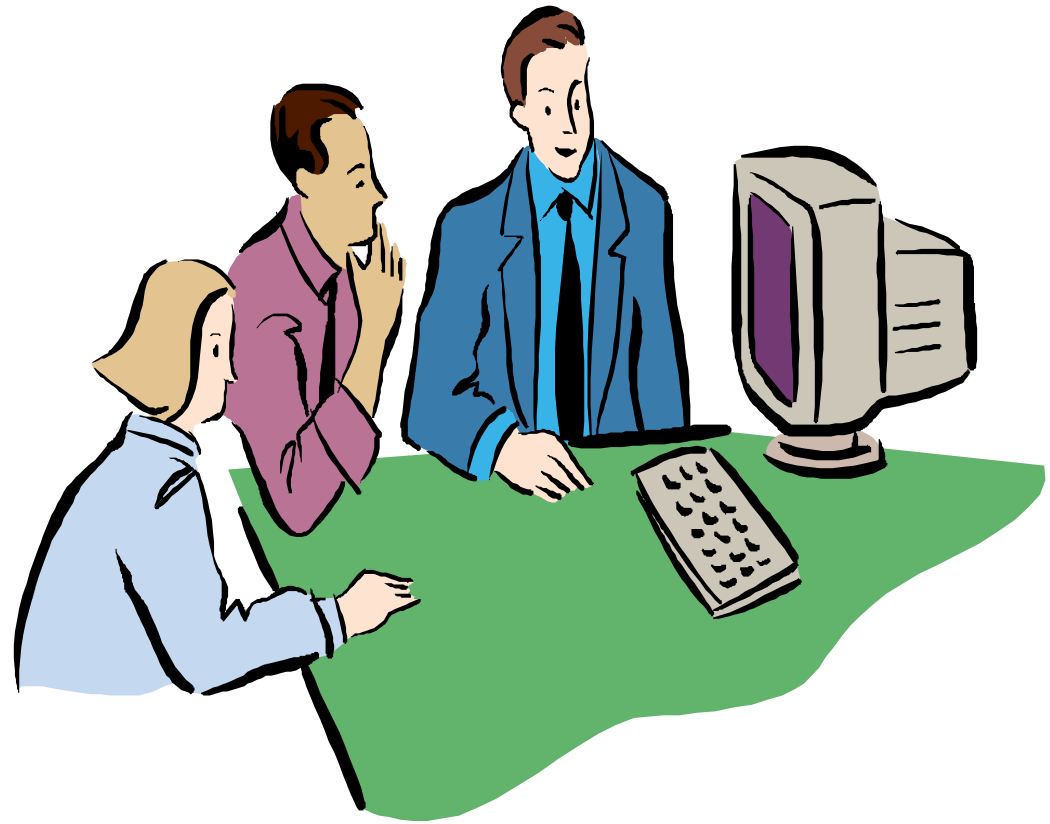
"You live and die by what your customers think of you"

Training the Frontline

Excellence

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You Must Talk to Stakeholders! Employee Focus Groups Revealed

- **3 main barriers to providing excellent service at Claflin were:**
  - **Lack of Consistent service standards**
  - **Outdated processes/ aging infrastructure**
  - **Poor customer service soft skills**

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Coffee Stains Exercise
(with all incoming Freshmen)

What things did you immediately notice?

- Value
- System
- People

Coffee Stain Removal

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Value Turnoffs

Quality relative to price paid

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People Turnoffs

Communication problems

Simple In-house assessments

My Department	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Greets professionally:					
Greet and welcome customers in a courteous and professional manner					
Interact with customers and each other courteously and professionally					
Is accountable for behavior and holds each other accountable					
Listens Effectively :					
Listen effectively to customers and promptly take action					
Keep customers informed of unexpected delays in service					
Works to resolve issues with co-workers and other departments					
Responds Quickly:					
Set expectations with documented process time and completion deadlines					
Follow up with customers to provide updates on requested service					
Respond to inquiries(web, email, voicemail within 24 hours					
Complete encounters with our customers in a professional manner					

Simple but very useful!

Overall Statistics for Listen Effectively			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mean Overall	26	2.98667	0.14338

Descriptive Statistics for Listen Effectively					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Listen effectively to customers and promptly take action	26	2	5	3.35	.977
Keep customers informed of unexpected delays in service	26	1	5	2.65	1.263
Works to resolve issues with co-workers and other departments	25	1	5	2.96	1.098

Claflin's PEACE PLEDGE

PEACE PLEDGE	Departmental Goals
People: COMMITMENT TO VALUING PEOPLE	
Excellence: COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE	
Accountability: COMMITMENT TO FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY	
Customer Focused: COMMITMENT TO BEING CUSTOMER FOCUSED	
Educational Excellence: COMMITMENT TO EXEMPLARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	

SSI 2012-2018 Results

- **Significant Improvement in all categories over the 2012 ratings**

- **Exceeds National 4 year Privates in 11/12 categories**

- **Service Excellence increased by 6%, by 8% over Eastern Peers**

- **Have a 7 year track record of improvement with data to prove it!**

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Overall Improvements in Key Measures over last 5 years

Enrollment 1866 to 2172

Retention 70% to 77%

Graduation 51%

National Rankings #10 to #7 HBCU

National Liberal Arts Ranked

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Culture Of Excellence

Are we there yet….?

- **No fear of assessment/ increased participation**

- **Individual units are developing strategies on their own**

- **Satisfaction rating at its highest**

- **Realize that we are never there, but in it for the journey**

Phase II- Ongoing

- **Detail discussions with divisions/departments**
- **Develop training plan and President's video**
- **Develop a Service Excellence user's manual**

Phase III- Long Term Implementation

- **Quality Council**
- **Additional Training for mid-senior level**
  - Process Improvement
  - Problem Solving
  - Effective Communication (Oral/Written)

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Service Excellence Must be a Key Strategy for Higher Education Institutions

Implementation Challenges:
- Dedicated Focus on the Effort
- Faculty embracing service excellence
- Leadership Consistency-pockets of excellence
- Recognition vs. the journey
- Loving/ Understanding data
- Turn Over- passing the torch

Summary

Creating a Culture of Excellence :

- Is not a one size/approach fits all
- Must start at the top
- Must be driven by stakeholder need
- Build on existing Mission, Vision and Values

Summary

Creating a Culture of Excellence :

- Start with simple key assessment tools and develop a cycle for improvement
- Institute Training
- Listen, Listen Listen to stakeholders
- Be Consistent
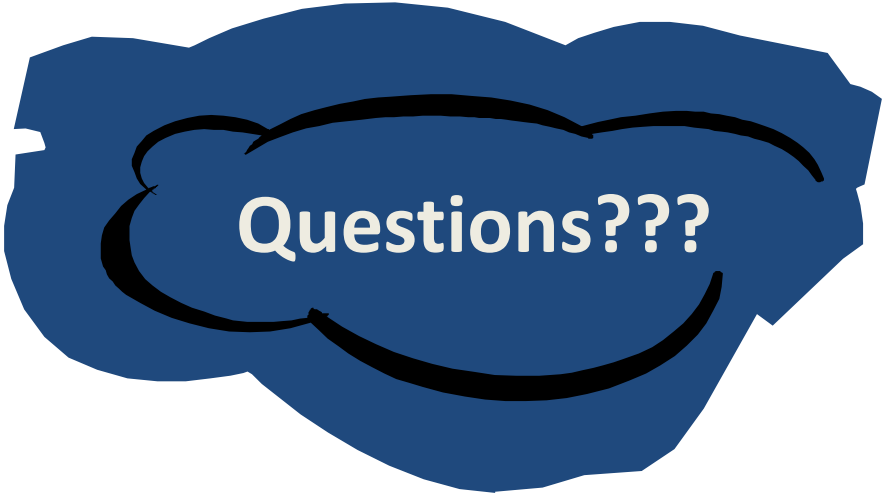- Understand the journey…Recognition vs Improvement

Bridget P. Dewees

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Excellence