ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING:
CREATING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS
THROUGH
ACTIVE LEARNING AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Submitted to
Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Universities
January 31, 2005
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Quality Enhancement Plan

Enhancing Student Learning: Creating a Community of Learners through Active Learning and Student Engagement

I. Introduction

A. Goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan

The ultimate aim of the University of West Florida’s (UWF) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is to maximize student learning and attain learning goals at all levels: general education, undergraduate education, and graduate education. More specifically, the primary goals of the QEP are to

1. Improve student learning.
2. Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments.
3. Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.
4. Build communities of learners.
5. Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.

The QEP will provide a mechanism to accelerate and sustain the University’s instructional paradigm shift from instructor-centered to learner-centered. An instructor-centered context assumes the delivery of instruction to be the institution’s purpose. A learner-centered context focuses the purpose on what students are expected to learn and accomplish as described in outcome statements at the university, college, program, and course level. According to Robert B. Barr and John Tagg (1995),

In the Instruction Paradigm, a college aims to transfer or deliver knowledge from faculty to students; it offers courses and degree programs and seeks to maintain a high quality of instruction within them, mostly by assuring that faculty stay current in their fields. If new knowledge or clients appear, so will new course work. The very purpose of the Instruction Paradigm is to offer courses.

In the Learning Paradigm, on the other hand, a college’s purpose is not to transfer knowledge but to create environments and experiences that bring students to discover and construct knowledge for themselves, to make students members of communities of learners that make discoveries and solve problems. The college aims, in fact, to create a series of ever more powerful learning environments. The Learning Paradigm does not limit institutions to a single means for empowering students to learn; within its framework, effective learning technologies are continually identified, developed, tested, implemented, and assessed against one another. The aim in the
Learning Paradigm is not so much to improve the quality of instruction-although that is not irrelevant—as it is to improve continuously the quality of learning for students individually and in the aggregate (p.15).

To facilitate this paradigm shift, the University will have a clear set of university-level expectations as to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and values students will have acquired as a result of the UWF educational experience. An assessment system will be in place to determine whether students have, in fact, acquired these competencies and are applying them in their post-University experiences. College- and program-level student learning outcomes will be developed in alignment with university-level student learning outcomes. This alignment of student learning outcomes across all levels will support the alignment of programs, instructional practices and experiences, resource allocations, and assessments with the strategic direction of the University.

Each individual program that contributes to student learning will (a) identify a clear set of student learning outcomes at the program and associated individual course/activity levels, (b) develop methods of assessing whether students have achieved the outcomes, and (c) review and modify the instructional component of programs/activities to ensure that appropriate strategies are being used to help students achieve the desired outcomes. These strategies are expected to embody active learning approaches; lead to increased levels of student and faculty/staff engagement in the learning process in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities; and provide opportunity for effective participation of students, faculty, and staff as members of a community of learners.

The University will have in place a system for assisting units with developing and refining student learning outcomes and related assessment and learning strategies. In particular, the QEP will establish an organizational structure and funding source to support faculty and staff innovations designed to improve achievement of student learning outcomes.

The University will have in place a system for regular review and assessment of the university-, program-, and course/activity-level outcomes, assessments, and developmental strategies. This system will be developed and monitored as part of a strategic initiative to ensure continuous improvement and appropriate allocation of resources. Assessments will be based on metrics gathered both internally and externally.

B. Definition of Student Learning

For the purpose of UWF’s QEP, student learning is defined as changes in students’ knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values that may be attributed to the students’ experiences at the University of West Florida. At UWF this definition is applied through six domains of student learning: Content, Critical
Thinking, Communication Skills, Project Management, Values and Ethics, and Discipline Specific Outcomes.

- The Content domain includes the concepts, theories, and frameworks of the respective discipline areas.
- The Communication domain includes the various modes of communication essential for effective writing, speaking, or otherwise presenting or demonstrating information and ideas.
- The Critical Thinking domain includes effective information literacy and management, problem solving, analysis of situations and issues, creativity, and discernment.
- The Project Management domain includes development of self-regulatory behavior, collaboration, reflection and self-assessment, and project planning and execution skills consistent with a particular discipline. The Values and Ethics domain includes academic integrity, discipline-specific professional standards, and values-based decision making.
- The Discipline Specific Outcomes domain is used to identify includes any special outcomes that distinguish a particular field of study such as professional certification or licensure.

C. Evolution of and Rationale for the Theme

As an essential part of the UWF’s reaffirmation of accreditation effort, the foundation for the QEP was laid in the Spring of 2003. The following reviews, supporting documents for which are available in the UWF SACS Office, were conducted in order to develop a context for planning and organizing the QEP effort:

- Review of the required elements and criteria for judging the adequacy of a Quality Enhancement Plan as described in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools publication *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*.
- Review of statements related to the University’s vision, mission, strategic goals, strategic imperatives, and strategic priorities to determine what course of action related to enhancement of learning might be suggested.
- Review of the "resource support" and "program enhancement" sections of unit-level strategic plans to identify academic department needs that might be related to enhancement of learning.
- Review of the reports of undergraduate and graduate education task forces.
- Review of recommendations included in academic program reviews.
- Review of "enhancement" projects already in implementation or planning stages.
- Review of the President’s annual survey of students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders related to the University’s strategic goals and imperatives.
- Review of the strengths of the University as expressed by alumni.
A number of potential themes emerged from these reviews and discussions. These themes included:

- Identifying and Assessing Student Learning Outcomes.
- Utilizing Electronic Media to Increase Access to and to Enhance Instruction.
- Incorporating Service Learning in the Curriculum.
- Strengthening International and Diversity Components in the Curriculum.
- Strengthening the General Studies Program.
- Developing Undergraduate Programs of Distinction.
- Strengthening Graduate Programs.
- Incorporating Faculty Research in Undergraduate and Graduate Programs.
- Strengthening Academic Advisement and Career Counseling.
- Strengthening Articulation Between UWF and Community Colleges and Between UWF and High Schools.

UWF’s SACS Leadership Team traveled to Atlanta in June of 2003 for an orientation meeting with representatives of the Association’s Commission on Colleges. In addition to what was shared about the QEP process from the *Principles*, this orientation meeting stressed that the QEP must focus on and lead to enhancement of student learning, the QEP must be related to the University’s ongoing planning processes, the QEP must have wide campus involvement, and implementation of the QEP must be financially and fiscally feasible within the University’s expected resources.

Based on these considerations the UWF SACS Reaffirmation Project administrative team was asked to suggest to the University’s SACS Leadership Team a proposed theme and develop a related concept paper. The initial theme as approved by the University Leadership Team was “Adding Value through Active Learning and Student Engagement.” The concept paper included the following sections:

- What is a Quality Enhancement Plan? (Relationship to SACS reaffirmation of accreditation? Purpose? Characteristics? Considerations in selecting a theme? SACS definition of student learning?)
- What themes have been used by other institutions?
- How was UWF’s proposed theme identified?
- Who should endorse the theme?
- How are active learning and student engagement defined?
- How would a QEP based on this theme benefit members and components of the University?
- What priorities in the University’s strategic plan would be addressed by this theme?
- What process should be used to develop the QEP?
- Who should be represented on the QEP Task Force?
- How will those not directly involved in preparing the QEP be engaged in development of the QEP?
• What assurances are there that once the QEP has been developed, resources will be available to implement the QEP?
• What professional literature is available to support elements of the theme?

The theme’s wording—which later became *Creating a Community of Learners through Active Learning and Student Engagement*—was selected because it reflected the University’s vision and mission statements, and it focused on strengthening further a characteristic of the University commonly believed to be a strength and an important part of the University’s “brand promise”: degree of interaction between students and faculty/staff. The theme also provided opportunities for a wide degree of involvement in development and implementation from units within the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The theme language also addressed the University’s strategic goals and imperatives (see Appendix A), particularly the following:

• Promote a learning environment that encourages the development of individual potential in students, faculty, and staff by creating a new standard in education focused on student learning outcomes; demanding excellence in teaching, research, and service; and promoting integrity through intellectual inquiry and open discourse.
• Provide solutions to educational, cultural, economic, and environmental concerns by aligning University programs, activities and services with University and community needs and interest through teamwork and collaboration; and engaging in scholarly research and creative activity to solve regional problems and enhance the quality of life.

The focus and theme of the Quality Enhancement Plan was influenced by a number of factors including the University’s vision and mission statements, consistency with the overall thrust of operational enhancement plans currently underway (e.g., Making Way for Excellence), the potential for building upon current perceived University strengths and aspirations, the potential for cooperative and collaborative activities between Academic and Student Affairs, the potential for engaging all academic and student affairs departments over the projected five-year span of the QEP, and the potential for practical evaluation of learning outcomes and data-based decision making.

Although the vision, mission, and strategic goals of the University encompass a variety of themes important to many constituent groups, the primary purpose of the University is to educate students with the intention of helping individuals acquire significant levels of knowledge, a broad range of competencies, and a set of ethical values. The vision statement —*Distinguish UWF as the premier creative, student-centered university focused on excellence*—and the mission statement —*Empower each individual we serve with knowledge and opportunity to contribute responsibly and creatively to a complex world*—help define the University’s aspirations for its students in a broad and hopeful way. These statements provide the basis for the articulation of University-level student learning outcomes (SLO’s) within the framework of knowledge, skills, and core values.
The QEP, with its focus on improving student learning, is an appropriate companion activity with an operational excellence plan currently being implemented. Making Way for Excellence, a partnership initiative with the Baptist Leadership Institute, is an effort intended to bring about a cultural shift in campus leadership and management by focusing on staff development and continuous process improvement strategies. (See pp. 37-38.)

The selected theme also focuses on further enhancing a characteristic of the University thought to be a strength and an important part of the University’s “brand promise.” The degree of interaction between students and faculty/staff is a well known and accepted part of the institution’s view of itself and it is commonly stated that one of the things that makes UWF special is the availability of smaller classes and the accessibility of the faculty and staff. Analysis of the data from the annual surveys of faculty, students, and friends of the University and the National Survey of Student Engagement suggest that there is a gap between perception and reality. This apparent gap provides additional support for the focus of the QEP effort in that it will move the University toward its desired student learning centered culture.

The notion of cooperative and collaborative activities between Academic and Student Affairs is already woven into the University’s strategic plan. Additionally, opportunities for such collaboration are suggested and supported by the literature surrounding some of the key concepts underpinning the QEP theme: student engagement, active learning, and community of learners.

D. Theoretical and Philosophical Framework

1. Student Engagement

Student engagement encompasses the student’s degree of involvement and integration, amount of psychological and cognitive effort involved, commitment to time on task, and interaction with the environment. Student engagement is a broad concept, including level of academic challenge; active and collaborative learning; student-faculty interaction; enriching educational experiences; and supportive campus environment (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2001). It is consistent with Astin’s (1977) Theory of Student Involvement, which proposes that when students are involved in both social and academic aspects of higher education, their learning is enhanced. Research suggests that academic involvement is associated with increases in learning, academic performance, and retention (Astin, 1993). Furthermore, students report increased educational benefits from courses and other experiences that engage them in the learning process (Light, 2001). Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) suggest, after a review of two decades of research, that student engagement plays a substantial role in the cumulative effect of student learning in college. While academic and student affairs professionals are likely to have an intuitive notion of what is meant by student engagement, the term is...
somewhat slippery. To provide a consistent definition for the purposes of the QEP, the workgroup looked to the literature for a research-based, operational definition. Our definition was found in recent research on learning communities.

Using the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Zhao and Kuh (2004) have linked participation in learning communities to student engagement and to academic achievement. In the context of their study, Zhao and Kuh considered student engagement to be the level of effort students expend in academic activities, higher-order thinking, active learning, and interaction with faculty members.

This construct of student engagement used by Zhao and Kuh (2004) was consistent with the definition used by Chapman (2003). Researchers with similar viewpoints have defined student engagement as the extent to which students use cognitive strategies in the learning processes (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990). The desired outcome of student engagement is to increase the depth of student learning so that students can apply the knowledge that they have constructed to a variety of new contexts.

For the purpose of this Quality Enhancement Plan, student engagement is defined as the student's degree of involvement and integration, amount of psychological and cognitive effort involved, commitment to time on task, and interaction with the environment.

2. Promoting Student Engagement

The relationship between student engagement and learning has been documented in sources such as Knight (2003), Pintrich and De Groot (1990), Wawrzynski (2004), and Zhao & Kuh (2004). While some of the factors that affect student engagement are internal to the student, environmental factors have also been shown to affect student engagement (Wawrzynski, 2004). Internal influences on student engagement include intrinsic motivation and personal interest. Environmentally, it is important to create a learning environment that is challenging, but non-threatening (American Psychological Association’s Board of Educational Affairs [BEA], 1997; National Learning Infrastructure Initiative [NLII], 2003). Additionally, integrating authentic activities into the learning tasks can foster personal interest and increase students’ intrinsic motivation. Increased motivation to learn can also lead to increased effort to learn, thereby boosting the behavioral component of student engagement (Chapman, 2003). When students are motivated to learn, the effort expended towards complex tasks increases and persists (BEA, 1997; Chapman, 2003).

It is also important to provide a learning environment that stimulates cognitive growth. In an investigation of the link between faculty behaviors and student engagement, Wawrzynski (2004) found that institutions with higher percentages of faculty who solicited academically challenging behaviors from students resulted in students who reported higher levels of higher order thinking. However, when a
higher percentage of faculty activity was devoted to research (as opposed to teaching), levels of student engagement were lesser. The implications of these findings are that faculty should spend significant time communicating high expectations for academic performance and should structure activities in an academically challenging manner. To further enhance learning, educators can increase student engagement by helping learners develop strategies for assimilating new knowledge into existing knowledge. This requires faculty to develop learning strategies that are appropriate for the level of complexity of the learning tasks and for the developmental level of the learner (BEA, 1999).

3. **Active Learning**

In order for students to be engaged, they must also partake in active learning. Similar to student engagement, active learning has been broadly defined throughout the literature. The characterization that best aligns with the idea of student engagement described above is that the process of active learning involves “students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing” (Bonwell & Eison, 2003, p. 2). Specifically, active learning requires that students engage in higher order thinking. Conditions that must be present for active learning to occur include problem-solving in real-world contexts, situational exploration, and practice and reinforcement. This type of learning in which students actively construct meaning while performing authentic learning tasks is closely aligned with the principles of constructivism. To promote active learning, learning tasks must be structured to allow students to relate new knowledge to their prior experience (Chickering & Gamson, 1987) and test their constructions of the knowledge (Modell, 1996).

Active learning refers to the proactive acquisition and reinforcement of knowledge or skill through thinking about, working with, and applying what has been presented through reading or other modes of information presentation. Active learning strategies include but are not limited to service learning, internships, study abroad, problem-based learning, collaborative projects, participation in inquiry-oriented discussion of course material, and active application of concepts to situations beyond those in which they were learned. Often active learning strategies involve an element of choice and self-direction on the part of the learner. For example, engaging in “metacognition,” such as the planning, monitoring, and deliberate modifying of learning strategy, is another form of active learning. Active learning has been shown to lead to more effective learning, application, integration, and retention. In addition, it leads to greater transfer of learning to new situations (e.g., Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Ford, Smith, Weissbein, Gully, & Salas, 1998), which is consistent with the purpose of the higher education experience.

For the purpose of this Quality Enhancement Plan, active learning is defined as the proactive acquisition and reinforcement of knowledge or skill through thinking about, working with, and applying what has been presented through reading or other modes of information presentation.
4. Community of Learners

The concept of community of learners as used in this QEP is perhaps best reflected in the report *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning* issued by three higher education associations (American Association of Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1998). This document offers special insight for the QEP because the project is expected to reflect cooperative and collaborative efforts between the Academic and Student Affairs divisions.

*Powerful Partnerships* provides 10 principles related to enhancing student learning, particularly how the academic units and the student affairs units can work together. Many of these principles actively address the issues of collaboration and environment. The following principles have been selected to help define the term “community of learners” within the context of our QEP:

- Learning is fundamentally about making and maintaining connections: biologically through neural networks; mentally among concepts, ideas, and meanings; and experientially through interaction between the mind and the environment, self and others, generality and context, deliberation and action…
- Learning is enhanced by taking place in the context of a compelling situation that balances challenge and opportunity, stimulating and utilizing the brain’s ability to conceptualize quickly and its capacity and need for contemplation and reflection upon experiences…
- Learning is done by individuals who are intrinsically tied to others as social beings, interacting as competitors or collaborators, constraining or supporting the learning process, and able to enhance learning through cooperation and sharing…
- Learning is strongly affected by the educational climate in which it takes place: the settings and surroundings, the influence of others, and the values accorded to the life of the mind and to learning achievements…
- Much learning takes place informally and incidentally, beyond explicit teaching or the classroom, in casual contacts with faculty and staff, peers, campus life, active social and community involvements, and unplanned but fertile and complex situations… (pp. 1-12)

These principles suggest that opportunities to integrate experiences in the classroom with meaningful out-of-class activities can support the process of forming essential learning enhancing connections. These activities should take advantage of purposeful facilities and opportunities for relationships with a broad range of others. Participation in clubs and organizations, living on campus, and interacting with faculty and peers in both formal and informal settings influence student success. Active learning and student engagement strategies such as learning communities, first year experience programs, group projects, service learning opportunities, and
supervised research activities that bring students and faculty together in settings outside the classroom are also essential.

The importance of appropriate and sustained co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (peer-group programs, student-development activities, and student-support services) has been well documented by Pascarella and Terenzini. In their 1991 *How College Affects Students*, they presented a synthesis of over 2500 studies on college learning and development outcomes and drew the following conclusions:

The environmental factors that maximize persistence and educational attainment include a peer culture in which students develop close on-campus friendships, participate frequently in college-sponsored activities, and perceive their college to be highly concerned about the individual student, as well as a college emphasis on supportive services (including advising, orientation, and individualized general education courses that develop skills). It is worth noting that some of these environmental influences on educational attainment persist even after college size and student body selectivity are taken into account (p. 604)

Chickering (1993) argues that educational environments exert powerful influences on student development and suggests seven key factors. First, institutional goals must be clear and specific with objectives that guide the development of programs and services and that lead to greater consistency in policies, programs and practice while clearly declaring the value of the institution. Second, significant participation in campus life and satisfaction with the college experience are important if development is to occur. "Bigger is not necessarily better" if the opportunities for significant participation are not available to enough students. Third, student/faculty relationships must be extensive and varied since interaction among faculty and students facilitates development. Fourth, a relevant curriculum is needed. It must be sensitive to individual differences, offer diverse perspectives, and help students make sense of what they are learning. Fifth, teaching should involve active learning, student faculty interaction, timely feedback, high expectations, and respect for individual learning differences. Sixth, meaningful friendships and diverse student communities in which shared interests exist and significant interactions occur will encourage development. Communities may be informal friendship groups or more formal groups such as residence hall floors. Seventh, collaborative efforts by faculty and student affairs professionals are necessary to provide developmental programs and services. Student affairs administrators should seek to identify themselves as educators.

After extensive interviews with students graduating from Harvard and other institutions of varying characteristics, Light (2001) found that “those students who make connections between what goes on inside and outside the classroom report a more satisfying college experience” (p. 14). More specifically, in terms of the issue of community, Light (2001) found that substantial academic learning takes place
outside the classroom, classes which are structured to encourage or require collaboration increase both learning and engagement, the diversity of the community is important, and time spent focused on academic work with faculty or peers outside of the classroom is critical.

Baxter-Magolda (2001) suggests that for students to succeed after college they must have "a complex mind . . . and a complex self" (p. 326). This integration requires engaging the student in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes in settings both in and out of the formal classroom. She suggests that active collaborations and partnerships between academic and student affairs are essential to creating an environment rich in opportunities for community building among appropriate peer groups, student and faculty interactions, leadership and service activities, campus employment situations, and diversity.

*Powerful Partnerships* (American Association for Higher Education, 1998) concludes by identifying the essential roles to be played by each member of the community of learners that we seek to cultivate. Illustrations of these roles are provided below:

Students take charge of their own learning and organize their educational programs to include a broad array of experiences both inside and outside the classroom; become aware of the cumulative nature of their education, and consequently plan and monitor their development; and establish personal relationships with faculty and staff as an essential part of their education.

Faculty become masters of cognitive studies; develop pedagogy and curricula that draw upon and embody learning principles; become involved in all aspects of their institution's community life; and work in partnership with staff and community supporters to create learning activities based on the learning principles.

Scholars of cognition share their findings widely with faculty colleagues and higher education audiences and become attentive in their writings to the application of new findings to the conduct of teaching and learning.

Administrative leaders rethink the conventional organization of colleges and universities to create more inventive structures and processes that integrate academic and student affairs; align institutional planning, hiring, rewards, and resource allocations with the learning mission; offer professional development opportunities for people to cooperate across institutional boundaries; use evidence of student learning to guide program improvement, planning and resource allocation; and communicate information on students' life circumstances and culture to all members of the college or university community.

Student affairs professionals and other staff take the initiative to connect to each other and to academic units; develop programs that purposefully incorporate and identify learning contributions; and help
students to view their education holistically and to participate fully in
the life of the institution and the community . . .

All those involved in higher education, as professionals or as
community supporters, view themselves as teachers, learners, and
collaborators in service to learning. (pp. 11-12)

For the purpose of this Quality Enhancement Plan, a community of
learners is defined as a collaboration between and among segments of the
University community to enhance student learning and success.

In summary, each of the three major elements of the QEP theme (student
engagement, active learning, and community of learners) provides a key part of the
foundation of the QEP’s actualization. Promotion of student engagement, described
above as the degree of psychological and cognitive investment by the student in the
learning process, enhances student learning by getting students more involved and
invested in their own learning outcomes. Active learning, described by some as both
constructivist and authentic, involves both faculty and students in the learning
process through strategies designed to promote higher level thinking and problem
solving. A community of learners, described above as a collaborative and
purposeful environment focused on student learning, is at once part of the process
and part of the product of the intended QEP impact. By focusing scholarly and
creative attention on the process of student learning and by promoting appropriate
partnerships, collaborations, and structural changes UWF will move toward a
sustainable learner-centered community.

E. Campus Involvement in the Development of the Plan

Prior to final approval of the theme by the University Leadership Team,
endorsement of the Quality Enhancement Plan theme was requested from the
following governance-related organizations: Faculty Senate, Student Government
Association, Deans Council, and Division of Student Affairs Directors. During
discussions with the Faculty Senate, Senate members recommended changing the
wording of the theme to Creating a Community of Learners through Active Learning
and Student Engagement to provide a greater degree of specification to the reason
why students and faculty should use active learning and student engagement
strategies. The modified theme was approved by the UWF SACS Leadership Team.
Subsequently, the theme was approved by the Programs and Resources Committee
of the University Planning Council and then by the Planning Council itself.

During the Fall Semester 2003, an initial Quality Enhancement Plan Task
Force (see Appendix B) was convened with representatives from the three Colleges
and the Division of Student Affairs. It was decided that the Task Force should be
collaboratively chaired by representatives from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.
It was also decided that additional representatives would be added in the Spring
As with any group process, the collection of individuals involved went through the typical dynamic transitions often characterized as forming, storming, norming, and performing (Tuckman, 1965). This group dynamic was complicated by a number of factors. First, there was the ambiguity of the co-chair system that led to some confusion and tentativeness about agenda-setting during the spring and early summer of 2004. Then the original academic co-chair resigned from the project due to other commitments and responsibilities. This resulted in a short transition period during June and July of 2004. A new academic co-chair was selected and briefed on the project. These two situations extended the so-called forming and storming phases of the project. Finally, and most critically, the University was closed for three weeks due to the unprecedented impact of a catastrophic hurricane (Ivan) in September of 2004. The entire University community was significantly impacted personally and professionally. The student affairs co-chair was engaged in emergency recovery activities for the three weeks the University was closed plus at least an additional week after re-opening. This interruption came at the time when the QEP team should have been working at its most productive level.

Despite these complicating factors, the QEP team did accomplish a great deal. The process began with preliminary meetings which focused on the purpose of the project and determining a plan of work. Discussions among Task Force members through the end of February 2004 revealed the following:

- Confusion over what exactly is to be enhanced and confusion over what “problem” is to be solved.
- Lack of clarity in what is meant by a community of learners, active learning, and student engagement and the relationship between these three concepts. To some degree, the confusion resulted from student engagement being both a desired student learning outcome and an active-learning-based instructional strategy used to secure other learning outcomes.
- Difficulty in identifying appropriate measures related to desired student learning without clear specification of the student learning outcomes.
- Perception that the University lacks a clear set of university-level student learning outcomes.
- Perception of a lack of alignment of strategic planning documents at different levels.
- Perception that the theme presupposes solutions without full analysis of underlying problems.
- Perception that although units may have identified unit-level student learning outcomes, there is little valid and reliable measurement data being collected and used with respect to the stated outcomes.
- Perception that the identification of the theme may not have been as data-driven as it might have been.
Discussions among the QEP Leadership Team and Task Force members continued throughout the spring of 2004 as the group worked on identifying best practices external to the University via literature review and Web searches and identified the types of data that would be necessary. Also during this period of time, the National Survey of Student Engagement was administered electronically with a response rate of 40% (slightly above the national average for participating institutions). Preliminary work was done on planning an evaluation design.

One of the major challenges of the QEP team was to align student learning outcomes to all levels of the University’s planning processes. Early on, the perceived lack of alignment between the university-level strategic plan and the program- and activity-level student learning outcomes had been identified as a potential gap. Two very important activities emerged that addressed this issue: a revision of the University’s strategic plan and the evolution of university-level student learning outcome domains.

Based on feedback from the QEP group and other constituent groups, the language of the University’s strategic plan was updated to reflect better the direction of the QEP. Key concepts, such as communities of learners and education focused on student outcomes, were included in the University’s Goals and Imperatives. New or revised University priorities were included such as

- Engaging students in . . . programs that will prepare them to make life-long contributions to society,
- Aligning innovative curricula and co-curricula to the University’s mission, and
- Identifying and systematically assessing learning outcomes.

These changes in the University’s central strategic planning document were endorsed by the University Planning Council in April 2004 and by the UWF Board of Trustees in June 2004. The updated Strategic Plan was seen as a prelude to the upcoming Quality Enhancement Project and an essential message to the entire University community that the enhancement of student learning was central to the University’s mission.

The second major factor contributing to the improved alignment of student learning outcomes to all levels of the University’s planning processes was the adoption of resolutions in April and July of 2004 by the Florida Board of Governors requiring all state universities to create and publish Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) for their baccalaureate degree programs. Per Board of Governor’s policy directive, these ALCs must, at a minimum, identify the expected core student learning outcomes and related assessments in the areas of content/discipline knowledge and skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills. Because the development of university-level student learning outcomes had already been identified as a gap by the QEP group, the University’s academic leaders embraced this requirement as an opportunity to meet or exceed the requirements of the State while creating what was effectively an essential prerequisite to the QEP.
implementation. In addition to the three required domains, three additional "value added" outcome domains were crafted: project management, values and ethics, and discipline specific outcomes. This work resulted in the development of the University-level student learning domains described on pp. 5-6.

During the summer of 2004, work groups were assigned to develop tools to establish a baseline of practice at UWF related to student engagement and active learning strategies and assessment of student learning. In June of 2004, the Director of the Center for University Teaching and Learning coordinated a visit by consultant Bill Hill from Kennesaw State University. Dr. Hill’s visit included meetings with the QEP work groups and leadership team. Dr. Hill made presentations entitled Developing Student Learning Outcomes: Strategies and Challenges; Assessment Plans and Strategies, and Enhancing Instruction: Needs, Strategies and Opportunities. Dr. Hill also provided an external review of UWF’s QEP draft and presented observations and suggestions. This consultation visit helped focus the organization and work plans of the QEP team on a tighter integration of student learning outcomes, assessment, and learning strategies.

At the same time the QEP was being developed, resources became available for implementation of a Faculty Fellows Program through the Center for University Teaching and Learning (CUTL). The Center chose to emphasize components of the QEP – mentoring, instructional strategies, and assessment – in this faculty development program. Three fellow positions were advertised; potential candidates were effective teachers who possessed organizational and leadership abilities as well as a concrete vision for what they could accomplish as a CUTL Fellow. Any full-time, tenure-track faculty member with at least 3 full years of experience at the University was eligible. (Reapplication for an additional consecutive term is permissible.) Successful candidates receive a course release each semester, a $2500 stipend, and a summer stipend. At the end of the fall 2004 term, the selection committee had identified two fellows: Mentoring Fellow and Assessment Fellow. The Mentoring Fellow will develop programs and initiatives that contribute to faculty and student success in addition to mentoring individual faculty. The Assessment Fellow will contribute to the inclusion of effective assessment techniques in the accomplishment of student learning outcomes. An Instructional Strategies Fellow is anticipated for the fall of 2005 to advance effective strategies for student engagement and active student learning.

As mentioned above, the fall of 2004 was complicated by Hurricane Ivan. The University of West Florida was closed to regular business for 3 weeks and all areas of the campus were challenged to participate in intensive recovery activities. After the reopening of the University, the QEP Leadership Team was enhanced by the addition of a representative from the Faculty Senate and the original Task Force was reconstituted into a broader Steering Committee (see Appendix B). The Steering Committee was charged with a number of tasks essential to completing the planning stage of the QEP effort. Agreement was also reached on the overall
administrative and governance structure once full implementation takes place in the Fall Semester 2005 (see pp. 64-67).

The principal outlines of the QEP were presented to the University community at the President’s Fall Semester Town Hall Meeting on November 10, 2004. Previously, presentations had been made to the Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and College Councils as part of the planned update on activities related to the QEP and to a meeting of department chairpersons and faculty on the development of the university-level student learning domains associated with the Academic Learning Compacts project.

To inaugurate a series of faculty and staff development activities related to the adoption of the learning domains associated with the Academic Learning Compacts described above, Dr. David Callahan was invited to campus in mid-November for presentations and focus-group discussions on academic integrity. In early December, the University participated in the multiagency-sponsored teleconference on Shaping the Future: Aspirations, Assessment, and Action. Plans were also made to bring to campus in early March 2005 Dr. Barbara Walvoord, a recognized expert in course-embedded, program-level assessments. Additionally, travel support has been made available to send groups of faculty to conferences and workshops related to the goals of the QEP.

During the latter part of Fall Semester 2004, work was done to establish a Web site to host a variety of information resources for faculty and staff related to the QEP theme and processes. A process for soliciting project proposals (RFP – Request for Proposals) was created. The surveys designed during the summer were formatted, piloted, and then distributed electronically to all academic chairpersons and faculty. The QEP document was drafted during the Fall Semester of 2004 and submitted to the campus community for review and response early in the Spring Semester of 2005. The QEP was endorsed in concept by the Faculty Senate at its January 2005 meeting and formally adopted by the University Planning Council on January 27, 2005.
II. Charting the Course: What Do We Know About Current Conditions?

This Quality Enhancement Plan, as would any change activity, occurs within the context of a dynamic environment. The movement of the University does not stop while new initiatives are rolled out. There is no analog in a university setting to the industrial model of shutting down the plant to retool for production of a new model. Therefore, this planning process has influenced and been influenced by a number of environmental factors. These include the overall University strategic plan, divisional planning in both Academic and Student Affairs, the movement toward a student learning outcome paradigm represented by the development of the Academic Learning Compacts and the Student Affairs planning and assessment initiative, results from formal and informal assessments, and other related campus initiatives. The most important of these environmental factors are described below and in designated appendices.

A. University Strategic Plan

As detailed above, the University Planning Council and the University Board of Trustees developed and approved a new strategic plan for UWF (see Appendix A). The new strategic plan replaced the Partnership Strategic Plan that was adopted in January 2000. All organizational units are updating their individual strategic plans in support of the new strategic plan.

The UWF Strategic Plan includes the following major strategic goals:

- Promote programs and activities, and learning and living environments that encourage the development of individual potential in students, faculty, and staff; communities of learners; and the valuing of lifelong learning.
- Attract and inspire a diverse and talented student body committed to uncompromising academic excellence.
- Provide solutions to educational, cultural, economic, and environmental concerns.
- Manage growth and development responsibly through focus on continuous quality improvement of programs and processes.
B. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Strategic Plans

The Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs also publish strategic plan documents. These are intended to link the university-level plan to the program- and service-level activities.

The Academic Affairs strategic plan for 2003-2004 focused on the following major strategic goals:

- Offer high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education/distance education programs.
- Foster high-quality research and other creative and scholarly activities.
- Engage in high-quality public service.
- Provide quality learning and work environments.
- Strengthen contributions to the development of the UWF.
- Support the advancement of higher education through professional service, personal professional development, and educational partnerships.

For 2004-2005 the major strategic goals focus on the following themes:

- Leadership and organization.
- Accountability.
- Academic program development.
- Faculty recruitment and development.
- Research and grants.
- Enrollment and student support.

The Student Affairs strategic plan includes the following major strategic goals:

- Provide a student-focused environment that encourages the development of the whole person, enhances the quality of the UWF experience for all students, and promotes active student learning through engagement.
- Provide student services that meet the unique needs of students in a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate manner.
- Create a professional environment that promotes and recognizes growth, quality work, a sense of community, and synergy.
- Integrate technology into student affairs programs to become “leaner, meaner, and more efficient” in business practices allowing us to be more individually engaged with student relationships.
- Identify and develop “centers of excellence” within the functional units of the division.
- Articulate the essential role of Student Affairs in the mission of the University through formal and informal communications; participation in University planning, programming, and governance activities; and relationship networks with a cross section of the University community.
C. **Student Learning Outcomes**

The movement toward a learner-centered culture at UWF is manifested in two major divisional initiatives. Academic Affairs, responding to both the gaps identified in the reaffirmation of accreditation process and new requirements of Florida’s evolving higher education governance structure, initiated work on Academic Learning Compacts. Student Affairs, seeking to enhance collaboration with Academic Affairs and to better engage the departments and units of the division in the academic enterprise, initiated a planning and assessment framework that embraces both program outputs and learning outcomes.

1. **Academic Learning Compacts**

At its April 22, 2004 and July 22, 2004 meetings, the Florida Board of Governors, adopted policy resolutions requiring all universities in the State University System of Florida to adopt, through their respective Boards of Trustees, action plans for developing and implementing Academic Learning Compacts for baccalaureate degree programs. Subsequent to adoption of these resolutions the statewide Division of Colleges and Universities drafted a set of policies and procedures for implementation of the resolutions. The sections which follow are based on those policies and procedures and UWF’s implementation plan.

**UWF Definition of Program.** At a minimum, each academic department is to prepare Academic Learning Compacts for each of its baccalaureate and graduate degree programs listed by six-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes on the State University System Inventory of Degree Programs. In cases where an academic department offers multiple programs under one six-digit CIP code and the programs so offered are substantially different with respect to core student learning outcomes, a separate Academic Learning Compact is to be prepared for each program.

**Board of Governors Policies and Procedures.** Each university is to construct and publish clearly defined policies and procedures for developing, implementing, and reviewing Academic Learning Compacts and associated activities. A current copy of each university’s policies and procedures regarding Academic Learning Compacts is to be filed with the Division of Colleges and Universities. These policies and procedures are to be aligned with System policies and are to include, but not be restricted to the following elements:

I. For each baccalaureate program on the State University System Academic Degree Inventory, university personnel are to develop and make Academic Learning Compacts available to students that

   A. Identify, at a minimum, the expected core student learning outcomes for program graduates in the areas of
      1. content/discipline knowledge and skills
      2. communication skills
      3. critical thinking skills
B. Identify corresponding assessments used to determine how well student learning matches those articulated expectations.

II. University personnel are to develop the evaluation systems (including external validations) necessary to corroborate that the assessments referenced above truly measure student achievement against the expected core learning outcomes. Such evaluations are to serve as validation of the confidence levels associated with the assessment mechanisms used in the program, and results are to be used to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.

Action Plan. During the initial phase of implementing the policy, university personnel are to develop an action plan that is to be approved by the university’s Board of Trustees and submitted to the Division of Colleges and Universities. The plan is to include the following:

- A proposed timeline for developing policies and implementing procedures to capture each element above, as well as in making Academic Learning Compacts readily available to students.
- A description of how university personnel will certify that each baccalaureate graduate has completed a program with clearly articulated core learning expectations and corresponding robust and effective assessment mechanisms.

The UWF Board of Trustees approved the UWF Action Plan (a copy of which is available in the UWF SACS Office) at its November 2004 meeting.

Information Available to Students. University personnel are to provide students and prospective students with concise statements of what active and successful participants in the joint teaching-learning process will know and be able to do, expressed in terms of the core learning outcomes embodied in the requirements for each baccalaureate degree. The Academic Learning Compacts made available to students will also list the types of assessment used in the program.

University policies and procedures are to delineate how and where Academic Learning Compacts will be made readily available to students.

Academic Learning Compacts must be made available to students beginning no later than the fall semester of 2005. As of the date of the preparation of the UWF QEP, decisions related to the place of publication of the Academic Learning Compacts at UWF are still under consideration.

Inclusion in State-Mandated Academic Program Reviews. As part of the mandated review and continuous improvement process for State University System degree programs, university personnel are to submit to the Division of Colleges and
Universities an electronic copy of the Academic Learning Compact for each baccalaureate degree program under review.

At UWF, effective with academic program reviews conducted in Academic Year 2004-2005, program review self-studies and final reports must include the Academic Learning Compact and related curriculum maps and assessment plans. Program Review Teams will be required to comment on the sufficiency of the Compacts, curriculum maps, and assessment plans. Given the University’s five-year rotation of academic program reviews, inclusion of this component in program reviews will ensure that all Academic Learning Compacts are reviewed on a regularly scheduled basis.

UWF Core Student Learning Outcomes/University-Level Domains. At UWF, each baccalaureate and graduate degree program is expected to present program-level Academic Learning Compact core student learning outcomes for each of the following domains:

- Content*—concepts, theories, and frameworks of the discipline.
- Critical Thinking*—information management, higher-level cognitive skills, problem solving, creativity.
- Communication*/Literacy—written (reading and writing), spoken (listening and speaking), quantitative, technological, and other communication skills as appropriate to the discipline.
- Integrity/Values—decision making, academic integrity, professional standards for discipline integrity.
- Project Management—project planning and execution pertinent to the discipline.

In addition, degree programs may present student learning outcomes representing

- Discipline Specific Skills—special outcomes that distinguish program completers not identified in the five domains listed above.

*Note: Areas required by Board of Governors policy.

UWF Curriculum Maps/Matrices. At UWF, each program is to identify where the key learning activities and key assessments related to the program-level core student learning outcomes are found in the program. There is to be clear identification by course and other curriculum components of the program-level student learning outcomes, key teaching-learning activities, and key assessments associated with the program’s Academic Learning Compact.

UWF Assessment Plans. At UWF, in addition to identifying the types of assessments to be used to ascertain whether students have acquired the core learning outcomes, the assessment plan must address the following as stipulated in Board of Governors policy:
University personnel will develop the evaluation systems (including external validations) necessary to corroborate that the assessments referenced truly measure student achievement against the expected core learning outcomes. Such evaluations will serve to validate the confidence levels associated with assessment mechanisms used in the program, and results will be used to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.

Certification of Program Completion. At UWF, effective with first-time-in-college (FTIC) students entering UWF in the Fall Term 2005, departmental and college approvals of baccalaureate candidates for graduation will include verification that the candidates have completed programs with “clearly articulated core learning expectations and corresponding robust and effective assessment mechanisms.”

Relationship to Requests for New UWF Programs and Program Modifications. At UWF, effective with requests for implementation of new programs and requests for program modifications to be reviewed and considered after August 1, 2005, such requests must include an appropriate Academic Learning Compact and related curriculum map and assessment plan. Inclusion of this requirement in program change request policy and procedures will ensure that all new and revised programs develop Academic Learning Compacts and related curriculum maps and assessment plans in a timely fashion.

2. Student Affairs Planning and Outcome Assessment

Historically, there have been three major philosophical movements in student affairs practice: student services, student development, and student learning (Doyle, 2004). Each of these movements has a unique and essential place in the past, present and future of student affairs work.

The student services approach, with its roots in the American Council on Education’s Student Personnel Point of View (1937, 1949), suggests that the primary purpose of the profession was to provide specialized services to support the academic mission of the institution. From these two seminal documents the notion emerged that the academy should provide “student personnel services” designed to integrate classroom and outside-the-classroom experiences.

The student development movement emerged as student affairs practitioners sought to regain relevance to the direct educational mission of the academy. Though there are many models of student development, the basic premise is the same. Student development reflects theories of human growth and environmental influences as applied to in-class and out-of-class personal learning opportunities. The central element of student development as an intentional activity is the interaction between the student and the educational environment. The notion of most student development theories is that all aspects of the student's life should be attended to because they all impact the developmental outcome. Environmental
elements both challenge the student and provide the support needed to meet these challenges, catalyzing more advanced levels of growth and development.

**Student learning** as a focus addresses more specifically the measurable outcomes associated with the collegiate experience. The student learning approach focuses on the questions of what students will know, be able to do, and value as a result of engagement in the academy. Student learning is by its nature defined in terms of observable student behaviors and actions. A student learning focus suggests that it is the responsibility of student affairs to proactively seek ways to contribute to the enhancement of student learning.

Which of these guiding philosophies is the “right way”? It can be argued that each of the three approaches has a place in the functioning of the Division of Student Affairs at UWF. The student services orientation is well reflected in the organization of programs, services, and facilities to meet the needs of students and to focus on student satisfaction. Student service initiatives have direct impact on the quality of life of students and provide the essential safety nets for students in need. The student development perspective represents the more global aspirations for students and the professional value structure that embraces the notion that the work of student affairs professionals makes a difference in students’ lives.

The next stage of evolution for UWF’s Division of Student Affairs is to align planning and assessment processes with these three frameworks. To accomplish this, planning and assessment efforts must be organized into three components:

- **Program outcomes** should be stated to describe what programs, services, and facilities should accomplish. Outcomes and assessments might include usage data (attendance, number of events, number of clients), satisfaction surveys, benchmarking, and other direct and indirect measures.

- **Student development outcomes** should be stated to describe how we believe students will experience personal growth from participation or exposure to our programs, services, and facilities. Outcomes and assessments might focus on how students move from concrete and simplistic to abstract and complex thought processes, from absolute to relativistic belief systems, and from external to internal control. Assessment for these sorts of outcomes would necessarily be long term and broad and likely best effected at a divisional or institutional level via national instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) or institutionally developed alumni surveys.

- **Student learning outcomes** (SLOs) should be stated to describe what students are expected to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills, and values due to campus programs, services, and facilities. The focus of student learning outcomes and related assessments is discussed more fully below.
A Context for Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes. An ad hoc task group of professional and pre-professional staff convened to develop a common model of student learning outcomes that can serve as the foundation for all Student Affairs departments and units. The committee drew upon a variety of resources from the literature and the experience (and files) of the members. After two sessions of brainstorming and refining a proposed general model was developed.

University Level Student Learning Outcome Domains. Although the mission and strategic goals of the UWF encompass a variety of aspects important to many constituent groups, the primary purpose of the University is to educate students with the intention of producing individuals with a range of competencies. These competencies, in aggregate, help define the University's aspirations for its students in a broad and hopeful way. These competencies also provide the foundation for University level outcomes within the framework of knowledge, skills, and core values.

Within the context of UWF's place as a state-supported institution, these competencies and learning outcomes align with the Academic Learning Compacts described above. Within the area of Student Affairs, each program or service should have articulated student learning outcomes that can be aligned with University student learning outcomes and which are in general support of the Academic Learning Compacts process. These co-curricular program outcomes will drive the development of event, activity, or service delivery outcomes.

Operationalizing and Assessing Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes. Because they are intentionally broad and general there is no “silver bullet” for quickly and easily operationalizing and assessing these outcomes. Successful learning strategies and assessment must therefore occur at the program and activity levels where these broad outcomes are expressed more specifically and actualized by a specific program or service. At that point the questions that guided the development of the outcomes can be adapted to guide assessment:

- What do the students know? (Knowledge)
- What can the students do? (Skills)
- What will the students choose to do? (Values)

For example, if the divisional learning outcome is that “our students will know about the world of work including career possibilities, how to search for jobs, how to prepare resumes, and professional expectations” then a learning outcome for the Career Services Resume Workshop might be that “students will produce a clean and effective resume.” The assessment of this activity level learning outcome might be a simple rubric by which the resume can be judged “clean and effective.” Asking what the student can do in relation to creating a resume will in fact be an assessment of both the extrapolated departmental learning outcome and the root divisional learning outcome. If departmental learning outcomes are aligned with the divisional outcomes, then assessment (both formative and summative) can roll up to the divisional level.
Mapping the Co-Curriculum. The next step is to position the divisional learning outcomes within the Division’s strategic plan. In addition, each department or unit must begin identifying and articulating outcomes that can then be aligned with the divisional outcomes. The divisional outcomes should offer sufficient opportunities for every department and unit to find ways to align their learning and program outcomes with those of the Division and the University.

A framework for mapping student learning outcome strategies and assessment efforts has been designed that will chart at macro and micro levels the activity and event level learning outcomes extrapolated from the general model. A division level map (spread sheet) will identify which learning outcomes and associated assessments are linked to each department. Each department will have (at minimum) a department level map that more specifically articulates the learning outcomes associated with the department in terms of measurable student behaviors and actions. Departments with more complex structures and programs will likely need to create another level of map to drill down to the activity/event level.

Using Planning and Assessment for Organizational Effectiveness. Each department within the Division of Student Affairs should already have a strategic plan in place which is published on the University Planning Information Center (UPIC) Web site. The UPIC system, the official posting site for University planning and assessment activities, must eventually contain all the essential information on divisional planning and assessment. In preparation for submitting information to UPIC it is recommended that each department or unit use the following general outline as an organizational tool:

I. Department or unit vision, mission, and values – review to ensure that these are in appropriate alignment with the divisional- and University-level vision, mission, and values.

II. Department or unit strategic goals – review to ensure that these are in appropriate alignment with the divisional- and University-level strategic goals.

III. Department or unit program outcomes and assessment methods – review to ensure that program outcomes are clearly stated and assessment methods are sufficient and appropriate.

IV. Department or unit student learning outcomes and assessment methods – create and map student learning outcomes and assessment plans for these outcomes.

V. Assessment implementation and reporting plans
   a. The department will select at least one person who will be the department’s assessment director. If a department is large and complex, a committee should be appointed to support and assist this person.
b. The departmental assessment director will create a listing of assessment activities (program outcomes and student learning outcomes) and address issues such as the following:
   i. When (including frequency) will assessment occur?
   ii. How will it be reported to the university community?

c. Each department will establish a plan to analyze assessment results regularly and use results to make changes intended to improve departmental effectiveness.

VI. A divisional assessment “Web site” will be established as a way of making assessment information available to all stakeholders and will include information and documents such as the following:
   a. Introduction to assessment documents
   b. Documents
      i. Summaries of student learning outcome assessments
      ii. Summaries of program assessments
      iii. Internal assessments
         1. Campus surveys
         2. Focus groups
      iv. External assessments
         1. EBI
         2. NSSE
         3. Consultant reports
      v. Analysis
      vi. Recommendations/Actions

D. National Survey of Student Engagement

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) annually assesses student engagement—the extent to which undergraduate students at the freshman and senior levels are involved in educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development. The developers of the NSSE have clustered the items on the NSSE to provide information about five benchmarks of effective educational practice: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interactions, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment. Benchmark data are reported in terms of the institutional mean for a given benchmark, the corresponding mean for peer institutions, and percentile ratings for the institution. Data on individual items are available for means, standard deviations, and margin of error for the institution, for peer institutions, and for the entire NSSE sample for a given year.

The NSSE was administered at the UWF in the spring of 2004 to 630 freshmen and 492 seniors with response rates respectively of 34% and 47%. See Appendix C for a summary of general findings for the University.
In reviewing data from the administration of the NSSE and anticipating use of the NSSE for tracking levels of student engagement over the course of the QEP, specific benchmarks and individual items were selected for review based on relevance to the goals and objectives of the QEP. Data from the Fall 2004 administration of the NSSE are presented in Tables 1-9 below organized by the QEP goal to which they pertain. Over the 5 year span of the QEP, the intent is to increase the mean scores for NSSE items closely aligned to the QEP and significantly raise the percentiles for the selected benchmarks.

**NSSE Baseline Data from Spring 2004 Administration**

### Related to QEP Goal 1: Improve Student Learning

**Table 1**  
Educational and Personal Growth  
Selected Items (4-point scale)

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<th>Peer First-Year</th>
<th>UWF Senior</th>
<th>Peer Senior</th>
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Table 2
Satisfaction with Educational Experience
Selected Items (4-point scale)

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<th>Item</th>
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<th>Peer First-Year</th>
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*Related to QEP Goal 3: Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies*

Table 3
Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark

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<th>SD</th>
<th>UWF Percentile</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. BS = Benchmark Score (max = 100). SD = deviation of UWF BS from peer institutions' BS. UWF percentile in relationship to peer institutions.

Table 4
Practica and Other Engagement Activities
Selected Items (2 choices--0 = not done; 1 = have done)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>UWF First-Year</th>
<th></th>
<th>Peer First-Year</th>
<th></th>
<th>UWF Senior</th>
<th></th>
<th>Peer Senior</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>practica</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>community service</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7d</td>
<td>faculty research</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7h</td>
<td>culminating exper</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5
Academic and Intellectual Experiences
Selected Items (4-point scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>UWF First-Year</th>
<th>Peer First-Year</th>
<th>UWF Senior</th>
<th>Peer Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>asked questions</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>class presentation</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>prepared 2 drafts</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>integrative paper</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e</td>
<td>diverse perspectives</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g</td>
<td>work w/other in class</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h</td>
<td>work w/others out</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i</td>
<td>ideas 2+ courses</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1j</td>
<td>tutored</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1k</td>
<td>community project</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1l</td>
<td>electronic medium</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1m</td>
<td>e-mail w/instructor</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1n</td>
<td>discussed grades</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1o</td>
<td>discussed career</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p</td>
<td>discuss read</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1q</td>
<td>prompt feedback</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1r</td>
<td>worker harder</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1s</td>
<td>worked w/faculty</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1t</td>
<td>discuss read w/other</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1u</td>
<td>converse other race</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>converse other religion</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related to QEP Goal 4: Build communities of learners

Table 6
Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>UWF BS</th>
<th>Peer BS</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>UWF Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>40th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. BS = Benchmark Score (max = 100). SD = deviation of UWF BS from peer institutions’ BS. UWF percentile in relationship to peer institutions.
Table 7
Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>UWF BS</th>
<th>Peer BS</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>UWF Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>40/50th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. BS = Benchmark Score (max = 100). SD = deviation of UWF BS from peer institutions' BS. UWF percentile in relationship to peer institutions.

Table 8
Enriching Educational Experiences
Selected Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>UWF First-Year Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Peer First-Year Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>UWF Senior Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Peer Senior Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1u</td>
<td>converse other race</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1v</td>
<td>converse other religion</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>practica</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>community service</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c</td>
<td>learning community</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d</td>
<td>co-curricular activities</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c</td>
<td>contact with students</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Items 1u, 1v, and 10c use a 4-point scale; Items 7a, b, and c use a 0 or 1 response; Item 9d uses an 8-point scale.

Table 9
Working with Other Students
Selected Items (4-point scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>UWF First-Year Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Peer First-Year Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>UWF Senior Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Peer Senior Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1g</td>
<td>work w/other in class</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h</td>
<td>work w/others out</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1j</td>
<td>tutored</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1t</td>
<td>discuss read w/other</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. President’s Annual Survey

In the Fall Semester of each year, the Office of University Planning secures opinions about the degree to which the University community realizes the goals, imperatives, and priorities identified in the University’s strategic plan. Student, faculty and staff, and community input is solicited through a Web-based survey instrument. Several of the items on the survey pertain directly or indirectly to the theme and goals of the QEP. Data from the Fall 2002 and Fall 2003 administrations of the survey were reviewed both with respect to confirmation of the importance of the QEP theme and to establish a baseline for improvement in stakeholder perceptions.

For the forced-choice items, respondents may choose between five responses—fully agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, fully disagree, and no opinion. Respondents may also identify strengths and concerns in the free-response section of the survey. Ten of the survey items appear to be related to the QEP:

- UWF provides a good learning environment.
- UWF gives its students good learning experiences.
- UWF provides its students innovative curricula.
- UWF provides good student life services.
- UWF puts the needs of its students first.
- UWF does a good job of living its values.
- UWF empowers each individual its serves with knowledge and opportunity to contribute responsibly and creatively to our complex world. [UWF’s mission statement]
- UWF is a premier creative, student-centered university. [UWF’s vision statement]
- UWF excels in building educational partnerships and in providing community services.
- UWF emphasizes continuous quality improvements of programs and processes.

Results from the 2002 and 2003 surveys (see Table 10) tend to be favorable on these items when the “fully agree” and “somewhat agree” responses are aggregated. For example, with respect to UWF putting the needs of its students first, the percentage of combined “agree” responses for 2003 for community representatives was 69%; for faculty/staff, 66%; and for students, 55%. However, when the “fully agree” responses are considered alone, the corresponding percentages are 40%, 26%, and 20%. If the University wishes to distinguish itself as a premier student-centered institution, then one would want the percentages of responses in the “fully agree” category to be much higher.
### Table 10
PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL SURVEY OF FRIENDS, FACULTY/STAFF, AND STUDENTS
ITEMS RELATED TO UWF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN FOCUS
PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS SELECTING "FULLY AGREE" AND "SOMETHING AGREE" FALL 2002 AND FALL 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FRIENDS</th>
<th>FACULTY/STAFF</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2002 (n = 30)</td>
<td>2003 (n = 45)</td>
<td>2002 (n = 310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF provides a good learning environment.</td>
<td>FA 70 87</td>
<td>53 57</td>
<td>59 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 20 9</td>
<td>41 38</td>
<td>34 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF gives its students good learning experiences.</td>
<td>FA 63 67</td>
<td>40 44</td>
<td>46 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 30 22</td>
<td>47 44</td>
<td>39 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF provides its students innovative curricula.</td>
<td>FA 23 38</td>
<td>21 19</td>
<td>25 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 50 40</td>
<td>47 50</td>
<td>47 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF provides good student life services.</td>
<td>FA 40 44</td>
<td>28 29</td>
<td>30 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 23 13</td>
<td>39 39</td>
<td>34 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF puts the needs of its students first.</td>
<td>FA 40 40</td>
<td>21 26</td>
<td>22 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 33 29</td>
<td>43 40</td>
<td>35 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF does a good job living its values.</td>
<td>FA 37 36</td>
<td>21 22</td>
<td>35 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 40 51</td>
<td>44 48</td>
<td>41 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF empowers each individual it serves with knowledge and opportunity to contribute responsibly and creatively to our complex world.</td>
<td>FA 17 33</td>
<td>19 20</td>
<td>35 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 40 33</td>
<td>47 48</td>
<td>40 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF is a premier creative, student-centered university.</td>
<td>FA 23 33</td>
<td>15 19</td>
<td>33 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 40 33</td>
<td>44 46</td>
<td>39 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF excels in building educational partnerships and in providing community services.</td>
<td>FA 20 29</td>
<td>10 21</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 27 44</td>
<td>41 47</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWF emphasizes continuous quality improvements of programs and processes.</td>
<td>FA 30 31</td>
<td>12 20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA 20 44</td>
<td>46 46</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Survey response choices include: fully agree (FA), somewhat agree (SA), somewhat disagree, fully disagree, and no opinion.
F. Chairperson and Faculty Surveys

To identify current levels of usage of student engagement/active learning instructional strategies and student learning outcomes assessment practices by program level and by course level, surveys of chairpersons and of individual faculty were conducted in December 2004 through the Provost’s Office. (An earlier administration of the surveys was planned but proved not to be feasible because of the closure of the University for Hurricane Ivan.) Data from the surveys may also be used to assist in the identification of strengths and weakness of programs and courses with respect to assessment of student learning outcomes and the utilization of student engagement/active learning teaching strategies.

The Chairperson Survey and Faculty Survey (see Appendix D) both focus on student engagement/active learning instructional strategies and outcome assessment but from different perspectives. The Chairperson Survey deals with instructional practices and assessment processes at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral program levels. The Faculty Survey deals with instructional practices and assessment processes at the course level for three distinct course levels—graduate, upper division (3000- and 4000-level courses), and lower division (1000- and 2000-level courses). The intent of these surveys is to establish baseline data on current instructional and assessment practices at the program and course levels. Additionally, questions were included on the Faculty Survey to identify assessment and instruction topics for which the faculty have interest in attending professional development workshops. A question was included on the Chairpersons Survey to determine the nature of faculty involvement in establishing program-level student learning outcomes.

Responses to the Chairperson Survey were received from each of the 30 chairs and directors of academic departments to whom the survey was sent.

The Faculty Survey was sent to 331 regular faculty and 174 adjuncts who taught in the Fall Semester 2004. Responses were received from 141 (approximately 43%) of the regular faculty and 42 (approximately 24%) of the adjuncts.

1. Chairperson Survey

Responses were received from all 30 academic department chairpersons and directors with information provided for 65 bachelor’s, 41 master’s, and 10 doctoral/specialist degree programs and specializations.

Student Learning Outcomes

In response to questions about the nature of faculty and administrator involvement in the development of program-level student learning outcomes, there appears to be stronger involvement of department chairpersons in this process for
bachelor’s degree programs (62%) than for master’s degree programs (32%). However, it appears that for both bachelor’s and master’s degree programs, most units combine input from faculty committees, the department as a whole, and the chairperson. Survey questions pertaining to development of student learning outcomes for doctoral programs appear not to have been answered.

Instructional Strategies and Practices and Co-Curricular Activity

Baseline information was collected on inclusion of selected topics (or modules) in curricula. With the exception of few mentions of service learning across all programs and the little mention of inclusion of ethics in the doctoral programs, at least 50% or more of programs were reported as including topics (modules) such as international perspectives, diversity, ethics, information technology, and technology. Data on types of integrative culminating experiences are discussed below under outcome assessment procedures.

Of the bachelor’s degree programs, 82% are reported as having an associated student organization. For master’s degree programs the figure is 34%. None of the doctoral program specializations was reported as having an associated student organization.

Outcome Assessment Procedures

Baseline data on relative use of assessment procedures were collected for two levels of assessment—course and program. Survey questions dealing with integrative culminating experiences pertain both to student assessment and to curriculum organization. With respect to integrative culminating experiences, 90% of the doctoral programs were reported as including such experiences; 83% of the master’s degree programs; and 78% of the bachelor’s degree programs. For the doctoral programs, the predominant forms are comprehensive examinations (80%) and the dissertation (80%). For the master’s degree programs, the predominant form is the internship (49%) with 20-30% of the programs reported as using capstone courses, portfolios, comprehensive examinations, or theses. For bachelor’s degree programs, the predominant forms are the capstone course (54%) and internship (31%). Approximately 20% of the programs were reported as using oral presentations, or portfolios.

With respect to program evaluation methods, for doctoral programs the predominant methods reported are candidate licensure/certification, alumni surveys, and external accreditation reviews. For master’s degree programs, the predominant methods reported are employer feedback, placement of graduates, and external accreditation reviews. For bachelor’s degree programs, the predominant methods reported are employer feedback, placement of graduates, and acceptance into graduate programs.
2. **Faculty Survey**

Following are selected data from the Faculty Survey with responses aggregated for all faculty—regular and adjuncts—with 75 faculty reporting having taught graduate classes, 132 having taught 3000-4000 level classes, and 71 having taught 1000-2000 level classes. (Disaggregated data for regular faculty and for adjuncts are available in the UWF SACS Office.)

**Student Engagement/Active Learning Instructional Strategies**

**Relative Use of Instructional Strategies**

Responding faculty reported relatively high usage (60% or more respondents) of several strategies across all three course levels: using open-ended questions, including of diverse perspectives in class discussions, discussing ideas and issues from the discipline with students, helping students develop strategies for regulating their own learning, and aligning instructional practice with students’ prior knowledge and cognitive abilities. A few strategies showed greater incidence of use with graduate and upper-division courses than with lower division courses (e.g., requiring in-class or on-line presentations, requiring students to work with other students on projects, working with students on research projects, and encouraging students to participate in independent study). The reverse was true for encouraging students to attend or become involved with cultural performances. Several strategies were used consistently across all course levels with approximately 50% of the faculty reporting such use (e.g., suggesting that students mentor or tutor other students and encouraging students to participate in community-based projects).

**Interest in Instruction-Related Faculty Development Workshops**

More faculty expressed interest in attending workshops related to instructional practices than to assessment procedures. Among the instructional practices generating the most interest (approximately 25% or more of the respondents) were using of open-ended questions, using a variety of teaching techniques, helping students develop strategies for regulating their own learning, and aligning instructional practice with students’ prior knowledge and cognitive ability. A second cluster of interest (approximately 15% of the respondents expressing interest) included using in-class or on-line presentations, including diverse perspectives in class discussions, having students work with other students on projects, having students mentor or tutor other students, encouraging students to study abroad, and encouraging students to participate in community-based projects.
Outcome Assessment Processes

Relative Use of Assessment Procedures

Several assessment procedures such as portfolios, recitals, and exhibitions often associated with particular disciplines (e.g., performing arts) show relatively little general use across all course levels. Use of self-assessment/reflection procedures and professional journals/diaries show relatively low use across all course levels. Some of the listed assessment procedures show considerable difference in usage depending upon the course level (e.g., greater use of objective tests with undergraduate courses and greater use of creative products, group projects, oral presentations, term papers, and essay tests with graduate and upper division courses). Dissertations are restricted to doctoral programs and theses are associated principally with master’s degree programs.

Interest in Assessment-Related Faculty Development Workshops

Approximately 20% of those responding expressed interest in participating in workshops related to group projects, self-assessment/reflection, and creative products. From 10-15% of those responding expressed interest in workshops related to objective tests, essay tests, term papers, and oral presentations.

G. Related Campus Initiatives

The QEP is one project among several that relate to achieving the goal expressed in UWF’s strategic plan. Other concurrent initiatives include efforts to achieve excellence in campus services, improve the campus information technology environment, develop the “electronic” campus and facilitate online learning, focus on enrollment management, and manage facility needs according to an appropriate master plan.

1. Making Way for Excellence

The University of West Florida has initiated a service enhancement effort that has been named Making Way for Excellence. This initiative is a partnership between UWF and the Baptist Leadership Initiative (BLI), an affiliate of the local Baptist Hospital. Baptist Hospital is a Baldridge Award winner in recognition of the quality of its operations and services. The excerpt below, taken from the Presidential Newsletter of August 26, 2004, describes the goals of this partnership initiative:

The focus of every great college or university is students. That’s true here at UWF. The major changes that we have implemented in the area of human resources and the application of technology to
many of our processes have laid the groundwork for taking our university to the next level to create the best learning environment possible. In a world of business as usual, we are moving past the expected in an effort to create better services and better solutions. Our new Argus portal and our new electronic human resources and financial accounting systems are just two examples on the technology front. And it’s not just about being different . . . we are determined to be the best at what we do. In fact, we are going to be the best comprehensive university in America. This is not a stretch. We are already a very good university on course to becoming an excellent one.

Making Way for Excellence is the name we’ve put on setting this course for UWF. This isn’t a program or an initiative; it’s a fundamental change in our culture. It’s an uncompromising commitment to excellence. For us, it’s creating a learning environment like no other . . . a place where creativity, caring in its largest sense and intellectual excellence are intrinsic to the people who work and study here . . . a place where nothing is more important than maintaining personal relationships that nurture the mind and spirit, empowering those we serve as well as each of us, to reach our full potential.

The QEP, focusing on excellence in student learning, will be a notable and appropriate counterpart to Making Way for Excellence and its focus on excellence in service.

2. Information Technology Plan

In spring of 2004, the University Planning Council (UPC) approved a new strategic plan for Information Technology Services. The excerpt below describing the plan is taken from the planning document presented to the UPC:

Information technology is a tool to be used. However, it is also a force transforming higher education today, and is thus also an external pressure to which we must react. It is also an area of great expense, effort, and risk to the University, and therefore demands careful management to insure effective and efficient use. This plan takes into account all these aspects of information technology.

This plan establishes six strategic goals for the use of information technology at UWF. The first three goals concentrate on the utility and transforming nature of information technology in using technology in support of the University’s strategic goals. The final three goals concentrate on the prudent management and effective use of information technology to address the associated risk and expense. These strategic goals are:
1. Use information technology to enrich the educational experience of students by enhancing the quality of learning, access to learning, student services, and student engagement in the university community.

2. Use information technology to provide an environment that enables leading-edge scholarship and research by faculty and students.

3. Use information technology to enable the University to provide high-quality information and services to its clients and partners, and to conduct University operations effectively and efficiently.

4. Provide a quality, reliable, sustainable, consistent, and secure information technology infrastructure that enables contemporary teaching, learning, research, service, and administrative operations to flourish.

5. Ensure that all staff are skilled to be able to productively use information technology appropriately and effectively.

6. Ensure the effective governance, design, deployment, and management of information technology resources, guided by institutional priorities and stakeholder needs.

For each goal, the plan identifies specific imperatives (i.e., objectives) as well as near and midterm priorities to address. Because changes in information technology and the higher education landscape are many, rapid, and often unpredictable, this plan proposes broad, guiding strategies that are flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. It is left to University, divisional, college, and departmental leadership to develop specific tactical action plans for information technology that are in harmony with the principles of this plan and responsive to organizational priorities and changing conditions.

This plan specifically addresses enhancement of student learning and the educational environment of the UWF and therefore is well aligned with the direction of the QEP.

3. Academic Technology Center

In November of 2003, the establishment of the Academic Technology Center (ATC) was announced. As noted on the ATC Web site, the purpose of the ATC is to support colleges and faculty in all efforts related to designing and delivering priority distance learning programs at UWF through

- Professional Development
- Strategic Program/Course Development Services
- Desire 2 Learn Support System
- Interactive Distance Learning Studio Support System
- ATC Special Initiatives
- Online Campus Portal Project
The ATC provides essential faculty and program development support to ensure that student learning is enhanced in the “electronic” campus. Representatives from the ATC have been involved in the QEP development process to ensure that goals and activities are appropriately aligned.

4. **Enrollment Development Plan**

On a periodic basis, the University submits the following projections of enrollment by headcount and FTE to the Division of Colleges and Universities (Florida’s state-wide higher education coordinating office associated with the Florida Board of Governors and Florida Board of Education):

- FTE by level (lower division, upper division, graduate, thesis/dissertation) and location (current projection through 2014-2015).
- Headcount by degree type and program (current projection through 2013-2014).
- Degrees awarded by degree type and program (current projection through 2013-2014).
- Information and timelines for new branch campuses (UWF plans no new branch campuses as of the report submitted to the Division of Colleges and Universities in June 2004).

5. **Integrated Marketing Strategic Initiative**

In November 2004, the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs invited Dr. Jim Black to campus to introduce the concepts of Strategic Enrollment Management. The workshop was attended by representatives from enrollment services, student affairs, the three colleges, and student support services. Following the workshop the Provost and Vice President of Student Affairs agreed that the first step toward integrated strategic enrollment management at UWF was to focus on integrated marketing. The Provost invited three faculty members and one administrator to lead a workshop in December 2004 on the principles of integrated marketing.

The workshop, facilitated by UWF Associate Professor of Marketing Dr. Greg Martin, was based on the premise that the intensely competitive environment faced by institutions of higher education in the recruiting of targeted students, faculty, and staff requires university policy makers to engage in strategic thinking and planning modeled on successful practice in the non-academic environment, rather than the traditional, non-action-oriented mode of university strategic planning. In short, universities are forced to think and behave more like businesses in order to be successful and thrive in today’s higher education environment.

Participants were first introduced to the concepts of competitive advantage and business strategy through an interactive exercise. In a wide-ranging enterprise like a comprehensive university, the strategic process can quickly become mired in the effort of addressing all activities and missions of the institution in a grand,
comprehensive strategy. Thus, the first focus of the workshop group was to define UWF’s Core Enterprise and began to conceptualize the Core Product and Core Market of that enterprise, based on the premise that the institution must get its core strategy right first. After arriving at an acceptable concept of the core enterprise, participants were exposed to basic concepts of customer-oriented product strategy and market segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Complete definition of core product and market will be an ongoing task as existing data and information is integrated and analyzed.

The second focus for the participants was to acquire the basic knowledge needed to begin searching for sources of competitive advantage in the enterprise, based on preliminary conceptualization of core enterprise, product, and market. The concept of finding sources of advantage in superior resources matched with superior skills was introduced, using the Value Chain model of the enterprise. Building on the Value Chain concept, the principle of creating competitive advantage through differentiation by strategic positioning of the value chain was discussed.

Finally, the notion of implementing the strategic position through the institution’s marketing strategy was used to move participants from a conceptual to operational focus. The importance of managing the complete, integrated marketing mix to bring the advantage to the market was stressed and general marketing management guidelines were discussed.

The administrators and faculty who participated in the workshop will continue to discuss strategic position through UWF’s marketing strategy. A key goal of the integrated marketing initiative is to align it with the goals of the QEP.

6. University Libraries

In the recent past, the University Libraries have implemented several initiatives designed to improve the ability of students and faculty to acquire and manage information in a technologically rich environment. These initiatives include migrating to a new library management system, increasing access to full text scholarly databases in a variety of disciplines, and teaming computer specialists with reference librarians to provide technology support in addition to research assistance. The Libraries are also developing a curriculum integrated information literacy program, which involves collaborating with teaching faculty to integrate information literacy concepts into college courses.

The University Libraries strategic plan includes the following goals:

- Provide excellent library services and access to information resources that will support the teaching, research, and service missions of the University and that will meet the information and research needs and expectations of UWF students, faculty, and staff.
• Provide the infrastructure necessary to support the teaching, research, and service missions of the University and to meet the information and research needs of UWF students, faculty, and staff.
• Participate as a collaborative partner in the learning/teaching process of the university.
• Provide staff qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the UWF Libraries

7. Facilities Master Plan

The University maintains a Campus Master Plan, which is updated every 5 years for physical facilities. The most recent version of the Master Plan was adopted in January 2003. The Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan is updated annually as part of the legislative budgeting process.

The Division of Colleges and Universities (Florida's statewide higher education coordinating office) performed a “Space Validation” and “Space Needs Assessment” of the University’s Educational Plant Facilities Survey in the fall of 2001. This assessment is completed at 5-year intervals for state-supported institutions. Further, a Classroom Space Assessment Study was completed in the fall of 2001 by an external consultant who evaluated existing space and made recommendations for improved space utilization.
III. Schedule: QEP Development and Implementation

The development and implementation timeline presented in the charts on the following pages was developed by the SACS Reaffirmation Project Administrative Team and the QEP Task Force. Although a dynamic document, it does much to provide essential focus and structure to the QEP concept and process and continues to serve as the principal guide to action.

The following activities will be included in each year of implementation of the QEP:

- Dissemination of information about the overall QEP efforts for that year.
- Consultative support and facilitation for units engaged in developing and implementing projects.
- Solicitation and selection of QEP projects for funding in subsequent year.
- Evaluation of individual projects.
- Dissemination of information about individual projects (e.g., Exploratory Projects, Pilot Projects, Stage 1 and 2 Expansion Projects).
- Ongoing faculty/staff development on student learning outcomes, assessment procedures, and instructional strategies.
- Review of Academic Learning Compacts.
- Evaluation of overall QEP project.
- Review of relationship of University Strategic Plan and QEP.
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<tr>
<th>AY</th>
<th>SACS Milestone</th>
<th>QEP Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Task</th>
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<td>2003-2004</td>
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<td>Exploration of Focus</td>
<td>*Preliminary identification of focus.</td>
<td>*UWF Leadership Team (LT).</td>
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<td>*Identification of QEP Steering Committee.</td>
<td>*UWF Reaffirmation of Accreditation Administrative Team (RAAT) and UWF LT.</td>
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<td>*Securing agreement on QEP focus.</td>
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<td>*Accumulating background information.</td>
<td>*QEP Steering Committee (SC) and UWF RAAT.</td>
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<td>*Identifying data and other information needs.</td>
<td>*QEP SC and UWF RAAT.</td>
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<td>*Identifying other preliminary tasks.</td>
<td>*QEP SC and UWF RAAT.</td>
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<td>*Articulating relationship of QEP to University Strategic Plan and other major quality enhancement efforts.</td>
<td>*UWF RAAT, QEP SC, and University Planning Council Programs &amp; Resources Committee.</td>
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<td>AY</td>
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<td>11/9/04 Off-Site Review</td>
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<td>Preparation of the QEP Document</td>
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<td>*QEP SC. *QEP SC. *QEP LT. *UWF LT, QEP LT and QEP SC.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1/31/05 Submit QEP</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exploratory Projects</td>
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<td>*QEP LT and QEP SC. *QEP LT and QEP SC. *Provost, Deans, and Chairpersons.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/31/05 Submit Focused Report</td>
<td></td>
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<td>*Dean of A&amp;S and Center for University Teaching, Learning, &amp; Assessment (CUTLA). *Chairpersons with faculties. *Deans, Vice President for Student Affairs. *QEP SC subcommittee.</td>
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<td>3/16-18/05 On-Site Review</td>
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<td>*CUTLA *QEP SC subcommittee recommendation. *President and SACS Liaison.</td>
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<td>5/??/05 Receipt of On-Site Report</td>
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<td>*UWF LT, QEP LT, and QEP SC.</td>
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| 2006-2007| IV             | Pilot Projects | *Continue Phase II exploratory and Phase III pilot projects as appropriate.  
*Phase IV pilot projects implemented: at least 1 additional project in CAS, CoB, CoPS, and SA.  
*Implement Phase IV faculty/staff development activities.  
*Evaluate Phase II exploratory and Phase III pilot projects.  
*Phase II exploratory and Phase III pilot projects information dissemination.  
*Evaluate Phase IV pilot projects.  
*Phase IV pilot projects information dissemination.  
*Review Academic Learning Compacts.  
*Evaluate second year of implementation of QEP.  
*QEP modification based on evaluation.  
*Plan for Stage 1 of expansion of projects across the University.  
*Select Stage 1 expansion projects. | *CUTLA, Deans, Unit Heads.  
*CUTLA, Deans, Unit Heads.  
*CUTLA.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*CUTLA.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*CUTLA.  
*AVPAcA, Director of CUTLA, Deans.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*UWF LT, QEP LT, QEP SC.  
*UWF LT, QEP LT, QEP SC.  
*QEP SC subcommittee recommendation. |
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| 2008-2009 |                | VI        | University-Wide Expansion: Stage 2 | *Continue Phase II exploratory, Phase III and IV pilot, and Expansion Stage 1 projects as appropriate.  
*Begin implementation of Stage 2 of campus-wide expansion.  
*Implement Phase VI faculty/staff development activities.  
*Review of Academic Learning Compacts.  
*Evaluate Phase II exploratory, Phase III and IV pilot, and Stage 1 Expansion projects.  
*Phase II, III and IV, and Stage 1 project information dissemination.  
*Evaluate Stage 2 of campus-wide expansion.  
*Expansion Stage 2 projects information dissemination.  
*Evaluate fourth year of implementation of QEP.  
*QEP modification based on evaluation.  
*Plan for full institutionalization across the University. | *CUTLA, Deans, Unit Heads.  
*CUTLA, Deans, Unit Heads  
*CUTLA.  
*AVPAC, Director of CUTLA, Deans.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*CUTLA.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*CUTLA.  
*QEP SC subcommittee.  
*UWF LT, QEP LT, and QEP SC.  
*UWF LT, QEP LT, and QEP SC. |
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2009-2010 | Submit 5th-Year Report | VII       | Full Institutionalization  | *Continue Phase II exploratory, Phase III and IV pilot, and Expansion Stage 1 and 2 projects as appropriate.  
*Begin implementation of full institutionalization.  
*Implement Phase VII faculty/staff development projects.  
*Review Academic Learning Compacts.  
*Evaluate Phase III and IV pilot projects and Phase 1 and 2 Expansion projects.  
*Phase 1 and 2, Phase III and IV project information dissemination.  
*Evaluate fifth year of implementation of QEP.  
*QEP modification based on evaluation.  
*Plan for maintenance of full institutionalization across the University.  
*Prepare and submit 5th-Year Report. |
IV. Setting Sail: Engaging in the Process

A. Goals and Objectives

This QEP is intended to maximize student learning and attain learning goals at all levels: general education, undergraduate education, and graduate education. The five principal goals of the QEP are as follows:

1. Improve student learning.
2. Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments.
3. Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.
4. Build communities of learners.
5. Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.

Associated with each of these goals are the following objectives:

1. Improve student learning.
   a. Unit-based projects funded through the QEP RFP process will demonstrate improvements in student learning.
   b. Assessments conducted in conjunction with the Academic Learning Compacts requirement will demonstrate improvements in student learning.
   c. Assessments conducted in conjunction with Student Affairs learning outcomes will demonstrate improvements in student learning.
   d. The majority of responses to the President’s Annual Surveys of Friends, Faculty/Staff, and Students on items related to student learning will be in the “fully agree” category.
   e. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings on items related to educational and personal growth [exclusive of sense of spirituality] (Items 11a-o) on the National Survey of Student Engagement will increase by 0.5 standard deviation.
   f. Over the 5 years of the implementation of the QEP, student ratings on items related to satisfaction with the educational experience (Item 13) on the National Survey of Student Engagement will increase by at least 0.5 standard deviation unit.

2. Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments.
   a. By the end of Academic Year 2009-2010, general education, baccalaureate, master’s, education specialist, and doctoral programs will have in place a set of program-level student learning outcomes and related assessments that align with the University’s strategic plan and University-level student learning outcomes.
   b. By the end of Academic Year 2004-2005, each bachelor’s degree program will have established student learning outcomes and related
assessments associated with the Board of Governors required Academic Learning Compacts; by the end of Academic Year 2005-2006 the general education program and each graduate degree program will have established student learning outcomes and related assessments.

c. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, responses of chairpersons on the QEP-related Survey of Chairpersons will show increased use of multiple methods of assessment of program-level student learning outcomes.

d. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, annual reports of progress on implementation of recommendations of program review teams will show action on recommendations related to student learning outcomes and related assessments.

e. By the end of Academic Year 2005-2006, all program and course Curriculum Change Requests (CCRs) will include appropriately stated student learning outcomes and related assessments and with program-level outcomes being consistent with university-level outcomes.

f. By the end of Academic Year 2009-2010, all course syllabi will include appropriately stated student learning outcomes and identify related assessments.

3. Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.
   a. Unit-based projects funded through the QEP RFP process will demonstrate increased use of student engagement/active learning instructional strategies.
   b. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP responses from chairpersons and faculty on the QEP-related Survey of Chairpersons and Survey of Faculty will show increased use of student engagement/active learning strategies.
   c. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for the Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark on the National Survey of Student Engagement will reach the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors.
   d. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for items related to practica, community service, work on research projects with faculty, and culminating senior experiences (Items 7a, b, d, and h) on the National Survey of Student Engagement will increase by at least 0.5 standard deviation units.
   e. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for selected items related to academic and intellectual experiences (Items 1a-e and 1g-v) on the National Survey of Student Engagement will increase by at least 0.5 standard deviation unit.
4. Build communities of learners.
   a. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for the Supportive Campus Environment benchmark on the National Survey of Student Engagement will reach the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors.
   b. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for the Student-Faculty Interaction benchmark on the National Survey of Student Engagement will reach the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors.
   c. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for items related to students working with other students (Items 1g, h, j, and t) on the National Survey of Student Engagement will increase by at least 0.5 standard deviation units.
   d. Over the 5 years of implementation of the QEP, student ratings for selected items related to enriching educational experiences (Items 1u, v; 7, a, b, c; 9d; and 10c) will increase by at least 0.5 standard deviation units.

5. Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.
   a. Annually, the University will engage at least two external consultants to provide guidance and counsel on effective use of student engagement/active learning instructional strategies and outcome assessment practices.
   b. Annually, the University will support individual and group faculty and staff travel to professional meetings and workshops related to the goals of the QEP.
   c. Faculty/staff development activities will be included as part of the unit-based projects funded through the Request for Proposal process.
   d. Annually, the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment will provide developmental activities related to student learning outcomes, assessment strategies, and student engagement/active learning instructional outcomes.
   e. Annually, the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Web site will provide information on student learning outcomes, assessment strategies, and student engagement/active learning instructional strategies.
   f. Annually, the University will provide support for faculty and staff preparing manuscripts for journal articles and other publications on activities and projects related to the QEP.
B. Strategies for Achieving Goals and Objectives

This QEP embraces three primary strategies for achieving the goals and objectives described above. First, Academic Learning Compacts will address the refinement and alignment of program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments. Second, faculty and staff development activities will be facilitated by the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by the Division of Student Affairs. Third, in order to achieve the remaining primary goals and supporting objectives of the QEP, an infrastructure is proposed that will provide for quality enhancement projects, essential resources, an evaluation plan that includes both formative and summative evaluation, and a leadership structure to facilitate continued collaboration. Project activities and strategies that prove successful will be institutionalized. Three principal strategies are described below.

1. Academic Learning Compacts

The principal vehicle for achieving the goal of refining program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments will be developing the Academic Learning Compacts required by the Board of Governors (See Section II. C. above.) Whereas the Board of Governors requirement involves only baccalaureate-level programs, the University will also use the occasion of this requirement to develop Compacts for all degree programs regardless of level and for general education.

By the end of Academic Year 2004-2005, all departments offering baccalaureate degree programs will have established program-level student learning outcomes consistent with the University-level student learning outcome domains for undergraduate programs, identified appropriate assessment strategies, and prepared curriculum maps for each baccalaureate degree program. By the beginning of Academic Year 2005-2006, each department offering graduate degree programs will have established program-level student learning outcomes consistent with the University-level student learning outcome domains for graduate programs. By the end of Academic Year 2005-2006, graduate departments will have identified appropriate assessment strategies and prepared curriculum maps for each graduate degree program. By the end of Academic Year 2005-2006, the unit responsible for the University’s general education program will have refined the general education student learning outcomes consistent with University-level student learning domains for undergraduate programs, identified appropriate assessment strategies, and prepared an associated curriculum map.
2. Faculty Development

To facilitate implementation of the QEP, the University will provide a variety of faculty and staff development activities and services. Among the types of support which will be provided each year are the following:

- Fellowships at the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.
- On-campus workshops for faculty, adjuncts, and graduate teaching assistants.
- Resources to send faculty to regional and national workshops and conferences that emphasize active learning and assessment.
- External consultants.
- Faculty-teaching-faculty sessions on best practices in active student learning.
- Pilot project reports to the university community.
- Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Web site.

3. Quality Enhancement Projects

Focus of Projects

The primary strategy for achieving the goals of improving student learning and increasing the use of student engagement/active learning instructional strategies will be development of academic- and student affairs-based unit projects. Funding will be available during the period 2005-2010 to assist academic and student affairs units to develop projects leading to enhanced student learning through the use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies. Projects must show a direct relationship to the unit’s program level student learning outcomes (developed in conjunction with the Academic Learning Compact requirement) and must include direct measures of student learning. The basic intent of these funds is to provide seed funds for units to develop and evaluate new approaches to instruction and assessment, rather than ongoing support of existing activities. Approximately five to six projects will be funded annually. Projects are expected to be completed within an academic year period. Multiyear projects will be considered provided they have a cross-unit character involving at least three administrative units.

Exploratory Projects for 2005

To test the feasibility of the project dimension of the QEP and to provide examples of the types of projects for which funding will be available, the three colleges and the Division of Student Affairs were asked to identify an exploratory project for initial implementation in the Spring Semester 2005 with funding available up to $5000 per project. The Deans and Vice President for Student Affairs were asked to submit initial ideas for these exploratory projects to the Deans Council in
December 2004 for discussion and subsequent consideration by the QEP Leadership Team.

Subsequent to approval of the initial concepts by the QEP Leadership Team, the Deans and Vice President were asked to provide additional detail about each project using the following template:

Summary of Planned Project

Project Title:
College/Division:
Contact Person:
Telephone:
E-mail:
List of Individuals Involved:
Brief Description of Project:
Rationale:
Project Student Learning Outcomes:
Relationship to Quality Enhancement Plan Goals:
Relationship to Academic Learning Compact Domains:
Desired Student Learning Gains:
Outcomes Assessment Procedures:
Instructional Strategy Enhancements (focusing on active learning/student engagement):
Assessment Plan:
Baseline:
Formative:
Summative:
Information Dissemination Plan:
Institutionalization Plan:
Resources to Be Used:
Timeline for Project Activities and Events:

The four Spring 2005 exploratory projects include the following (see Appendix E for additional details):

- Development of an information management system for program- and course-related assessment data associated with University-, college-, and program-level student learning outcomes. (College of Professional Studies)
- Development of program-level assessment procedures to be included in the capstone course for undergraduate programs in the College of Business. (College of Business)
- Re-examination of the rationale, design, and implementation of General Education requirements. (College of Arts & Sciences in collaboration with the University Libraries)
Development of an instructional module and associated student manual for the University’s freshman year experience courses. (Division of Student Affairs in collaboration with the University Advising Center)

Request for Proposals Process

A draft of the Request for Proposals (RFP) has been prepared (see Appendix F) with the intent that the RFP for Academic Year 2005-2006 pilot projects will be issued following the SACS site visit in March 2005.

Proposal Format and Content
Proposals should include the following:
• Complete cover sheet with required signatures.
• Narrative that addresses the overall significance of the project to the unit, college/division, and University, and identification and discussion of each of the project proposal elements as listed on the cover page.
• Detailed budget request, including information on matching or other available funds. (Because it is anticipated that funding of these projects will be through E&G sources, funds allocated through this proposal process may be spent only in accordance with E&G expenditure policies.)

Required Elements in the Proposal
• Rationale.
• Project student learning outcomes.
• Relationship to program’s Academic Learning Compact student learning outcomes and the University’s QEP goals.
• Desired student learning gains.
• Outcomes assessment procedures.
• Instructional strategy enhancements focusing on active learning/student engagement.
• Assessment plan: baseline, formative, summative.
• Information dissemination plan.
• Institutionalization plan.
• Resources needed.
• Timeline for project activities and events.

Proposal Submission
Proposals are to be sent via e-mail to Gary Howard, Director, Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by April 15, 2005, at ghoward@uwf.edu.

Evaluation
A review committee comprised of members of the QEP Steering Committee will review proposals and make recommendations to the QEP Leadership Team. Awards will be made by the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs. Recommendations for funding will be made by May 15, 2005. Funding decisions will
be announced no later than June 1, 2005. Proposals will be selected on the
likelihood of success of the project and compliance with the goals of the QEP.

Required Reports
A brief interim report will be required by April 30, 2006, with a full final report
by August 30, 2006. Units with funded projects will be required to share findings
from the project in the annual Quality Enhancement Plan Symposium to be held
during the Fall Semester of each academic year.

C. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation of UWF’s QEP will involve two components. One deals with
evaluation of the individual projects that will be planned, implemented, and
evaluated by individual units within Academic and Student Affairs. The other is
broader, incorporating and expanding upon the first by providing an overall
evaluation of the QEP itself over a period of several years. Both components will be
guided by the overall goals and specific objectives of the QEP as stated on pp. 50-
52 of this document:

- Improve student learning.
- Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related
  assessments.
- Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional
  strategies.
- Build communities of learners.
- Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.

1. Evaluation of individual projects

The plan for evaluating an individual project will be embedded in the
information provided in the proposal as described in the draft RFP. Among the
required elements for a successful proposal are the following:

- Project student learning outcomes (SLOs).
- Relationship to program’s Academic Learning Compact student learning
  outcomes (for academic programs) and the University’s QEP goals (for
  academic and student affairs programs).
- Desired student learning gains.
- Outcomes assessment procedures.
- Instructional strategy enhancements focusing on active learning/student
  engagement.
- Assessment plan: baseline, formative, summative.

The evaluation of each project will begin with the identification of the
knowledge or attributes which are the focus of the project and the collection of
baseline data on these measures for students who participate in the project. If
feasible given the design of the project, data should also be collected on another comparable group of students who are not participants.

For projects in academic units, these measures should be relevant to the program’s Academic Learning Compact. For all projects, the measures should be relevant to the University’s QEP goals (i.e., a control group).

Approximately mid-way through the project, information should be gathered that will show whether the project appears to be operating as planned so as to have the desired impact on student learning. This review will constitute the project’s formative evaluation. This mid-point evaluation may also include a “site visit” or other consultation with members of the QEP Evaluation Team. If alterations are made in the project on the basis of this interim information, the changes should be documented and a rationale for the alteration should be provided. A discussion of this process should be included in the project’s interim and final evaluative reports.

At the conclusion of the project, data should be collected to evaluate the project’s impact on student learning outcomes. If baseline data were collected from a comparison group of non-participants, these persons should be retested as well. The assessment measures must include direct measures of student learning, such as measures of knowledge, skills, behaviors, or values.

The final evaluative report should include
- Brief description of the project including its rationale.
- Statement of the desired learning gains as described in the proposal.
- Analysis of data to show whether these desired learning gains were attained.
- Discussion of what worked, what did not, and what could be improved.
- Discussion of the appropriateness of and opportunities for extending the project to other students or other units at UWF.

After the final evaluative reports for individual projects have been submitted, the QEP Evaluation Team will review each project and evaluate how well it met the goals of the QEP itself:
- Is there evidence of improved student learning?
- Did the project help to refine program- or course-level SLOs and related assessments?
- Did the project increase the use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies? If so, how?
- Did the project help build a community of learners?
- Did the project provide opportunities for faculty and staff development?

These project reviews will be retained and incorporated into the overall evaluation of the QEP.
2. **Overall evaluation of the QEP**

At the end of each year a formative evaluation will be compiled as outlined in the Timeline. This evaluation will include a review of individual projects underway and completed as well as a review of the overall administration of the QEP activities. Modifications may be made to the implementation of the QEP based on results of these formative evaluations. Any such modifications and the rationale for them should be documented in the annual evaluation report. The annual evaluation of the QEP should also reference the degree to which the QEP activities have contributed to achievement of the goals articulated in the University's strategic plan. At the end of 5 years, a comprehensive review and summative evaluation should be undertaken and recommendations made for further implementation, data collection, or institutionalization.

During the 2004-2005 academic year, baseline data have been collected including Chairs’ descriptions of instructional strategies and assessment practices at the level of academic programs and faculty descriptions of instructional strategies and assessment practices at the course level. The National Survey of Student Engagement has been administered to students and the President's Annual Survey has been administered to community representatives, to faculty and staff, and to students. These surveys are relevant to some of the goals of the QEP and will be re-administered on an annual basis as part of the process of its overall formative evaluation.

Progress in reaching the overall goals of the QEP will be assessed by examining a variety of information. Items listed below correspond to the goals and objectives given on pp. 50-52 of this document.

**Goal 1: Improve Student Learning**

a. Student learning outcomes will be shown in data from individual projects.

b. Reports of Academic Learning Compacts from academic departments will indicate student learning.

c. Reports of Student Affairs Learning Outcomes from student affairs units will indicate student learning.

d. Results of annual surveys conducted by Office of University Planning will show improved evaluations of student learning, with the majority of responses in the “fully agree” category over the period of 5 years.

e. Improvement will be demonstrated on items related to educational and personal growth [exclusive of sense of spirituality], Items 11a-o on the NSSE (5-year goal: increase by 0.5 standard deviation on ratings). (Note. These items can be “tracked” into the six learning outcome domains of the UWF Assessment Plan.)

f. Improvement will be shown on NSSE Item 13 related to satisfaction with the educational experience (trend upward over time with 0.5 standard deviation increase over 5 years).
Goal 2: Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments.

a. By the end of 5 years, general education, baccalaureate programs, master’s programs, specialist programs, and the doctoral program will have in place a set of program-level student learning outcomes and related assessments that align with the University strategic plan. Each year there will be improvement toward reaching this goal.

b. Academic Learning Compacts, required for the bachelor’s degree programs, will include program learning outcomes and associated assessments by the end of 2004-2005; Compacts for general education and for graduate programs will include program learning outcomes and associated assessments by the end of 2005-2006.

c. Improvements will be seen in reports of program assessments in Chairs’ Survey.

d. The external reviewers participating in the University’s 5-year program review process will be asked to review and comment upon the program-level student learning outcomes.

e. Within one year, all program and course proposals and modifications completing the Curriculum Change Request (CCR) process will have appropriate course student learning outcomes and related assessments that are consistent with University-level outcomes.

f. Within 5 years, all course syllabi will include student learning outcome statements and related assessments.

Goal 3: Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.

a. Data from individual projects will show increased use of active learning and student engagement strategies.

b. Annual Faculty Survey will show increases in use of these instructional strategies.

c. Improvements will be seen on NSSE benchmark Active and Collaborative Learning, reaching the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors within a 5-year period.

d. Improvements will be seen on NSSE Items 7a, b, d, and h dealing with practica, community service, work on research projects with faculty, and culminating senior experiences (trend upward over time with 0.5 standard deviation increase over 5 years).

e. Improvements will be seen on NSSE Items 1a-e and g-v related to academic and intellectual experiences (trend upward over time with 0.5 standard deviation increase over 5 years).
Goal 4: Build communities of learners.
   a. Improvements will be seen on NSSE benchmark Supportive Campus Environment, reaching the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors within a 5-year period.
   b. Improvements will be seen on NSSE benchmark Student-Faculty Interaction, reaching the 70th percentile for first-year students and the 80th percentile for seniors within a 5-year period.
   c. Scores on NSSE items 1g, h, j, and t related to working with other students will improve, increasing by 0.5 standard deviation over a 5-year period.
   d. Improvement will be noted on NSSE items related to enriching educational experiences, with scores on items 1u and v; 7a, b, and c; 9d; and 10c rising 0.5 standard deviation within a 5-year period.

Goal 5: Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.
   a. Records will be kept of external consultants who provide developmental opportunities for faculty and staff.
   b. Logs will be maintained of faculty travel to professional meetings and workshops related to the purposes of the QEP.
   c. Documentation will be maintained of individual projects that include a faculty or staff development component.
   d. Data will be maintained on developmental activities provided by the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment that are relevant to the purposes of the QEP.
   e. Data will be maintained on the number of “hits” to QEP-related components of the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment’s Web site.
   f. Records will be kept of the QEP-related manuscripts submitted and published and of QEP-related professional conference papers and workshops presented.

D. Resources

   1. Finances

   Administrative Personnel

   Co-direction for implementation of the QEP will be assigned to the Director, Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

   Coordination of QEP activities within the Colleges will be assigned to a member of the college administration.

   Coordination of activities funded through the RFP process will be the responsibility of the unit administrators and individual(s) identified in the proposal.
Proposal budget requests may include funding for release time for project coordination.

**Project Activities**

**Academic Year 2004-2005:**
Funding in the amount of $50,000 was made available during academic year 2004-2005 for initial development and implementation of the QEP. These funds were earmarked as follows:

- Academic unit assessment development principally associated with the development of Academic Learning Compacts: $20,000.
- Faculty and staff development activities related to development of student learning outcomes and related assessments: $10,000.
- Exploratory projects — $20,000 (four at up to $5,000 each).

**Academic Years 2005-2006 through 2009-2010:**
It is expected that funding in an amount not less than $50,000 annually will be earmarked for implementation of the QEP with such funding to be used for the following:

- Implementation and refinement of academic unit assessment related to student learning outcomes.
- Faculty and staff development activities related to student engagement/active learning instructional strategies and outcomes assessment procedures.
- Individual and multi-unit projects submitted for funding through the QEP Request for Proposals process.
- Continued participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement and administration of institution-developed surveys of faculty, staff, and students to determined levels of use and effectiveness of student engagement/active learning instructional strategies and student learning outcome assessment practices.

Units will be encouraged to seek external funding for QEP-related activities from grant and contract agencies. Units will also be assisted by the Office of Development in soliciting funding for QEP-related activities through the upcoming capital campaign. Although the campaign is still in the planning phase, preliminary campaign literature included the following references to engagement:

- Engaged with Students—UWF offers a learning environment characterized by active learning and student engagement.
- Engaged with the Community and Region—UWF is committed to supporting partnerships critical to the northwest Florida region.
• Engaged with the World—UWF is committed to global education and partnerships that prepare students for a richly diverse world.
• Engage in Providing Opportunities—UWF seeks to attract and retain an outstanding student body that can excel in the University’s educational environment.

The campaign will seek funding for seven specific initiatives related to the overall active learning/student engagement focus of the QEP:

• Leadership Development Program.
• Undergraduate and Graduate Research Opportunity Fund.
• Enhanced Internship and Service Learning Programs.
• Nationally-Competitive Honors Program.
• Study Abroad Scholarships/International Education Enhancement.
• Faculty Development to Support Active Learning Initiatives.
• Library Enhancements.

The draft campaign case statement includes the following statements highlighting the importance of active engagement:

The nation’s best regional university will distinguish itself by the quality of the student experience. UWF students will be actively engaged in their learning . . .

2. Information

The Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, established as a central location for faculty development activities for all University units, will develop a Web site as part of its ongoing online service emphasizing the QEP. Among the components of this online information resource will be the following:

• Student Learning Outcomes Resources – These resources will include suggestions on writing student learning outcomes at the program and course levels and will also include an inventory of student learning outcomes for all programs and courses in the University.
• Assessment Resources – These resources will provide a variety of alternatives for assessing student learning outcomes from course-embedded assessments to capstone courses to external evaluations.
• Academic Learning Compacts – All of the Academic Learning Compacts for each degree program will be accessible through this link.
• Best Practices – Case studies and successful practices in active student learning will be available on the Web site.
• Resource Library – Links to other Web sites and resources will be available through active links and archived materials.
• Threaded Discussions – Opportunity for faculty to converse with each other on QEP items of interest will be available.
• Electronic Newsletter – This newsletter will allow the University to have current, cogent information on the progress of the QEP.

A subcommittee of the QEP Steering Committee and liaisons in each department will serve as a workgroup to provide Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment with continuous evaluation of the Web site.

E. Leadership

1. Administrative

Administrative responsibility for implementation of the QEP will be assigned to the Director of the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA) and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

The University is in the process of hiring a new Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs to whom the Director of CUTLA will report. Among the responsibilities of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs are the following:
• Representing the University in responding to regional accreditation matters, including planning, coordination, and reporting mechanisms.
• Collaborating with the Division of Student Affairs on planning that will result in joint and complementary initiatives.
• Supervising and evaluating the director of the Center for University Teaching and Learning.
• Promoting the effective assessment of programs in the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.

In addition to assuming responsibilities associated with the QEP, the Center, currently known as the Center for University, Teaching, and Learning (CUTL), will also be assuming responsibilities for coordinating assessment activities for units within Academic Affairs. Accordingly, the name of the Center will be changed to the Center for University, Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA). The Director of the Center will work closely with the Deans and the Associate Vice Presidents in Academic Affairs on activities related to the QEP.

The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs reports to the Provost. The Associate Vice President for Student Affairs reports to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs report to the President.
2. Advisory

It is proposed that advice and counsel related to the implementation of the QEP be provided to the QEP co-directors through two related advisory bodies—QEP Leadership Team and QEP Steering Committee—and communication with units within the Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs continue to be facilitated through the QEP/Assessment Liaisons identified in the Fall Semester 2004.

**QEP Leadership Team** (see Appendix B for current membership)

Membership:
- Co-chaired by the QEP co-directors
- Provost
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Faculty Senate representative
- Student Government representative
- Faculty representative from each college
- Student Affairs representative

Responsibilities:
- Serve as resource to the QEP co-directors on matters related to plans of operation, budget, assessment, and modifications to the QEP.
- Review annual plans of operation for implementing the QEP.
- Review annual QEP-related budget requests.
- Review annual assessments of project effectiveness.
- Review recommendations for any modifications to the QEP.
Frequency of Meetings:
- At least once per semester

**QEP Steering Committee** (see Appendix B for current membership)

Membership:
- Co-chaired by the QEP co-directors
- Other members of the QEP Leadership Team
- Representation from the following units:
  - Provost’s Office
  - College of Arts & Sciences faculty
  - College of Business faculty
  - College of Professional Studies faculty
  - General Education faculty
  - Graduate Studies
  - Advising Center
  - Student Success Programs
  - International Education and Programs
  - Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
  - Academic Technology Center
  - Division of Student Affairs
  - Division of Administrative Affairs
  - Division of Development
  - University Planning
  - Faculty Senate
  - Student Government Association

Responsibilities:
- Serve as resource to the QEP co-directors and QEP Leadership Team on all matters related to the QEP.
- Establish a subcommittee to review annually proposals submitted for QEP funding.
- Establish a subcommittee to review annually evaluations of individual QEP projects and overall evaluation of effectiveness of QEP implementation.
- Establish a subcommittee to provide advice on faculty/staff development activities.
- Submit recommendations to the QEP Leadership Team for modifications to the QEP based on annual evaluations.
- Provide other advise and counsel as requested by the QEP Leadership Team.

Frequency of Meetings:
- At least once per semester
QEP/Assessment Liaisons (see Appendix B for current liaisons)

The QEP/Assessment Liaisons serve as the principal points of communication within academic and student affairs units for matters related to the QEP.

Each college has identified a member of the college administrative team to serve as a college liaison for matters related to the QEP and academic assessment. Each academic department has identified two departmental QEP/Assessment Liaisons—the department chair and one faculty member. Units within the Division of Student Affairs have identified QEP Liaisons.
V. Summary

The University of West Florida is committed to maximizing student learning and attaining learning goals in general education, undergraduate education, and graduate education. To accomplish this commitment, five primary goals have been established for this QEP:

• Improve student learning.
• Refine program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments.
• Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.
• Build communities of learners.
• Provide related opportunities for faculty and staff development.

Student learning has been defined to include changes in students’ knowledge, skills, behaviors, or values that may be attributed to the students’ experiences at UWF. At UWF this definition has been operationalized as six domains of student learning: Content, Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Project Management, Values and Ethics, and Discipline Specific Outcomes. These six domains also form the basis for the University’s Academic Learning Compacts required by the State of Florida Board of Governors.

The QEP as proposed includes opportunities for collaboration between and within units within the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. This focus on collaboration is intended to reinforce the essential paradigm shift from instructor-centered education to learner-centered education. The proposed leadership and administrative structure also supports collaboration.

The QEP is one project among several that relate to achieving UWF’s strategic plan. There should be synergy among the various activities and projects that will enhance all related efforts.

The QEP embraces three primary strategies for achieving the goals and objectives described above. Academic Learning Compacts will address the refinement and alignment of program- and course-level student learning outcomes and related assessments. An infrastructure is proposed to provide for QEP projects that will demonstrate and document improvements in student learning through the use of student engagement and active learning instructional strategies. Supporting both the Academic Learning Compacts and QEP Projects initiatives, faculty and staff development activities will be facilitated by the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and by the Division of Student Affairs. Cooperation and collaboration between the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will help foster an educational environment that may be characterized as a community of learners.
References


THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA
Strategic Plan

Our Vision
To distinguish UWF as the premier creative, student-centered university focused on excellence.

Our Mission
To empower each individual we serve with knowledge and opportunity to contribute responsibly and creatively to a complex world

Our Values

Caring
Providing a safe and dynamic learning environment that encourages the development of individual potential

Integrity
Doing the right things for the right reasons

Quality
Dedication to uncompromising excellence

Innovation
Dedication to exploring and expanding the boundaries of knowledge

Teamwork
Working together to achieve shared goals

Stewardship
Managing and protecting our resources

Courage
Daring to be different by design

Our Goals and Imperatives
Promote programs and activities, and learning and living environments that encourage the development of individual potential in students, faculty, and staff; communities of learners; and the valuing of lifelong learning.

• Attract a high quality, diverse faculty and staff dedicated to putting students first
• Demand excellence in teaching, research, and service
• Create a new standard in education focused on learning outcomes
• Promote integrity through intellectual inquiry and open discourse

Attract and inspire a diverse and talented student body committed to uncompromising academic excellence

• Promote creativity by the exchange of ideas in the spirit of academic freedom and professional responsibility
• Promote diversity through a respect for and appreciation of differences

Provide solutions to educational, cultural, economic, and environmental concerns

• Align University services with community needs and interests through teamwork and collaboration
• Engage in scholarly research and creative activity to solve regional problems and enhance the quality of life
• Develop targeted areas in education and research that address critical national and international objectives

Manage growth and development responsibly through focus on continuous quality improvement of programs and processes

• Promote development of instructional, research, and service sites throughout the University’s service area
• Target markets of opportunity with effective communications programs
• Align financial resources with performance expectations
• Continuously develop and improve processes and methods in delivering the University’s brand promise

Our Priorities

The following goals and priorities will guide UWF in its planning and operational activities during 2004-2005, and beyond:

Goal One: Promote Programs and Activities, and Learning and Living Environments that Encourage the Development of Individual Potential in Students, Faculty, and Staff; Communities of Learners; and the Valuing of Life-Long Learning

1. Offering Highest-Quality Undergraduate, Graduate, and Continuing Education/Distance Education Programs
2. Engaging Students in Career, Experiential Learning, Leadership, and Service Programs that Will Prepare Them to Make Life-Long Contributions to Society
3. Aligning Innovative Curricula and Co-Curricula to the University’s Mission
4. Enhancing the Quality of the Learning Environment, Academic Experience, and Student Services
5. Identifying and systematically assessing learning outcomes for curricular and co-curricular programs and activities
6. Systematically Effecting the UWF Information Technology Strategic Plan
7. Providing Faculty and Staff Development, Recognition, and Rewards
8. Acquiring and Utilizing adequate Space to Foster Learning and Living Environments
9. Systematically Effecting the Campus Master Plan

Goal Two: Attract and Inspire a Diverse and Talented Student Body Committed to Uncompromising Academic Excellence

1. Increasing Student Enrollment and Retention
2. Increasing Enrollment and Retention of Academically Talented Students
3. Marketing to, Enrolling, and Retaining a Diverse Population – Including Military Populations
4. Aligning Facilities and Other Resources to Strategic Initiatives
5. Delivering the University’s Brand Promise (as synthesized in a related document)

Goal Three: Provide Solutions to Educational, Cultural, Economic, and Environmental Concerns

1. Aligning UWF Instruction, Research, and Service Programs to the Communities We Serve – Including Military Base Communities
2. Assisting Students to Develop and Apply Leadership and Life Skills to the Solution of Community Problems
3. Converting Research to Products through Technology Transfer  
4. Providing Comprehensive Data for Decision-Making  
5. Developing Educational Partnerships and Community Services  
6. Enhancing Research and Service Centers and Institutes  
7. Identifying and Developing Programs and Centers of Excellence  
8. Enhancing Continuing Education/Distance Education (including Certificate Programs)  

Goal Four: Manage Growth and Development Responsibly through Focus on Continuous Quality Improvement of Programs and Processes  

1. Emphasizing Exemplary Customer/Client Service to Students, Faculty, Staff, and External Constituencies  
2. Acquiring Outside Funding Enhancements  
3. Continuing Development of Instructional, Research, and Service Sites within the University’s Service Area (e.g., Fort Walton, Downtown Pensacola)  
4. Identifying and Implementing Campus Safety and Security Improvements  
5. Modifying Human Resource Systems (includes classification and pay plans)  
6. Enhancing Faculty and Staff Salaries  
7. Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness, Accountability, and Performance Reporting  
8. Implementing Governance Structure Improvements  

The UWF Strategic Plan was adopted and revised as follows:  
University Planning Council (UPC) – adopted May 17, 2002; revised 5-15-2003; revised 4-22-2004.  
University Board of Trustees (BOT) - adopted June 7, 2002; revised June 19, 2003; affirmed June 17, 2004.
Appendix B

QEP-Related Committees

UWF SACS Leadership Team
QEP Task Force
QEP Leadership Team
QEP Steering Committee
QEP Liaisons

Return to ToC
Quality Enhancement Plan
Advisory Committees

UWF SACS Leadership Team

Chair: John Cavanaugh, President

Members: Sandra Flake, Provost
          Hal White, Executive Vice President
          Deborah Ford, Vice President for Student Affairs
          Cornelius Wooten, Vice President for Administrative Affairs
          Dean VanGalen, Vice President for Development
          Carl Backman, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs, & SACS
          Liaison
          Jerry Norris, Associate Vice President, Planning
          Patricia Wentz, President, Faculty Senate

Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team

Co-Chairs: Subhash Bagui, Professor, Mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences
          Jim Hurd, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs

Members: Sandra Flake, Provost
          Deborah Ford, Vice President for Student Affairs
          Gary Howard, Director, Center for University Teaching and Learning
          Tim O’Keefe, Faculty Senate
          Steven Loveless, Student Government Association

Ex Officio: Carl Backman, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and
          Director, SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Project
          Rosemary Hays-Thomas, Associate Director, SACS Reaffirmation of
          Accreditation Project
Quality Enhancement Plan Steering Committee

Co-Chairs: Subhash Bagui, Mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences
Jim Hurd, Student Affairs

Members: Academic Affairs

Provost’s Office: Sandra Flake*, Carl Backman**

Arts & Sciences: Subhash Bagui*, Jane Halonen,
Rosemary Hays-Thomas**

Business: Marcia Howard, Greg Martin, Tim O’Keefe*, Randy Reid

Professional Studies: Charles Lombardo, Bob Markowitz

General Education: George Ellenberg

Graduate Studies: Julie Kunselman, Leo TerHaar

Library: Alberto Hernandez, Caroline Thompson

Enrollment Services: Bob Shaw

Advising Center: Kathy Wilson

Student Success Programs: Angela McCorvey

International Education & Programs: Kay McKenzie

Center for University Teaching and Learning: Gary Howard*

Academic Technology Center: Pam Northrup

Student Affairs: Deborah Ford*, Jim Hurd*, Tammy McGuckin

President’s Office/University Planning: Jacqui Berger

President's Office/Information Technology Services: Laura Hiltabrand

Administrative Affairs: Ellen Till

Development and Alumni Relations: Gretchen Van Valkenburg

Students: Stephen Loveless*, Melissa Kelly

*Members of the QEP Leadership Team
**Ex Officio: Members of UWF SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Administrative Team
Original Quality Enhancement Plan Task Force
(Task Force was expanded and renamed the Steering Committee)

Co-Chairs: Chula King, Professor and Chairperson, Accounting and Finance
Jim Hurd, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Members: Academic Affairs

Provost’s Office: Carl Backman*

Arts & Sciences: Subhash Bagui, Rosemary Hays-Thomas*,

Business: Marcia Howard, Greg Martin, Randy Reid

Professional Studies: Charles Lombardo, Bob Markowitz,
T. Scott Marzilli*, Carolyn Pearson

Library: Caroline Thompson

Center for University Teaching and Learning: Gary Howard

Student Affairs: Deborah Ford, Jim Hurd, Tammy McGuckin

Development and Alumni Relations: Gretchen Van Valkenburg

Students: Stephen Loveless, Melissa Kelly

*Ex Officio: Members of the UWF SACS Reaffirmation Project
Administrative Team

Quality Enhancement Plan & Academic Learning Compact Departmental Liaisons

For academic departments, the department chairperson and at least one other faculty member serve as departmental liaisons for the Quality Enhancement Plan and Academic Learning Compact projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Liaisons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Departments (department chairperson named first)</td>
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<tr>
<td>College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
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<td>Dean’s Office</td>
<td>Jane Halonen, Dean</td>
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<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Judy Bense, John Bratten</td>
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<td>Art</td>
<td>Suzette Doyon</td>
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<td>Biology</td>
<td>George Stewart, Chris Pomory</td>
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<td>Stephen Tanner, Pamela Tanner</td>
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<td>Communication Arts</td>
<td>Bruce Swain,</td>
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<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Ed Rodgers, Eman El Sheikh</td>
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Electrical/Computer Engineering  Muhammad Rashid, Dale Harrell
English/Foreign Languages  Mary Lowe-Evans,
Environmental Studies  Klaus Meyer-Arendt, Johan Liebens
Government  Alfred Cuzan
History  Jay Clune, Dan Miller
Mathematics/Statistics  Kuiyuan Li
Medical Technology  Swarna Krothapalli
Music  Rick Glaze, Margaret Willers
Nursing  Marilyn Lamborn
Philosophy/Religious Studies  Nick Power, Sally Ferguson
Physics  Chandra Prayaga
Psychology  Ron Belter, Claudia Stanny
Theatre  Greg Lanier

College of Business

Dean's Office  Marcia Howard
Accounting/Finance  Chula King
Management/MIS  Arup Mukherjee
Marketing/Economics  Greg Martin

College of Professional Studies

Dean's Office  Joe Peters
Criminal Justice/Legal Studies  Cheryl Swanson, Julie Kunselman
Engineering/Computer Technology  Kimberly Tatum
Graduate Education  Karen Rasmussen, Dave Dawson
Social Work  Joe Peters
Health, Leisure, & Exercise Science  Frank Sansone, Patty Babcock
Teacher Education  Stuart Ryan, Scott Marzilli

Library

Alberto Hernandez

Advising Center

Tom Westcott, Kathy Wilcox

Student Affairs

Student Life Unit  Bill Healey
Student Development Unit  Jeff Pollard
Dean of Students Unit  Lusharon Wiley
Appendix C

National Survey of Student Engagement

University of West Florida Report
Executive Summary

Return to ToC
The National Survey of Student Engagement, referred to as NSSE, is a survey of first-year and senior college students designed to assess student engagement. Student engagement is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. Research evidence clearly links engagement to learning and personal development (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). NSSE stresses the principle that a high quality educational experience is based on good educational practices such as: a) student faculty contact; b) active learning; c) prompt feedback; d) time on task; e) high expectations; f) cooperative peers; and g) respect for diverse learning styles (Chickering and Gamson, 1987).

NSSE may be useful for institutional improvement and for public accountability. Because it is a national survey it provides comparison and benchmark information for participating institutions. Overall, 620,000 students have participated since NSSE’s inception. In the spring 2004 administration, 40% of UWF students invited to participate responded to the survey. This is a slightly higher rate than students at all participating universities (38%). The initiative is co-sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning. The survey is administered out of Indiana University’s Center for Survey Research under the direction of George Kuh.

The NSSE survey instrument, The College Student Report, measures student engagement in activities that represent effective educational practice. Questions from the survey are grouped into five clusters of activities and conditions that make up NSSE’s national benchmarks. The benchmarks are: a) Level of Academic Challenge; b) Active and Collaborative Learning; c) Student-Faculty Interaction; d) Enriching Educational Experiences; and e) Supportive Campus Environment. The benchmarks “are intended to help steer the national conversation about collegiate quality away from resources and reputational rankings toward what matters more to student learning – good educational practice.”

**University of West Florida Findings**

Overall, the University of West Florida standard scores are slightly lower than the comparison group of Master’s Colleges and Universities on the five benchmarks. For UWF seniors, the highest percentile score was on the benchmark of Supportive Campus Environment (40th percentile) and the lowest was Student Faculty Interaction (30th percentile). For the other benchmarks, the senior percentile rank was between the 30th and 40th percentile. For UWF first-year students, the highest benchmark ranking was Enriching Educational Experiences (50th percentile), and the lowest was Active and Collaborative Learning (between the 20th and 30th percentile). The other first-year benchmark percentile scores from highest to lowest were Student-Faculty Interaction (between 40th and 50th percentile), Level of Academic Challenge (40th percentile), and Supportive Campus Environment (30th percentile). Table 1 summarizes the standard benchmark scores for UWF as compared to other Master’s Colleges and Universities.

However, after adjusting for the types of students that attend UWF and other institutional characteristics, UWF first-year and senior students scored higher than predicted on most of the benchmarks. For first-year students, the actual scores were higher than the predicted
scores on all the benchmarks except Active and Collaborative Learning. For UWF seniors, the actual scores were either higher or equal to the predicted scores on all benchmarks except for Level of Academic Challenge. Table 2 provides the actual versus predicted scores for all five benchmarks.

Table 1 Standard Benchmark Scores for UWF Students and Comparison Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>First-Year Mean Score</th>
<th>Senior Mean Score</th>
<th>First-Year Percentile</th>
<th>Senior Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Level of Academic Challenge</td>
<td>University of West Florida 51.5</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>40th</td>
<td>30/40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s 52.6</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Active and Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>University of West Florida 38.5</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>20/30th</td>
<td>30/40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s 41.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>University of West Florida 31.9</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>40/50th</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s 32.3</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Enriching Educational Experiences</td>
<td>University of West Florida 25.6</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>50th</td>
<td>30/40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s 25.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Supportive Campus Environment</td>
<td>University of West Florida 59.8</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s 62.3</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Actual and Predicted Scores on NSSE Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Predicted</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Academic Challenge</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Academic Challenge</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Active and Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Active and Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Enriching Educational Experiences</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Enriching Educational Experiences</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Supportive Campus Environment</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Supportive Campus Environment</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The first column, “Actual”, reports UWF’s actual benchmark scores. The second column, “Predicted”, represents what UWF students are predicted or expected to do given their background characteristics and selected institutional characteristics. The last column, “Residual” is the difference between actual and predicted scores.

While the benchmark scores yield a broad view of student engagement, results from specific questions within the survey can be very informative. Of particular interest, are students’ overall evaluations of the University of West Florida. Both first-year and senior students, scores on overall educational experience and loyalty are equivalent to the mean scores on these items for all Master’s institutions with the UWF first-year scores being slightly higher than the comparison group. In other areas of positive results, under the survey category of
Academic and Intellectual Experiences, the UWF senior score was significantly higher than the comparison group score on “use of an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment.” Both first-year and senior students report that they, on average, often “discussed ideas from [their] readings or classes with others outside of class.” The UWF first-year score for “having a serious conversation with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own” was significantly higher than the first-year comparison group and UWF senior score for the same item was slightly higher than the comparison group score.

Using NSSE information

NSSE is an objective tool UWF can use to build engagement among undergraduate students at the University. Through identifying, targeting, and advocating key engagement activities, UWF may sharpen the focus on this essential component of student success. Data from NSSE on benchmarks and specific questions allow UWF to identify current levels of student engagement. UWF performance can be evaluated relative to institutions fitting within the Carnegie Classification and Master’s Colleges and Universities. Also, UWF performance can be tracked from year to year as additional data collection occurs and established outcomes can be measured. By comparing UWF performance over time and relative to peer institutions, it will be possible to identify successes and challenges.

Once a challenge area is identified from NSSE data, the information may be used to encourage key university departments to develop and adopt practices that may increase engagement. How can educational leaders modify curricular and instructional services in order to enhance engagement? What programs and policies can administrators develop to focus attention and action on student engagement?

Conclusion

NSSE is just one of many assessment instruments that the University can use to evaluate how teaching practices, programs, and support systems contribute to the overall success of the student body. The results will allow the university to establish a baseline understanding of student engagement on campus and measure future benchmarks as outcomes for practices put into place as a result of the University’s assessment program.

Reference:


Appendix D

Chairperson Survey: Department Chair Questionnaire

Faculty Survey: QEP Assessment Survey

Return to ToC
Department Chair Questionnaire

**Doctoral Programs***

1. Do you chair a program that offers a **Doctoral Degree**?
   ( ) Yes     ( ) No

2. What is the name of the degree program/specialization? (If specializations within a degree program have significantly different curricula, then complete the survey for each specialization.)

3. Who developed the student learning outcomes for the program? **(Select all that apply.)**
   ( ) Department Chair   ( ) Faculty Committee   ( ) Individual Faculty Member

4. Does this program have a student organization associated with it?
   ( ) Yes     ( ) No

5. Does your program have a culminating experience where all of the work is placed into an integrating context?
   ( ) Yes     ( ) No

6. If yes, what form does this experience take?
   ( ) Capstone Course   ( ) Internship   ( ) Research Paper
   ( ) Portfolio   ( ) Oral Presentation   ( ) Personal Professional
   ( ) Thesis   ( ) Comprehensive Exam   ( ) Performance (e.g. recital, exhibition)
   ( ) Other ______________________

7. Does your program require:
   ( ) Co-op   ( ) Internship   ( ) Practicum   ( ) None of these

8. Does this Program have any specific modules relating to the following?
   International Aspects   ( ) Yes     ( ) No
   Diversity   ( ) Yes     ( ) No
   Ethics   ( ) Yes     ( ) No
   Information Technology   ( ) Yes     ( ) No
   Technology   ( ) Yes     ( ) No
   Service Learning   ( ) Yes     ( ) No

9. What factors are used to evaluate the program?
   License/Certification or Individual Students   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   Employer Feedback   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   Successful placement of Graduates   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   Acceptance in Graduate School Programs   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   Alumni Surveys   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   External Accreditation Review   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A
   Attrition Rate   ( ) Yes     ( ) No     ( ) N/A

10. Are there any other assessment techniques used to evaluate this program?

* The same information was asked on all master’s and baccalaureate programs.
QEP Assessment Survey

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Q.1
What Department/Division are you in? (Type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. Select only one choice.)

() Accounting / Finance               () Health Leisure & Exercise Science
() Administrative Studies             () History
() Anthropology                       () Management / Management Information Systems
() Art                                () Marketing / Economics
() Biology                            () Mathematics & Statistics
() Chemistry                          () Medical Technology
() Communications Arts                () Music
() Computer Science                   () Nursing
() Criminal Justice & Legal Studies   () Philosophy & Religious Studies
() Electrical & Computer Engineering  () Physics
() Engineering & Computer Technology  () Psychology
() English & Foreign Languages        () Social Work
() Environmental Studies              () Teacher Education
() Government                         () Theatre
() Graduate Education

Q.2
What is your faculty classification? (Type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. Select only one choice.)

() Regular Faculty                   () Adjunct Faculty

Q.3
Did you teach any graduate courses during Fall 2003- Spring 2004? (Type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. Select only one choice.)

() Yes                                () No

Q.4
How many sections of graduate courses did you teach during Fall 2003 - Spring 2004? (Type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. Select only one choice.)

() 1  () 2  () 3  () 4  () 5  () 6  () 7  () 8

Q.5
What assessment strategies did you use in the graduate courses taught during these semesters? (For each topic below, type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. Select only one choice per topic.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Strategies</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat Frequently</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Personal Professional</td>
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<td>Journals/Diary</td>
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<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Areas</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Very Frequently</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Somewhat Frequently</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Very Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Assessments/Reflections</td>
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<td>Creative Products</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Questions 6-11 ask for the same information on assessment strategies in 3000-4000 and 1000-2000 level courses.

Q.12
Please select all of the assessment areas on which you would be interested in attending a workshop. (Type an X between the brackets preceding each choice you wish to select. **Choose All That Apply.**)

- Objective Tests
- Essay Tests
- Oral Presentations
- Term Papers
- Exhibitions
- Group Projects
- Recitals
- Personal Professional Journals/Diary
- Theses-Dissertations
- Self Assessments-Reflections
- Creative Products

**Teaching and Learning Strategies to Promote Student Engagement**

Please answer items 13, 14 and 15 only for the course levels at which you taught during Fall 2003 - Spring 2004.

Q.13
Which of the following teaching and learning strategies did you use for courses at the graduate level? Please indicate relative frequency per topic. (For each topic below, type an X between the brackets preceding your choice. **Select only one choice per topic.**)

**Prompt students with open-ended, provoking questions during in-class discussions or online threaded discussions.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

**Require students to make presentations during class or online.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

**Include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions and written assignments.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

**Require students to work with other students either in- or out-of-class on projects or presentations.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

**Use a variety of teaching techniques including games, debates, skits, films, experiments, role playing, stones, and higher order thinking activities.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

**Require multiple drafts of written papers and assignments.**

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Never
- N/A

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Suggest that students mentor, tutor, or teach other students.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Discuss ideas and issues from the discipline with students.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Work with students on research projects or other activities outside of course or program requirements.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Encourage students to study abroad.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Encourage students to participate in an independent study.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Encourage students to participate in a community-based project, community service or volunteer work.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Encourage students to attend or become involved in cultural performances (lectures, theater, concerts, museum shows.)
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Help students develop strategies for regulating their own teaming.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Align instructional practices with students’ prior knowledge and cognitive ability.
( ) Always   ( ) Occasionally   ( ) N/A
( ) Frequently   ( ) Never

Questions 14-15 ask for the same information on teaching and learning strategies in 3000-4000 and 1000-2000 level courses.

Q.16
Which of the following teaching and learning strategies would you like to learn more about? (Check all that apply.)

( ) Prompt students with open-ended, provoking questions during in-class discussions or online.
( ) Threaded discussions.
( ) Require students to make presentations during class or online.
( ) Include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions and written assignments.
( ) Require students to work with other students either in- or out-of-class on projects or presentations.
( ) Using a variety of teaching techniques including games, debates, skits, films, experiments, role playing, stories, and higher order thinking activities.
( ) Require multiple drafts of written papers and assignments.
( ) Suggest that students mentor, tutor, or teach other students.
( ) Discuss ideas and issues from the discipline with students.
( ) Work with students on research projects or other activities outside of course or program requirements.
( ) Encourage students to study abroad.
( ) Encourage students to participate in an independent study.
( ) Encourage students to participate in a community-based project, community service or volunteer work.
( ) Encourage students to attend or become involved in cultural performances (lectures, theater, concerts, museum shows.)
( ) Help students to develop strategies for regulating their own learning.
( ) Align instructional practices with students’ prior knowledge and cognitive ability.
( ) Other ________________________________

Q.17
Other strategies that you use to engage students and promote active learning.
Appendix E

QEP Exploratory Projects

Return to ToC
Project Title: Student Learning Outcome Indicator Database Project

College/Division: College of Professional Studies/Division of Teacher Education, Division of Social Work, Division of Health Leisure, and Exercise Science, Division of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies, and Division of Engineering Technology

Contact Person: Dr. Joe Peters
Telephone: 474-2864
E-mail: jpeters@uwf.edu

List of Individuals Involved: Mr. Scott Barlow (Technical Expert and Project Director), Dr. Joe Peters (SLO/Indicator Development), and Mrs. Darlene Peters (COPS Accreditation Coordinator), applicable program faculty members to develop SLO Indicators, Indicator Rubrics, and/or additional Student Learning Outcomes as needed.

Brief Description of Project: We will be developing an online database to collect information (i.e. met/not met) on key SLO Indicators linked to Student Learning Objectives. We will develop the core database and applicable data entry web pages. There will be a master web page where faculty/staff can see a listing of courses or other methods that Student Learning Objectives are met (i.e. Florida Teacher Certification Exam results). These will be grouped by division and sub-grouped by program.

SLO Indicators will be embedded in courses or existing internships, testing, culminating experiences etc. At the end of each semester, the faculty/staff member will select their course or other indicator from the master page. This page will provide links to secondary pages specific to the SLO Indicator they have assessed. Faculty will input a “1” (met) or “0” (not met) for students in the database depending on if indicators were met by individual students. The dynamic database can be sorted by individual, course, program, division, or college. A “program sort” will indicate when or if there is a problem with an indicator and thus, the need for programmatic changes. “Course sorts” would indicate needed course changes. “Individual sorts” could be used as decision points in a student’s pathway to graduation (i.e. entering student teaching). Note that each indicator will be accompanied by a rubric and appear in all sections of a course syllabi each term.

We will have ongoing meetings with faculty to revise/identify Student Learning Objectives and SLO Indicators. As they are developed, they will be integrated into the database.

Relationship to Quality Enhancement Plan Goals: The goal of the Quality Enhancement Plan is to “For each individual program that contributes to student learning, program faculty will have identified a clear set of student learning outcomes at the program and individual course/activity levels, specified methods of assessing whether students have achieved the outcomes, and reviewed and modified the instructional component of programs/activities to ensure that appropriate strategies are being used to help students achieve the desired outcomes.” (See: [http://nautical.uwf.edu/files/org/FACSEN/Quality_Enghancement_Plan.pdf#xml=http://search.uwf.edu/scripts/txris.exe/search/xml.txt?query=Quality+Enhancement+Plan+&pr=uf&order=r&cq=&id=41e3ca321d](http://nautical.uwf.edu/files/org/FACSEN/Quality_Enghancement_Plan.pdf#xml=http://search.uwf.edu/scripts/txris.exe/search/xml.txt?query=Quality+Enhancement+Plan+&pr=uf&order=r&cq=&id=41e3ca321d)). The proposed project will assist in solidifying Student Learning Objectives, identification of specific SLO Indicators to meet the Student Learning Objectives, Indicator Rubrics linked to SLO Indicators, and the ability to review programmatic data and make necessary changes to support active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.

Relationship to Academic Learning Compact: The Academic Learning Compacts consist of the Student Learning Objectives assessed in this project. We will be able to make data-driven decisions on program effectiveness and change programs accordingly.

Desired Student Learning Gains: We will be able to better monitor if learning is occurring in courses and programs. This will allow us to make necessary changes.

Outcomes Assessment Procedures: This is the goal of this database project. SLO Indicators, assessed by Indicator Rubrics, to show success with Student Learning Objectives.

Instructional Strategy Enhancements: Due to the nature of faculty meetings to determine Student Learning Objectives, SLO Indicators, and Indicator Rubrics, we will be completing a comprehensive curriculum study to be sure that our courses and programs support active learning and student engagement instructional strategies.

Assessment Plan:

Baseline: N/A (SLO’s just developed)

Formative: Formative assessment, often done at the beginning or during a program, will occur as students are assessed each semester (through “student sort” reports.)
**Summative:** Summative assessment, the comprehensive assessment that provides accountability and is used to check the level of learning at the end of the program, will be completed through “program,” “course,” and “student” sorts.

**Information Dissemination Plan:** Information falls into two categories. Information on the project and information developed as data is collected by the project. “Report web pages” will be used to sort data and provide information for data-driven decisions. Information about the database development and implementation will be shared in the college and between colleges.

**Institutionalization Plan:** From the beginning of development, this project is designed to be scaleable to accommodate the entire university population.

**Resources to be Used:** Mr. Scott Barlow is our primary resource. Funding from this project will be used to compensate a replacement individual to perform his normal duties. Mrs. Peters is already assigned as an Accreditation Coordinator.

**Timeline for Project Activities:** We intend to have the database up and running with baseline Teacher Education spring term data inputted by the start of fall term.
Quality Enhancement Plan
College of Arts and Sciences Exploratory Project
Summary of Planned Project

Project Title: QEP Exploratory Project for Redefining General Education

College/Division: College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)

Contact Person: Dean Jane Halonen
Telephone: 474-2268
E-mail: jhalonen@uwf.edu

List of Individuals Involved:
- Barbara Walvoord, external consultant
- Jane Halonen
- George Ellenberg
- Grady Morein
  - And faculty and staff to be named

Brief Description of Project:

This is a pilot project in the College of Arts and Sciences to re-examine the rationale, design, and execution of General Education requirements. We will be using an external consultant to guide a select group of administrators, faculty, and librarians to develop a proposal for Gen Ed reform, targeted for completion by the end of summer, 2005. The Task Force will be charged with preparing a proposal for faculty consideration about Gen Ed reform. As such, it represents a project with a “macro” focus, which is likely to contrast sharply with other pilot projects that have targeted one specific context (e.g., COB outcomes, first year experience). However, the ability to design systems for gathering evidence of the effectiveness of Gen Ed experiences is a critical element for success in the overall university plan. Therefore, we are hoping to invest our “pilot” funding in a project that we think should have significant implications for all undergraduate programs at UWF.

Rationale:

Every university, whether under pressures related to SACS accreditation review or not, regularly should engage in a systematic review of the nature of General Education requirements as part of the undergraduate program. At UWF, General Education courses are primarily housed in the College of Arts and Sciences. As a faculty, we have not thoughtfully examined Gen Ed requirements for some time and are further constrained in our creative reforms by content area stipulations from the Board of Governors to facilitate articulation across the state. However, with the introduction of the university assessment plan that specifies five domains of skill development (content, critical thinking, communication, character/integrity, and project management), we have a fresh perspective from which to evaluate and reform our current Gen Ed requirements. We think that this lens should offer new
Insights about why students will take the courses that we require. In addition, linking General Education more specifically to learning outcomes that are part of the university plan offer us an interesting opportunity to promote institutional coherence in our educational programs.

**Project Student Learning Outcomes:**

Defining specific learning outcomes for the General Education as well as developing a plan for faculty adoption will be the objective of the project.

**Relationship to Quality Enhancement Plan Goals:**

We see this step as a crucial one in helping all undergraduate programs build on a coherent skills foundation. Adherence to the university assessment domains clearly facilitates a stronger commitment to active learning strategies and should improve engagement, the primary goals of the institutional QEP.

**Relationship to Academic Learning Compact Domains:**

Our challenge will be to link specific content requirements with commitments from the Gen Ed faculty to contribute foundation learning experiences that promote skill development at the appropriate levels.

Specifically:

- **Content** – Gen Ed requirements in the state of Florida require students to distribute their hours across writing, math, social and natural sciences, and the humanities. Our Task Force will need to strategize whether there are common content-based outcomes that should guide learning experiences in the clustered content areas. In effect, Gen Ed courses may need to commit to some specific course outcomes to justify their required status, which should facilitate some interesting conversations in content areas about what outcomes are truly shared across disciplines.

- **Critical Thinking** – Preliminary thinking in this area suggests this domain would be a great place to house information literacy. Under Grady Morein’s leadership, the faculty/staff in the library have already accomplished a great deal toward this outcome, including the development of superb online materials to help students navigate the library resources. We need some consideration of where information literacy can be systematically experienced by our students as part of Gen Ed requirements.

- **Communication** – Our students are obligated to complete hours in writing and math. Both areas constitute important forms of information processing and expression. We currently do not require technology performance or public speaking. We need to determine whether contemporary Gen Ed requirements need to specify these experiences in formal courses. If not, how can these appropriate “literacies” be embedded in existing curriculum?
• Project Management – Too often, faculty assume that students will learn their project management skills simply by assignment to group projects. Should we not examine where the curriculum might be made more explicit in developing students’ group abilities to reduce how much they have to learn from “hard knocks?”

• Character/Ethics – Preliminary conversations with the pilot project proposers addressing first year experiences suggest that there is an opportunity to ramp up character/ethics orientation in first year experience. Our task force will need to coordinate their ideas about the manner in which character/ethics should be addressed in the remaining Gen Ed curriculum. We think the Gen Ed ethics obligation should be to help students understand and adhere to principles of academic integrity. Again, the library faculty/staff have taken a lead in this area by crafting online training related to avoiding plagiarism that will serve as a cornerstone of the planning in this area. Should we also ask students to have a course in Ethics? Should we require that character issues should be an explicit part of humanities courses?

All of these areas would need to have articulated student learning outcomes, curriculum audits regarding existing requirements, and assessment planning. The goal of this phase of planning would be to articulate student learning outcomes and examine the implications of adopting an assessment-enhanced strategy for General Education.

Desired Student Learning Gains:

We believe that a coherent university assessment plan will help students develop a greater sense of self-regulation about the early learning. If this more coherent approach produces improved performance in General Education, we should see an enhancement of gains in the undergraduate programs as well.

Outcomes Assessment Procedures:

Defining the assessment procedures will be one of the goals of the Task Force.

Instructional Strategy Enhancements (focusing on active learning/student engagement):

Making a commitment to a specified domain in each Gen Ed course will enhance student skill development. In addition, the commitment virtually forces faculty to move to active learning strategies to promote skill development.
Assessment/Evaluation Plan:

The effectiveness of this product will be evaluated in stages as reflected by the achievements of the Task Force recommendations:

- Viability of the outcomes
- Implications of embedding outcomes in existing Gen Ed structure
- Projections of necessary curricular changes that blend state regulations and ALC structure
- Strategies for faculty engagement in Gen Ed reform

Information Dissemination and Institutionalization Plan:

The Task Force will produce a proposal at the end of summer, 2006, for the reframing of General Education requirements. We recognize that general education discussions can easily turn into a nasty enterprise. The Task Force will include explicit plans for how to promote faculty consideration, revision, and adoption over the course of the academic year 2005-6.

Resources to Be Used:

Access to Barbara Walvoord as consultant.
Faculty/staff time during summer in meetings/retreat.

Timeline for Project Activities and Events:

A. Appoint Task Force [February, 2005]
B. Convene meeting with Barbara Walvoord [March 8, 2005].
C. Send delegation to AAC&U conference on Gen Ed, including Task Force members, for preliminary framing of the issues.
D. Conduct two meetings during remaining semester to prepare the questions that must be answers [April, 2005].
E. Conduct retreat to answer the questions [July, 2005].
F. Provide recommendations including plans for faculty review, revision, and adoption [August, 2005].

Proposed Budget

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<th>Item</th>
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<td>2. Faculty services</td>
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<td>3. Books</td>
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<td>4. Retreat expenses</td>
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<td>5. Consultation access</td>
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Benefits

We believe that this pilot study will benefit UWF in many ways as detailed below:

A. We are overdue in a careful examination of Gen Ed requirements. Addressing Gen Ed from the lens of the new university assessment domains should provide a fresh, perhaps less threatening perspective that may help faculty rally to the need to revitalize Gen Ed.

B. We have an opportunity to make some headway as teacher-scholars in this critically important area and could emerge as regional/national leaders if we can continue the impressive degree of cooperation in assessment planning.

C. Students should benefit from the repeated emphasis on the skills curriculum that is oriented toward providing them a sound liberal arts education to help them adopt to the professional demands of postmodern life.

D. This activity will lay the groundwork for substantial new pilot projects in the next round dedicated to the refinement of student learning outcomes for General Education.
Quality Enhancement Plan
College of Business Exploratory Project
Summary of Planned Project

Project Title: Exploratory Project on Assessment in College of Business Capstone Course

College/Division: College of Business (COB)

Contact Person: Dr. Brian Peach
Telephone: 474-2312
E-mail: bpeach@uwf.edu

List of Individuals Involved:
Dr. E. Brian Peach
Dr. Martin J. Hornyak
Dr. Stephen Snyder

Brief Description of Project:

This is an exploratory project in the COB to develop a means to assess recently developed student learning objectives in the COB curriculum. The Capstone course will be utilized to administer a standardized and coordinated instrument to assess COB student learning objectives.

Rationale:

SACS and AACSB are mandating the use and assessment of student learning outcomes. The University and the COB have embarked on a comprehensive approach to develop and implement assessment plans for their programs. The COB currently does not have an effective and standardized device to assess the achievement level of graduating business students that is effectively linked to the newly developed student learning objectives. The pilot study will provide a standardized assessment mechanism for all business students completing the COB capstone course. The expected benefits of the pilot study are that it will help the COB better understand the challenges of assessment, generate preliminary data that will help the College refine its assessment efforts, and support the development of a device that effectively assesses COB student learning objectives.

Project Student Learning Outcomes:

Specific learning outcomes for the project include:
- given a balance sheet and income statement, calculate and interpret appropriate ratios summarizing an organization's profitability, liquidity, growth potential, & overall prospects.
• describe complexities and components in a changing external environment affecting relationships of industry performance; identify & explain models to analyze the external environment (five forces model, dominant economic characteristics, drivers of change, strategic group map, & key success factors)
• perform analysis of an organization's resources and competitive positions using financial analysis and models for such as SWOT analysis, value chain analysis, competitive strength analysis, & identifying strategic issues
• define basic competitive strategy options such as overall low cost, broad differentiation, best-cost, focused differentiation, & focused low-cost; discern strategy options within varied scenarios; explain complimentary strategic options available: merger, alliances, backward/forward integration, outsource value chain activities, & offensive/defensive strategic moves
• identify when to diversify and strategies for diversification (related/unrelated; how to enter new businesses, strategic fits)
• define the eight components of strategy execution (build organization, allocate resources, facilitating policies/procedures, best practices, install systems, rewards & incentives, corporate culture, & leadership); apply components to analyze various organization scenarios

Relationship to Quality Enhancement Plan Goals:

Through accurate, standardized assessment of student learning, the curriculum can be adjusted to ensure achievement of all SLOs.

Relationship to Academic Learning Compact Domains:

The academic learning compact domains are content, critical thinking, communication, project management, and ethics. The assessment device will be constructed such that it assesses all of these domains.

Specifically:
• Content - Demonstrate expertise at tools and techniques of strategic analysis such as Competitive Force analysis, SWOT analysis, financial analysis.
• Critical Thinking - Demonstrate ability to apply course concepts, use strategic models, and integrate disciplinary concepts in the development and implementation of strategic solutions to business issues.
• Communication - Demonstrate written communication skills, including knowledge of technical terms, grammatical structure and spelling.
• Project Management - Demonstrate ability to manage complex projects through effective planning and timely delivery of a comprehensive case analysis and recommended solution.
• Ethics - Demonstrate understanding of ethical issues and responsibilities facing business managers through their choice of recommended policy actions.
Desired Student Learning Gains:

Integrated understanding of business disciplines and ability to apply concepts to common business situations.

Outcomes Assessment Procedures:

Development of a standardized written case analysis assignment to be used by all COB capstone instructors. Development of a standardized set of case analysis grading criteria.

Instructional Strategy Enhancements (focusing on active learning/student engagement):

Provides students opportunity for problem based learning through integration of previously learned disciplinary concepts and active application of concepts to situations beyond those in which they were learned.

Assessment Plan:

- **Baseline**: Dissemination and discussion of expected student learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

- **Formative**: Use of weekly case written assignments will be used as measures of progress in learning concepts and application of models.

- **Summative**: Assignment of comprehensive written case analysis due at end of semester.

Information Dissemination Plan:

Results of pilot study including identification of what worked, problems encountered and proposed improvements will be made available to COB and university constituencies. In addition, presentations at conferences and journal articles will be developed.

Institutionalization Plan:

Based on the results and findings of the pilot study, a standardized assessment instrument will be incorporated into the COB capstone course on a continuing basis.

Resources to Be Used:

The development and administration of the pilot study will require significant time and effort by capstone instructors beyond normal course preparation. In addition, there are conferences available addressing assessment issues which the instructors
should attend. Administrative and student support will be required for data entry, case development and assessment support.

Timeline for Project Activities and Events:

A. Select common case for written case analysis. [Fall 2004]
B. Develop written case analysis instructions. [Fall 2004].
C. Develop written case grading criteria. [Fall 2004].
D. Implement pilot study using written case analysis criteria and grading [Spring 2005].
E. Collect data on common case analysis [Spring 2005].
F. Evaluate data on common case analysis [Summer/Fall 2005].
G. Attend conferences to learn about pitfalls and challenges of assessment [Spring 2005 and/or Fall 2005].

Attachment: Project Plan
Project Plan for Exploratory Project for Assessment in the 
College of Business Capstone Course

Background

The University of West Florida has undertaken a major project of developing and implementing an assessment plan for its programs. On one hand, this is a requirement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). On the other hand, the University considers it an opportunity to learn more about the effectiveness of its academic programs and then devise strategies to improve these programs. The University has developed a comprehensive Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to be the broad umbrella for assessing and improving the quality of its program offerings.

Further, the College of Business is also developing a plan to meet the Assurance of Learning standard of AACSB the international accreditation agency for colleges of business. The College of Business plan is expected to be broad enough to meet the requirements of both the above mentioned accreditation agencies. The College is developing a set of learning goals for the undergraduate business degree, to be followed by a tentative plan for assessment.

All undergraduate students in business complete a capstone course in Business Policy. The policy course is designed to integrate the various business disciplines and provide students with skills in identifying issues facing a firm and developing an appropriate strategy to address those issues and achieve the firm=s objectives. A number of pedagogical approaches are utilized in the policy course to help students achieve course goals. One pedagogical approach is the use of a computer simulation where student groups develop strategies to compete against other student teams or computer simulated firms in a business market place.

Another pedagogical approach is a series of case analyses culminating in an individually written case analysis. For the written case analysis, students are required to work independently in analyzing the competitive position of a firm, identifying the strategic issues facing the organization, and the development of an appropriate strategy and implementation plan. This case analysis gives students an opportunity to independently demonstrate their understanding of the business disciplines through their analysis and recommendations. Because the capstone course written case analysis is accomplished by all graduating business students, it is a natural setting for developing an assessment device for capturing the level of success of the COB for achieving its learning objectives. Specifically, this individual case analysis provides an opportunity to assess student use of business concepts, integration of knowledge across disciplines, and ability to communicate findings in writing.
Pilot Study

Although it is straightforward to envisage use of the capstone course for assessment, the implementation is currently confounded because there are three instructors who teach the course. At the present time they use different cases, a different set of instructions, and have different content requirements. Hence, the first tasks are to develop a common case description, a common set of instructions, and common grading criteria. In subsequent step the nature and type of data to be collected would be defined, and the pilot assessment device developed and administered.

In an initial review of similar efforts at other institutions, it was found that only a few institutions had promulgated assessment standards. It was also clear that none of these schools had assessment devices or approaches that would be suitable for adoption at UWF or for the COB. However, there are conferences where discussions and early research findings specific to learning assessment are available. It would be extremely beneficial to the quality of our pilot study and subsequent assessment development to have the investigators attend such conferences and network with the leaders in this field. Attendance at these conferences would enable us to learn more about assessment from professionals in the field and colleagues at other universities who have already implemented assessment plans or are conducting research in this area.

Proposed Activities

A. Select common case for written case analysis. [Fall 2004]
B. Develop written case analysis instructions. [Fall 2004].
C. Develop written case grading criteria. [Fall 2004].
D. Implement pilot study using written case analysis criteria and grading [Spring 2005].
E. Collect data on common case analysis [Spring 2005].
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Proposed Budget

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<td>4. Professional development B attend conferences to learn about assessment</td>
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Benefits

We believe that this pilot study will benefit UWF and the College of Business in many ways as detailed below:
A. The University will be able to provide documentation to SACS about implementation of its assessment plan.
B. The College will be able to meet its obligations to AACSB about implementing the first phase of its assessment plan.
C. The College will gain experience and expertise in developing and field testing its assessment plans.
D. The College will capture data to act as the baseline for initiating additional assessment measures.
E. The College faculty will be able to learn from the experience of the pilot study in the capstone course about the process of assessment.
F. The University will be able to share the experience of the pilot study in the COB capstone course about the process of assessment with other colleges.
Project Title: Enhancing the Freshmen Year Experience through a redesigned Freshmen Year Experience (FYE) Course

College/Division: Student Affairs, University Advising Center, College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s office

Contact Persons: Dr. Debbie Ford and Dr. Tom Westcott
Telephone: 474-2214 474-3178
E-mail: dford@uwf.edu twestcot@uwf.edu

List of Individuals Involved: SLS 1301 Faculty, Graduate Teaching Interns for SLS 1301, Student Affairs Leadership Team, Director of Volunteer UWF!, Director of Student Transition Programs, Student Transition Programs Advisory Committee, Student Success Program Faculty and Staff, Dean of Arts and Sciences

Brief Description of Project: The freshmen year experience seminar, SLS 1301, is an elective course for new students taught by Arts and Sciences faculty and staff from the division of student affairs. For fall 2004, the advising center created a UWF textbook for the course based on models from other institutions. Although there is a common curriculum, each section is taught independently.

The course faculty determined that the textbook needed more specifics related to UWF and agreed to work as a team to modify the text and the course around common learning outcomes for UWF first-year students. The course faculty agreed to use the following framework in modifying the textbook and redesigning the course to meet the needs of currently enrolled UWF students and to meet the goals of the QEP project.

- University Learning Outcome Domains
  - Content, Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, Project Management, Values and Ethics

The outcomes for the project will be as follows:
- Common Student Learning Outcomes related to the domains
- Common Syllabus and course curriculum
- Common Textbook for students to read and common workbook/manual or website for student success in the first year (to be developed by course faculty)
- Faculty Development
On-line course evaluation in collaboration with the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA)

Building a community of learners of faculty who teach FYE course and general education courses at UWF

There are six action items related to the completion of this QEP project:

- Modify the current UWF workbook/manual or website so that content and activities are centered around the domains for learning outcomes.
- Adopt a common book for the course that provides a basis for values discussions. This book will also be read by the course faculty and general education faculty in order to weave the learning throughout the general education curriculum.
- Create a common syllabus centered around the domains for learning outcomes.
- Incorporate Service Learning as a required component of all sections of SLS.
- Conduct faculty development with SLS course faculty to introduce domains for learning outcomes and common student learning outcomes.
- Collect and review data related to academic achievement and retention of students who enroll in the FYE course. The data will be used to improve the course and as a foundation for further study.
- Evaluate the learning outcomes with the course faculty and students via survey instruments.

Rationale: UWF’s enrollment is growing, especially at the freshmen level. In fall 2004 in-coming freshmen enrollment surpassed the in-coming transfer student enrollment for the first time in UWF’s history. With increased enrollment of new to college students UWF created an office of Student Transition Programs to focus on the Freshmen Year Experience. One of the transition services offered by the UWF
Advising Center is the freshmen seminar/success course. This is an elective course but freshmen advisors encourage students to enroll in the course.

With the QEP and an institutional focus on Active Learning and Student Engagement, SLS is one way to engage students in the learning process at UWF. Results of the 2004 NSSE show that scores for first-year students on the Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark could be improved. The FYE course is an appropriate course to introduce and practice the concepts of active and collaborative learning.

**Project Student Learning Outcomes for the redesigned FYE course:**

As a result of active participation in the redesigned Freshmen Year Experience course students will have the ability to:

- **Content**
  - Locate and utilize university resources designed to assist students with issues related to academic success and personal concerns
  - Locate and utilize a variety of library services and resources
  - Discover a variety of ways to participate in campus life
  - Use the university catalog to understand, identify, and explain educational terms, rules, regulations, and degree requirements
  - Learn specific methods to manage time efficiently and apply methods during
  - List and apply various strategies for effective study in college
  - Describe typical effective personal money management and budgeting techniques
  - Articulate the major issues involved in developing a healthy lifestyle
  - Identify and articulate personal learning styles as related to academics

- **Communication skills**
  - Use effective communication techniques
  - Establish additional mentoring relationships and support groups on campus
  - Describe cultural diversity and tolerance
  - Identify and articulate personal learning styles as related to academics

- **Critical Thinking**
  - Explain the balance between freedom and personal responsibility
  - Identify and apply steps involved in decision making and problem solving
  - Define academic integrity and its application in the university learning environment

- **Project Management**
  - Identify personal reasons for attending college
  - Identify and set meaningful short and long term goals and objectives
  - Prepare a comprehensive educational plan
Values and Ethics
- Describe the ethical issues involved in an academic setting
- Discover the relationship between service and learning
- Identify and apply steps involved in decision making and problem solving

Relation to Quality Enhancement Plan Goals:
As UWF moves from the instruction paradigm to the learning paradigm, the FYE course will serve as a foundation course to introduce the concepts and practices related to the learning paradigm. The redesigned curriculum, textbook, and course materials align with the goals of the QEP in the following ways:

- The domains serve as the foundation for the student learning outcomes, course curriculum, faculty development, and course materials
- The purpose of the FYE course is to develop a community of learners and introduce students to the academic culture of UWF, thus discussing student learning outcomes and their relationship to the students’ programs.
- Faculty development opportunities will be offered to the instructors and co-instructors of FYE

Relation to Academic Learning Compact Domains:
The student learning outcomes in this course are aligned with the domains of student learning outcomes. This course will introduce students to the concepts related to learning outcomes and the academic learning compacts.

Desired Student Learning Gains:
- Improved student retention
- Improved student satisfaction
- Improved scores on the NSSE, specifically in the Academic Learning and Collaboration benchmark
- Improved understanding of transition issues related to University life
- Ability to access resources available on campus to enhance student engagement and student success
- Greater connectivity with UWF and the academic culture at the completion of first semester on campus

Instructional Strategy Enhancements (focusing on active learning/student engagement):
- Common course syllabi
- Faculty development to share proven techniques to enhance student engagement
- Resource library for course materials and activities
- Regular meetings of teaching faculty of FYE course
- Enhanced use of technology in FYE course
Assessment Plan:

**Baseline:** Current course syllabi, current textbook, course evaluations from 2004

**Formative:** Throughout the course students will be asked to reflect on what they have learned and how a particular activity or assignment met one or more of the learning outcomes. This data will be used during instructor meetings to enhance the course.

**Summative:** Students will complete the University course evaluation and a specific evaluation designed to assess the student learning outcomes for the course. Faculty for the course will complete an evaluation of the course materials, curriculum, and faculty development sessions and meetings. This data will be used to further enhance the course and institutional changes for all sections of FYE.

Information Dissemination Plan: Dr. Ford and Dr. Westcott will serve as leaders of the project and will share information with their respective staffs on a monthly basis. In addition, Drs. Ford and Westcott will present project and progress to the Freshmen Year Experience committee and to the Provost.

Institutionalization Plan: The newly designed course will be piloted in no less than one-half of the sections of the FYE course in fall 2005 and evaluated in spring 2006. Modifications will be made to the text and course in spring 2006, and the course will be taught using the common syllabus and text in fall 2006.

In addition, the project leaders will work with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and general education faculty to explore FYE being a required course in the UWF general education curriculum.

Resources to Be Used:

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<td>Graduate Assistant</td>
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<td>FYE Expert for faculty development</td>
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<td>CSPA graduate interns</td>
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**Timeline for Project Activities and Events:**

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<tr>
<th>Project Goals</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Persons Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Modify the current UWF textbook so that chapter content and course activities are centered around the domains for learning outcomes. | • Organize chapter content around domains  
• Adopt common learning outcomes for course  
• Solicit faculty and student affairs staff to create resource materials for text or website  
• Organize text or website  
• Edit text or website  
• Publish text or website | Spring 2005 | SLS Faculty Anna Shiplee  
Project Leaders Faculty and staff to write text sections |
| Adopt a common book for the course that provides a basis for values discussions. | This book will also be read by the course faculty and general education faculty in order to weave the learning throughout the general education curriculum. | Spring 2005 | Project Leaders Dean of Arts and Sciences  
SLS faculty General Education faculty |
| Create a common syllabus centered around the six domains for learning outcomes | • Educate course faculty on learning domains  
• Adopt common learning outcomes for SLS course  
• Create draft of syllabus with readings, course activities, e-learning activities, etc. | Spring 2005 | Project Leaders  
SLS faculty Anna Shiplee |
| Incorporate Service Learning as a required component of all sections of SLS | • Add service learning as required course activity  
• Ask Volunteer UWF! to draft course responsibilities related to service learning  
• Add service learning orientation to class session | Summer 2005 | Tom Westcott  
Amanda Crowell |
<table>
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<th>Project Goals</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Persons Involved</th>
</tr>
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| Conduct faculty development with SLS course faculty to introduce domains for learning outcomes and common student learning outcomes | • Conduct workshop with a FYE expert on the Freshmen Year Experience and SLS type courses  
• Coordinate with course faculty to incorporate common e-learning tools in the course  
• Create a library of shared resources for the course | Summer 2005 | Debbie Ford  
Jim Hurd  
Anna Shiplee  
Kathy Wilson |
| Collect and review data related to academic achievement and retention of students who enroll in the FYE course. | • The data will be used to improve the course and as a foundation for further study. | Spring 2005 | Tom Westcott |
| Evaluate the learning outcomes with the course faculty and students via survey instruments | • Develop instrument to use with students  
• Develop instrument to use with faculty  
• Conduct evaluations in 14th week of semester  
• Assess if outcomes were met  
• Create report of evaluations and project  
• Modify text or website, syllabus, and faculty development based on outcomes of evaluations and meetings with faculty | Fall 2005 | Project leaders  
SLS faculty  
Graduate assistants  
Ann Shiplee  
CUTLA |
Appendix F

Request for Proposals

Return to ToC
“Creating a Community of Learners through Active Learning and Student Engagement”

Quality Enhancement Plan Project Proposal Packet
Proposal for Quality Enhancement Plan Project
Cover Sheet

Department Name

Name of Contact Person

Phone       E-mail

List of faculty and staff involved

We understand that in order to have this proposal considered by the UWF Quality Enhancement Steering Committee, we must include the following project proposal elements:

- Rationale
- Project student learning outcomes
- Relationship to program’s Academic Learning Compact student learning outcomes and the University’s QEP goals
- Desired student learning gains
- Outcomes assessment procedures
- Instructional strategy enhancements focusing on active learning/student engagement
- Assessment plan: baseline, formative, summative
- Information dissemination plan
- Institutionalization plan
- Resources needed
- Timeline for project activities and events

We understand that the UWF Quality Enhancement Steering Committee will recommend funding only if the project is consistent with the intent of the University’s Quality Enhancement Plan. We further understand that all funds must be expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of approval.

Print name of contact person Signature          Date          Phone

Department chair Signature          Date          Phone

Dean/Vice President Signature          Date          Phone

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date and time application was received: ________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________________
Proposal for Quality Enhancement Plan Projects Background

General Information

The University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), developed as one component of the process for reaffirmation of accreditation by SACS/COC, focuses on improving student learning through increased use of active learning and student engagement strategies. The QEP is an integral to the University’s strategic plan relating directly to the goal to “promote programs and activities, and learning and living environment, that encourage the development of individual potential in students, faculty and staff; communities of learners; and the valuing of lifeline learning.” For academic units, the QEP is also directly related to the development and implementation of the program-level Academic Learning Compacts required by the State University System Board of Governors.

Funding will be available annually during the period 2005-2010 to assist academic and student affairs units to develop projects leading to enhanced student learning through use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies. Projects must show a direct relationship to the unit’s program level student learning outcomes and must include direct measures of student learning. The basic intent of these funds is to provide seed funds for units to develop and evaluate new approaches to instruction and assessment, rather than ongoing support of existing activities. Approximately five to six projects will be funded annually. Projects are expected to be completed within an academic year period. Multiyear projects will be considered provided they have a cross-unit character involving at least three administrative units.

Proposal Format and Content

Proposals should include the following:

1. Complete cover sheet with required signatures
2. Narrative that addresses the overall significance of the project to the unit, college/division, and university, and identification and discussion of each of the project proposal elements as listed on the cover page.
3. Detailed budget request, including information on matching or other available funds. (Because it is anticipated that funding of these projects will be through E&G sources, funds allocated through this proposal process may spent only in accordance with E&G expenditure policies.)

Proposal Submission

E-mail your proposals to Gary Howard, Director, Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by April 15, 2005, at ghoward@uwf.edu.
Evaluation
A review committee comprised of members of the QEP Steering Committee will review proposals and make recommendations to the QEP Leadership Team. Awards will be made by the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs. Recommendations for funding will be made by May 15, 2005. Funding decisions will be announced not later than June 1, 2005. Proposals will be selected on the likelihood of success of the project and compliance with the goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan.

Required Reports
A brief interim report will be required by April 30 2006, with a full final report by August 30, 2006. Units with funded projects will be required to share findings from the project in the annual Quality Enhancement Plan Symposium to be held during the Fall Semester of each academic year.

Questions and Additional Information
A website with information about Quality Enhancement Plan projects can be found at http://uwf.edu/cutl. Please contact Dr. Gary Howard, Director, Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, for questions and assistance with proposal development. (473-7435; ghoward@uwf.edu)
Appendix A

### Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Relationship to Academic Learning Compact</th>
<th>Relationship to QEP Focus</th>
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### Assessment Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Measure(s)</th>
<th>Criteria for Success</th>
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### Resource Needs

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<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Cost Total</th>
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Appendix B

ALC Domains

Required by Board of Governors
- Content
- Critical Thinking
- Communication/"Literacies"

UWF value-added domains
- Integrity/Values
- Project Management
- Discipline Specific Skills