



Lobo Stars

Newsletter 2

Sul Ross State University Quality Enhancement Plan



Blakely Davis, Robbie McDaniel, and Nolan Pritchard present their ideas. (Photos by Jason Hennington)

Students Present Excellent Ideas at Student Conference

Trey Darby's idea for a **Kite Festival** was our favorite student suggestion as he has volunteered to take on the entire project himself and intends to "make it happen" during the Outdoor Expo (April 8). He has been getting some small donations of kite making materials and will even handle the publicity (as former *Skyline* Editor). He even earned a spot on the Outdoor Expo committee.



Another good idea presented by Jessica Lien was **Bike Rentals/Lockers**. She showed convincing photos of students trying to keep their bikes safe from vandals (dragging them upstairs and around stairwells and storing them in their rooms). She said it was so much trouble, they seldom used their bikes. She wants enclosed bike lockers at dorms, the sports complex, and ANRS. Also wants bikes for rent and several people in the audience said they thought bikes would be donated by local people. Dean of Student Life, Liz Garcia, thought rental could be handled by Rec Sports.

Paul Chambers suggested a **Freshman Camp** instead or in addition to orientation. He said freshman want a social camp to help them get acquainted. His presentation brought out lots of memories about SRSU traditions. Plans are already underway to find instructors for "Cotton-eyed Joe" and for polling our alumni for traditions that endeared them to Sul Ross. Paul suggests

an off-campus camp setting like Paisano or Prude Ranch and recommended that students pay extra.

Nolan Pritchard suggested a **Camp Fair**, inviting various summer camps to interview students for summer employment and/or advertise their facilities. We intend to incorporate it into the Outdoor Expo and try to schedule it earlier next year, as he suggests.

Robbie McDaniel gave a very engaging presentation on **poor teaching** techniques. We will suggest a viewing for Faculty Assembly.

Blakely Davis suggested **Horticulture Therapy**, Dean Rob Kinucan, in the audience, said it had been started at ANRS last year but the interested student stopped. Other audience members brought up several local community gardens. She will follow up.

Jessica Villanueva and Glen Lasoya's idea for **Outdoor Movies** received a good response. Jeff Blake, Campus Activities Coordinator suggested hanging a "screen" on a large building rather than an inflatable screen that could be stolen or blown over. The audience discussed possibly using the Outdoor Theatre (not used in winter). Instead of renting movies, the audience suggested student videos, PowerPoint's, or productions, perhaps the next student conference, and showing game films with players and/or coaches explaining (might increase fans and give players experience of speaking to the public). Need to install some hooks and purchase outdoor projector.

(Student conference cont.)

Addie Bencomo, a last minute fill-in, gave an excellent presentation on creating student engagement through local research topics. She presented her project on **Barry Scobee**. Colton Woodward, Josh Cross and Everett Morrow gave a great presentation on **Wind Power**, targeting the community. It might also be something SRSU would be interested in to reduce electricity costs?

Several students discussed ideas for serving the community or fellow students: Eden Simon described **Wildfire Ministries**, Kendal Chilcott and Cori Fain described **Equine Therapy**. Ben Stringer's idea for **Guided Astronomical Viewing** was presented by Susan Spring. Stringer wants six Celestron 8 telescopes (\$1699 ea), and says this would enable us to possibly create co-op with McDonald Observatory using students in real research a observing and recording.

Jered Hilgenberg, a member of Freshman Leadership, presented Sara Jewett's idea for a **Learning Abroad Program for Foreign Students** The main idea was sort of an "exchange" program. Jewett said that students can take the same classes anywhere, but it is the cultural experience that motivates them to choose to take those classes in a specific place. We would use our interesting culture and surrounding region to attract students. Several ideas were also suggested but not presented like a **Big Bend Volunteer Referral Service**. The QEP webpages intend to be a centralized spot for students to volunteer for outdoor projects with parks. city, etc. So perhaps we could link to some other volunteer sites of interest (maybe a nursing site for students who want to help with health care? Or a sociology site for students who want to help with social services?).

Other ideas originally submitted but not presented included a Gazebo Bar on the Mall, Outdoor Basketball Sensation, Big Brother/Big Sister, Education Enhancement: Coordinated Management Team, Equine Outdoor Club, Community Recreation Center, Recycling, Mountainside Lobo Cave, Hands-On Elements, Mixed Teaching Methods, and Hands-on with Livestock.

A good idea suggested but not presented was submitted by Travis Bryan for Disc Golf. He said students could design the course in GIS class, a graphic design class could create tee markers, and it could become a PE class or an intramural sport. (Photos by Travis Bryan). **Jeremy Baade of Rec Sports has already ordered a 9-hole Frisbee Golf set!**



News Briefs



Outdoor Expo

Planning committee of Donna Greene, Kevin Urbanczyk, Brad Butler, Trey Darby, Ryan Baade, Liz Garcia, and Barney Nelson met Feb. 18 to plan the Outdoor EXPO April 8th. EXPO will include a Kite Festival (chaired by Darby), rafting and canoeing presentations by Butler and Urbanczyk, and more!

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New Critical Thinking Materials Ordered



Videos in library include:

- *Peer Tutoring* (14 min)
- *Reasoning, Critical Thinking, and Creativity* (60 min.)
- *Critical Thinking/Fallacies* (30 min)

DVDs in library include:

- *Correcting Your Thinking Errors: Using Rational Thinking for Emotional Stability* (30 min)
- *Wise Problem Solving/Decision Making* (30 min)
- *Critical Thinking and Human Emotions* (60 min)

Numerous CT Booklets in QEP Office

Numerous CT Books in library

Numerous Outdoor Learning Books in library.

Please let us know if you find something worth ordering!



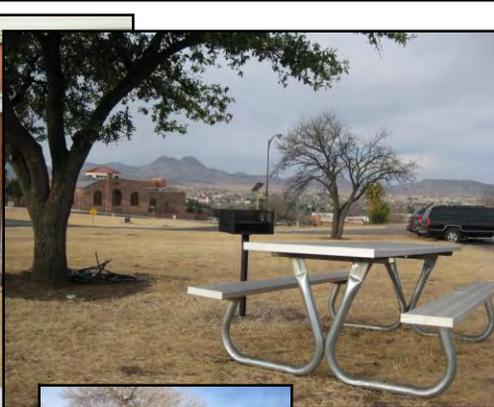
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Chris Garcia Hits Pilot Homerun!

As part of the QEP Pilot Program, Chris Garcia, Lecturer in the Academic Center for Excellence, organized a dodgeball team called the Aces in one of his four sections of ED 0300 to participate in an intramural tournament this past October. Garcia explained "the idea was to do something that would help bridge the personal relationship gap that often exists between student and teacher."

The Aces, who were all students from the Academic Center for Excellence, won the tournament. Garcia stated that the more important outcome was the positive feedback of students relating to him as a person and not just as an instructor relaying information.

The numbers tell the tale. The section of ED 0300 (Developmental Reading) students who participated in the dodgeball competition had a 73% pass rate. The average pass rate for the other three sections of Garcia's ED 0300 (students who did not participate in the dodgeball activity) was 64%.



Nine QEP grills have been installed by Physical Plant at various locations around campus: three around the Lobo Village, one at the sand volleyball courts, one at Physical Plant, IT, ANRS, and two at Kokernot Lodge. Freshman Sharoya Hall and art professor Jim Bob Salazar are ready to start cooking! We still have one waiting for a home.



Physical Plant employees, Jaime Leyva and Dennis Davis (plaid shirt), install new QEP picnic tables on the Library patio. (Photo by Donna Greene)

Dr. Vicki Lott Presents Critical Thinking Workshop in January

Story by Jason Hennington



As a part of the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP), Sul Ross State University students, faculty, and staff were invited to take part in an educational workshop geared at critical thinking.

Dr. Vicki Vernon Lott, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Lane College in Jackson, TN directed the workshop entitled "Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum" which was aimed at improving teaching and learning methods among students and professors.

"Our two main goals are to improve our thinking and to guide our students to critical thinking and goals such as graduation," Lott explained during her introduction.

Dr. Barney Nelson, Associate Professor of English and Director of the SRSU QEP, invited Lott to Sul Ross after taking part in presentations given by Lott in the past.

"I invited Dr. Lott because I had heard and/or seen her present three very successful sessions at SACS conferences (a workshop, a roundtable discussion, and a formal talk)," Nelson said.

According to Nelson, Lott's presentation was different from the presentations she had already seen.

"The workshop she presented here was very different from what I had seen and heard before," Nelson said. "I'm wondering if part of what she tried to do was help some of us realize what our own classrooms might sometimes feel like to our students or to give a confidence boost to those whose classrooms might be more engaging and active like her ending activity."

The idea of teaching in and out of the classroom was expressed during the workshop. Professors were encouraged to use elements outside of the classroom to find something students can relate to. After clarifying the difference between remembering and memorization, Lott explained why this method will help the student retain what they have learned in the future.

"Critical thinking is an art and a science," Lott said. "If we don't guide it, then it can become poor."

Lott stressed that practice is a major part of maintaining critical thinking. In an effort to explain the importance of practice, Lott made reference to singing legends Patti LaBelle and Aretha Franklin, who after over 20 years in the music business, still practice with a vocal coach regularly.

During the workshop Lott elaborated on certain points that could help students and professors with critical thinking. She stressed six terms throughout the day that were important for critical thinking: egocentrism, attitude, humility, empathy, clarity, and perspective.

"We can use these skills in developing student leaders," Lott said.

The workshop also clarified excerpts from the Sul Ross QEP, which were read aloud and explained by Lott.

(cont. next page)



Faculty, coaches, staff, and students mingled.

Mini-Guides to Critical Thinking and lunch provided by the President's Office



Photos by
Donna
Greene

(Workshop cont. from previous page)

"Tailor it to your own circumstances," she said. "As instructors we need to know what critical thinking is."

Lott spoke on everything from Essential Intellectual Traits to Ego-Centric to Attitude, and everything in between. She referred to them as "tools in the tool boxes," and provided a number of ways to organize them.

"Critical thinking is trying to organize what we already know," she said. "Organize tools we have into tool boxes. You have all the tools, but not all tools work for all jobs."

At the end of the workshop, Lott instructed a group exercise that she uses with her students involving attitude.

"According to the evaluations the most helpful and best part was almost unanimously the interactive activity at the end. Several planned to try the activity to help students understand difficult concepts, but many of the participants had gone on to other commitments by that time," Nelson said. "Also, those who completed evaluations all had different answers to the question about which part of the workshop they might use. The evaluations had several good suggestions about what to try next. Most people want us to just talk to each other now."

Since the workshop, Nelson is excited to see how students will respond during the upcoming QEP Students Conference.

"I'm anxious to hear what students have to contribute at the Student Conference next week-end," she said.

The workshop has also inspired Sul Ross to send faculty members to workshops at other universities in the near future.

"We will also be sending one of our best and brightest, Justin Badgerow, to a critical thinking workshop at Berkeley soon," Nelson said. "Maybe he will bring back the answers!"

Nelson, along with those in attendance, feel the workshop served a purpose to explain critical thinking and how it can help both faculty and students.

"The workshop's purpose was to introduce participants to critical thinking: what it is and how to encourage it in the classroom and in our own thinking habits," she said.



QEP received NCAA/ASC Tier II grant of \$3,218 for Lott Workshop. Tier II grants support equity issues and encourage development of better relationships between faculty and athletics.



Geology classes from Sul Ross and Midland College searched for garnet crystals on a recent combined field trip to the Van Horn area. This was one of six geology field trips offered so far during the Fall semester. Left to right are Amy Buntin, Midland College geology major, Ed Goebel, Sul Ross geology graduate student, Kendall Craig, Director of the Sul Ross-Midland College Science Initiative, and David Rohr, Chair, Earth and Physical Sciences. (Photo by Liz Measures)

February 19th

Join us for snacks &
Outdoor Learning Brainstorm Faculty Mixer

BYOB/RB

Kokernot Lodge

All Grad Teaching Assistants Invited

Jim Bob Salazar and Kevin Urbanczyk inspect the new turn on Hancock Hill Hike and Bike Trail built by Hill Club members. (Photo by Donna Greene)

