

**Quality Enhancement Plan:
Determining the Institutional
Context for Success**

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Presentation Objectives

- Brief description of the QEP and its importance to SACS Reaffirmation
- The necessary elements of the QEP
- The QEP and your institutional context

Importance of QEP to Reaffirmation

- A well-developed QEP is absolutely critical to successful reaffirmation.
- The QEP is not a secondary report that receives only a cursory reading.
- Review of the QEP is the primary focus of the SACS On-Site Review Committee.

Core Requirement 2.12:

- The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that:
 - 1) includes a broad-based institutional process identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment,
 - 2) focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution,
 - 3) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP,
 - 4) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP, and
 - 5) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

Addressing Key Elements of the QEP

- 1. Decide if the focus is on improving student learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and how it relates to your mission.
 - Student learning is broadly defined as "changes in knowledge, skills, behavior, or values" based on the college experience.
 - Existing QEP initiatives have targeted curricula, pedagogy, faculty development, and student support

Illustration: Georgia State University's QEP Critical Thinking through Writing

- GSU identified in its Strategic Plan, 2005-2010:
 - "Students must be able to present their thoughts cogently both orally and in writing ... Georgia State must also ensure that students are able to analyze and evaluate important trends in disciplines, comprehend their place in the world and how the world is changing, understand the interconnectedness of knowledge ..."

GSU's QEP: Critical Thinking through Writing

- The goal is to increase our baccalaureate students' performance on two of the University's general education learning outcomes – critical thinking and written communication – as evidenced in their academic major.

 - Implementation of graduation requirement (effective for students entering in fall 2009 and thereafter) that undergraduates pass two critical thinking through writing (CTW) courses in their major.
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How extensive do you want the QEP to be?

- Will it be targeted to a specific student learning outcome or multiple learning outcomes? (i.e., Are you planning to change knowledge, skills, behavior, or values or any combination thereof?) or a specific aspect of the learning environment?
 - Will it be targeted broadly to impact all students or narrowly to a specific sub-group of your student population?
 - How does the focus of the QEP advance the institution's mission?
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Addressing Key Elements of the QEP

- 2. What key issues are emerging from existing assessment efforts about student learning or the learning environment?
 - What are the current processes used to gather information on student learning outcomes and/or the learning environment?
 - What types of direct and indirect measures of student learning do you currently collect and how do you collect them?
 - What types of measures are collected on the effectiveness of the student learning environment?
 - What is currently done with information on student learning outcomes or the learning environment?
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Illustration: Georgia State University's Process



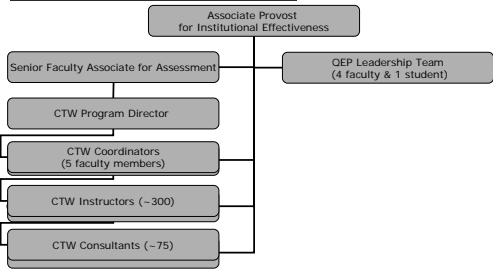
Small Group Discussion

- Using a 1 to 5 scale (1 = very little to 5 = very much) rate each item for how much influence it will (or did) have on determining the topics/ideas for your QEP?
 - Institutional mission
 - Knowledge gained through assessment
 - Knowledge of best practices
 - Senior campus leadership
 - Faculty
 - Student Support/Student Affairs
 - Students

Addressing Key Elements of the QEP

- 3. How do you assure that all institutional constituencies play a role in development and proposed implementation of the QEP?
 - Who will leading the QEP at your institution?
 - What role will senior leadership, faculty, students, administrative/support staff, & alumni play?
 - How much influence do each of the above constituents have over academic life at the institution?
 - Are there clear identifiable leaders among each of the constituents who have credibility and trust of their peers and others?

Georgia State University's QEP Structure



Georgia State's QEP: A Brief Illustration

- Process started in 2003
- Provost appointed APIE to be responsible for QEP
- APIE appoints two QEP Coordinators (Directors of CTL and WAC) and they review/share assessment information with students, faculty, chairs, and deans
- From assessment information and university mission, a couple of different foci emerge: quantitative literacy, international, and critical thinking & writing
 - Decided in 2005: critical thinking through writing
 - Discussion with leadership of University Senate committees - Admissions and Standards and Academic Programs

Accomplishments to date:

- University Senate passed motion approving CTW graduation requirement for baccalaureate degrees
- A total of 54 degree programs have identified 1 or more CTW Ambassadors who attended workshops hosted by the CTW Coordinators
- Each baccalaureate degree major has submitted a department plan for implementation & each has been reviewed and feedback provided
 - A description of the CTW implementation plan and assessment plan for the degree major within the department or program
- Assessment plan captures data at course, program, and university levels

Assessment of CTW: Course Level

- Assessment:
 - Direct Measures:
 - Evidence of student learning obtained from course assignments
 - Rubric scores/ evaluation criteria ratings from assignments
 - Indirect Measures:
 - Percent of time spent in class and outside of class on CTW assignments
 - Survey responses of students
 - Summaries of focus groups with students
 - Students' reflections on what they learned from assignments

Assessment of CTW: Program Level

- Direct Measures of Student Learning:
 - Capstone projects, senior theses, research projects as a CTW courses.
 - Pass rates or scores on licensure exams, subject area tests, certifications that include critical thinking and/or writing as a specific dimension.
 - Ratings by employer/internship supervisor/clinical supervisor of student's performance in areas of critical thinking and/or writing
 - Review of electronic portfolios of students

Assessment of CTW: Program Level

- Indirect Measures of Student Learning:
 - Surveys of students, employers, or alumni of perceptions of CTW
 - Graduate school placement rates
 - Job placement
 - Peer comparisons
 - Students' reflections on what they learned in program

Assessment of CTW: Institutional Level

- Direct Measures of Student Learning
 - Performance on tests of writing and/or critical thinking either home grown or standardized assessment tools, such as the CLA
 - Performance on achievement tests (such as GRE scores of exiting seniors)
 - Rubric scores for CTW assignments required of all students

Assessment of CTW: Institutional Level

- Indirect Measures of Student Learning
 - Student perceptions and self report of activities related to critical thinking and writing, such as:
 - NSSE survey (done every 3 years)
 - Survey of recent graduates (done every semester)
 - Undergraduates and alumni surveys (done every 7 year with academic program review)
 - Graduation and retention rates
 - Grade point averages of graduates

For additional information, contact:

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