



Office of the Dean

The Graduate School

Telephone (318) 357-5851
FAX (318) 357-5019
E-mail: grad_school@nsula.edu
<http://www.nsula.edu/graduateschool/>

Northwestern State University
Natchitoches, Louisiana 71497

A Member of the University
of Louisiana System

February 12, 2008

Dr. Belle S. Wheelan
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097

Dr. Wheelan:

Per your request by letter on January 9, 2008, please find requested information below:

TITLE of QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN
INSTITUTION NAME
CONTACT PERSON FOR QEP

Academic and Career Engagement (ACE)
Northwestern State University
Dr. Chris Maggio
Acting Dean of Students and
Assistant Provost for Student Success
Telephone: 318.357.5286
Email: Maggioc@nsula.edu

Executive Summary

Northwestern State University (NSU) has identified academic and career goal selection as the topic for the Quality Enhancement Plan for the University. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) team has formulated a plan labeled Academic and Career Engagement (ACE). The team selected this initiative after careful analysis of the University's data regarding student retention and student need for expanded support as they progress through their academic careers and into the world of work. The University will require all first time freshmen on the Natchitoches campus to complete a career portfolio as part of their Orientation 1010 class. Instructors and University Career Counseling personnel will construct modules which will support this career portfolio assignment; further, they will work with orientation instructors to assist them with specific issues related to career planning and placement. Students will be encouraged to attend advanced career counseling sessions through small group or individual sessions. Additionally, well trained academic advisors will assist students in exploring field-specific career information, identifying academic challenges, and using resources that are available. Academic counselors will work with all students to identify an appropriate undergraduate curriculum of study and to monitor the progress of the students throughout their academic careers.

Currently, the University employs only one 10-month career counselor, who is supported by faculty members who serve as academic advisors and by the academic advisors who are housed in the University College Academic Advising Center. Traditionally, the University College advisors have primarily served those students pursuing the general studies degrees. In most academic departments, faculty advisors have had little or no training in regard to career counseling. Often, advising sessions focus upon course selection, progress of the student in the chosen curriculum, and registration. The following narrative describes the proposed QEP which represents a significant change for the University.

The goal of the ACE initiative is to provide all first-time freshmen with the opportunity to receive high quality career and academic counseling as a continuing part of their collegiate experience. ACE will enable Northwestern to:

- Effectively achieve the University's goals;
- Augment and expand the learning experience for students;
- Strengthen partnerships between administration, academic affairs, and student affairs; and
- Provide students with the most current information regarding career planning and placement so that they can make informed, responsible choices about their academic and career choices.

The implementation of the QEP will provide students with the information they need to make informed decisions about their career path and to efficiently and expeditiously progress through their academic program. University administration and faculty believe that one key to retention is high quality academic and career counseling.

Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven G. Horton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Steven G. Horton, Ph.D.
Associate Provost and Dean
SACS Liaison