

CREATING A CULTURE OF QUALITY WITHIN THE DCCCD

Definition of Service Quality

Service quality can best be described as a measure of how **consistently** a service is delivered when match with students` expectations

High Friendliness Student-Centered Systems

“High friendliness” systems never subordinate student convenience and needs in favor of the convenience and needs of the people who work within the system or the institution itself.

Key Indicators of a Service Culture:

- People take responsibility
- There are few barriers to communication and action
- People are responsive to the needs of internal and external customers
- Front-line staff frequently ask if they can be of service
- People smile and look like they enjoy their work
- People continuously look for ways to improve
- Staff feel empowered to act
- People receive positive feedback from colleagues
- Customers are pleased after their interaction with staff
- Administrators help staff work to improve service
- Everyone works to identify and prevent problems
- People work to develop customer-oriented systems, policies, and procedures
- Staffs anticipate the needs of their internal and external customers.

Elements of Service Quality Include:

- Knowing what students (and other customers) want.
- Exceeding students` expectations.
- Ensuring student satisfaction wherever / whenever possible.
- Attention to detail.
- Absence of frustration.
- Getting it right the first time.
- Service-oriented **attitude** on the part of the person providing the service.

Determinants of Quality Service

- **Reliability** involves consistency of performance and dependability. The institution performs the service right the first time.
- **Responsiveness** concerns the willingness and readiness of employees to provide service.
- **Competence** means possession of the required skills and knowledge to perform the service.

- **Access** involves approachability and ease of contact. It means providing efficient services in an accessible way.
- **Courtesy** involves politeness, respect, consideration, and friendliness of contact personnel (i.e. receptionists, clerks, telephone operators, etc.)
- **Credibility** involves trustworthiness, believability, and honesty. It involves having the student's best interest at heart.
- **Understanding / knowing the student** involves making the effort to understand the student's needs. It involves learning the students' specific requirements and providing institutional attention.

Service Quality Starts with Assumptions and Beliefs. For example do you believe that the student is:

... the most important person on the campus. Without students, there would be no need for the Dallas County Community College System.

... not a cold enrollment statistic but a flesh and blood human being with feelings and emotions like our own.

... not someone to be tolerated so that we can do our thing. Students are our thing.

... not dependent on us. Rather, we are dependent on them.

... not an interruption of our work, but the purpose of it.

We are not doing them a favor by serving them. They are doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.

Common Student Service Problems on Most Community College Campuses

- Financial aid processes and policies
- Telephone system
- Parking
- Course availability
- Too much standing in line.
- Availability of academic advisor
- Poor communication between offices
- Student "run around", "bounce" or "shuffle"
- Registration processes
- Safety / security issues

High Quality Student Service is attained through:

- **Communicating** clearly and openly, in person and on the telephone --- verbally and non-verbally.
- **Developing rapport** and sensitivity to student needs---a "we care" attitude.
- **Defining problems** with the student and exploring realistic solutions.
- Being genuinely **friendly** and **courteous** at all times--- treating the student with respect and dignity.
- Being an **expert** on the institution's services, products, and procedures.

- Operating from a **cooperative position** that is a two-way relationship (i.e. “let’s work together”)
- Inviting **student responses** regarding services, procedures, and new programs.

Common Student Service Mistakes

1. Being apathetic
2. Being cold and indifferent
3. Not listening
4. Unfriendliness
5. Lack of empathy
6. Not asking questions
7. Always following procedures / policy
8. Keeping students waiting
9. Being discourteous
10. Arguing with students
11. Not admitting you are wrong
12. Rushing with transactions
13. Not solving the problem / addressing the concern
14. Being insensitive to behavioral styles
15. Allowing distractions
16. Negative, non-verbal communication
17. Being inconsistent and undependable
18. Embarrassing students
19. Criticizing students by name
20. Becoming angry and defensive
21. Expecting the student to always be reasonable
22. Not addressing the students by name
23. Wasting student’s time
24. Not keeping promises
25. Not treating students as you would like to be treated.

Service Champion Characteristics

- Being student-centered all of the time
- Being positive and enthusiastic
- Giving students your undivided attention
- Explaining policies and procedures
- Suggesting ways to make the system more student-friendly
- Solving problems quickly and fairly
- Adopting a “whatever it takes” attitude
- Showing you care
- The “Golden Rule of Service”---Treating everyone as you would like to be treated!