

## QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN TITLE:

TRANSFORMING PAIDEIA: INTERDISCIPLINARY, INTEGRATIVE AND INTENTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

## CONTACT:

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This Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) introduces integrated and intentional interdisciplinary teaching and learning into Southwestern University's general education curriculum. As part of their general education requirement, students will select at least three theme-based, four-credit cluster courses and a fourth four-credit course, a team-taught, interdisciplinary *Paideia Seminar*. Cluster courses can also count toward other general education requirements and/or toward one's major or minor. The upper-level *Paideia Seminars* will be team-taught by two faculty members from different departments. These *Paideia Seminars* will be interdisciplinary spaces in which students and faculty will collaborate together in approaching the theme; students will also synthesize ideas from their cluster as a whole and reflect on the collective impact of the theme.

The initial three themes and course clusters for the roll-out program in 2013-14 are: *Global Health, Mediterranean Mingling* and *Representing Gender*. (Each thematic course cluster consists of 10-15 courses, from which students choose at least three.) Beginning in 2014-15, the number of thematic course clusters will expand and all Southwestern University students will participate in *Paideia*, augmenting interdisciplinary coursework with community-based and intercultural academic experiences.

*Paideia* is a way for students to organize some of their courses around a central *theme* or question: it will enable them to make connections across different classes and departments or programs, to do more interdisciplinary writing, creating, and thinking, and to collaborate with other students, faculty, and staff interested in the same theme. There will also be opportunities to connect civic engagement projects and/or intercultural learning experiences to the theme as well as extracurricular activities (e.g., lectures, seminars, reading groups, field trips) related to each theme.

We believe that both students and faculty must be guided in how to intentionally integrate the various components of a liberal arts education. We support this belief through an extensive faculty development program and a curriculum that encourages student reflection on their learning in the cluster courses and seminars. We will assess learning in *Paideia* through student portfolios and a faculty/staff assessment committee that will read and rate selected portfolios using cluster-specific scoring rubrics.

We call this QEP "*Transforming Paideia*" because it builds on a program originally founded in academic year 2003-2004. From eighty to one hundred sophomore level students entered this program each year. Each *Paideia* professor met with a group of up to ten students twice a month in a seminar for one to two hours to discuss aspects of the program and students' lives. The *Paideia* cohorts often engaged in common reading and discussion. Students and faculty participated in a civic engagement project. Students received funds toward expenses of an intercultural learning experience. For their work in *Paideia* students received one upper-level elective credit (on a pass/fail basis) per semester of participation.

This QEP will transform *Paideia* by including all students, all academic departments and most faculty in theme or problem based cluster courses and in team-taught, interdisciplinary theme or problem based seminars. The cluster courses and seminars will be regular components of teaching and learning at Southwestern; they will all be four-credit graded classes; they will meet a variety of general education distribution requirements and some requirements in majors. The seminar will be a locus for truly interdisciplinary, integrative, and reflective work. Civic engagement and intercultural learning will remain integral to the transformed *Paideia*.

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