

## Executive Summary

The mission of Stetson University is to provide “a transformational education in a creative community where learning and values meet. Committed to scholarship and the liberal arts tradition, Stetson seeks to foster the qualities of mind and heart that will prepare students to reach their full potential as individuals, informed citizens, and responsible participants in their local and global communities.”

Stetson University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) enhances existing critical skills and overall student success for undergraduate students through **“Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Information Literacy.”**

The QEP takes a broad but deep approach to Information Literacy skills as essential elements of critical thinking by adopting a primary focus on student learning around how information is created and valued as they research, amass, and evaluate information. By strengthening students’ information literacy skills, the QEP improves their ability to be the informed citizens identified in our mission.

The QEP uses the definition of information literacy provided by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL): “information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.” Stetson’s QEP maintains that students can be successful when they have exposure, experience, and practice within the context of information literacy.

To arrive at the QEP recommendation, Stetson followed a well-structured process, which included the work of an initial QEP task force to generate ideas (2019-2020), a QEP committee to recommend a topic (2020-2021), a QEP implementation and development committee (2021-2022), a QEP writing task force (Fall 2021), and a QEP marketing and communications committee (2021-2022). Students, faculty, staff, and administration were involved in the review and decision-making process throughout. Over the two-year period, from 2019 to 2021, numerous focus groups were held and several surveys were administered to students, staff, and faculty at the beginning, middle, and near the end of the QEP topic development phase.

To successfully execute its QEP, Stetson University intends to leverage approximately 40 faculty across all academic disciplines to teach “Gap” enhanced courses at introductory and developmental (100 and 200) levels. Participating faculty will engage in workshops and training presented by Stetson’s in-house experts on Information Literacy at the duPont-Ball Library and the Brown Center for Faculty Innovation and Excellence.

Because the QEP is intended for long-range quality enhancement of student learning, a series of engagement opportunities has been identified for students that take place both within and outside the traditional classroom experience. Students in enhanced classes will be offered targeted and incentivized opportunities for learning via increased, specialized information literacy tutoring (offered by cross-trained Writing Center tutors and some Library student employees), and selected information literacy peer tutoring. The Library will offer Cultural Credit events to highlight the value of information literacy. (Students are required to attend 24 cultural credits events as part of their degree requirements).

The QEP will be implemented over five years and will start with preliminary (“soft”) launches of enhanced courses in the School of Business Administration in Spring 2022. Year One will begin in Summer 2022 and will feature course redesign workshops for faculty. Enhanced courses will hard-launch in Fall 2022. Each semester, faculty participating in the program will attend additional workshops on how to enhance information literacy along with how to assess and report progress toward QEP success. Over the next three years, new faculty will join the program annually, until the QEP supports 40 faculty. Each participating faculty member will be involved in the QEP for at least two sequential offerings of the course. To implement and execute the QEP, the University commits financial support for faculty (professional development stipends for course redesign), additional training for Writing Center staff and teaching apprentices, the additional work of the Library Liaison, and for other leadership positions including a QEP Director.

QEP courses will be assessed on a yearly basis to gauge successful implementation, using the First Year Seminar courses as a comparison group. This student population was chosen because the FSEM is the only first year course with an IL learning outcome, making it the best comparison group to assess QEP learning success. The student learning outcome focuses on information literacy, while the institution will use written and oral presentation artifacts to assess the success of student learning.

Through this multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary effort, the QEP will prepare Stetson’s students for success in their coursework and academic and professional work beyond Stetson University.

It should be noted here that the current document is a revision of the submitted QEP Report but should be read as an original document. Subsequent to the SACSCOC onsite visit and receipt of written recommendations, a number of revisions were made. For the most part, revisions have been made silently, leaving annotation and commentary to the accompanying narrative of changes. However, for the sake of clarity and transparency, we state here that QEP leadership decided to focus more intentionally on information literacy rather than the three part plan of Gather, Analyze, and Present and revised accordingly. This narrower focus encourages a stronger assessment plan and ensures more targeted learning practices, while remaining completely in keeping with expressed faculty, student, and staff preferences as indicated in the survey data.