

Narrative of Revisions

QEP: Bridging the Gap

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This memo describes the revisions and other changes made to the Quality Enhancement Plan submitted to the SACSCOC in February 2022. The SACSCOC onsite visit included a formal presentation of the QEP, a follow up discussion with the entire onsite team and QEP team members, and a private meeting between the QEP Director and a member of the onsite team. During that meeting, the SACSCOC member reviewed the QEP with me, noting a good number of positives and making a primary recommendation that appears in the formal report: “The On-Site Reaffirmation Committee recommends the institution refine the focus of the QEP to the information literacy concept in order to facilitate effective assessment.”

I was asked to present a narrative of changes to the original plan to accompany the revised version. Together with QEP Leadership and leaders from Institutional Research and Effectiveness, General Education assessment, and the Library, the report has been revised to present a QEP report that appears to the reader to be an original document; most revisions were silent.

In order to respond to the suggestions, several revisions were made to the original report. I have listed the recommendations below from the SACSCOC report, section “Analysis and Comments for Strengthening the QEP,” with summative commentary of the corresponding revisions. At the end of each commentary, I have indicated in italics where those revisions can be seen in the report.

One: “The scope of the QEP, in relation to assessment, is too broad and will make overall program assessment challenging.”

To accommodate this recommendation, we reviewed the entire report and eliminated all discussion of the Analyze and Presentation elements of the original plan, in some places developing discussion of Information Literacy more deeply. All references to G-A-P have been changed to Gap. All references that might indicate emphasis on analysis and presentation have been revised or deleted. Notes from committee and task force discussions have been updated to reflect appropriate parts of revised plan. All ancillary materials (course proposal form, course proposal evaluation rubric, educational information for participating faculty, etc) have been updated to reflect the new, single emphasis on information literacy. A new QEP learning outcome and rubric have been developed (see further below) and assessment materials and processes have been revised accordingly. (*See: throughout*)

Two: “The institution could consider having faculty assess a specific number of outcomes or narrowing the number of student learning outcomes within the information literacy concept. For example, the

institution could decide to reduce the number of student learning outcomes in the information literacy concept to three outcomes that all participating faculty must assess.”

The six learning outcomes originally offered, which reflect the six threshold concepts in information literacy, have been bundled to result in four major learning outcomes. This remained problematic given the number of learning outcomes attached to comparison courses; deeper discussions resulted in the four LOs being newly described as four dimensions of achievement of the single, unified QEP learning outcome. A new and unified assessment rubric thus simplifies the task of assessment. Faculty will be asked to select three of the four dimensions on the rubric, with the requirement that one of the three be the LO for citation and reference. We chose to remain with four rather than three information literacy goals, thus allowing faculty in these developmental courses to opt out of one that may not be developmentally appropriate to their course (specifically the LO covering “scholarship as a conversation,” which may not be suitable for a 100 level course). This revision allows faculty their accustomed agency to focus more intentionally and more deeply on information literacy goals, strengthening the QEP’s impact on teaching and learning. We recognize the remaining potential challenge of using a system that allows faculty to opt out of one of the dimensions of information literacy; we decided that sufficient precedent in our assessment processes exists to justify it for QEP as well. The use of typically assigned oral and written artifacts remains the same. Assessment procedures will continue to reflect best practices for authentic, embedded assessment. (*See: throughout, with special attention to Executive Summary, Literature Review, Assessment, Learning Outcomes and Rubrics, and appropriate Appendices*)

Three: “During the on-site visit, the QEP Director indicated the focus of the QEP has evolved, through their planning process, into a greater focus on information literacy because of the challenges in assessing the analysis and presentation concepts; the institution could consider narrowing the scope of the QEP to solely focus on information literacy within 100 and 200-level courses.”

We have revised the report, the proposal process, the proposal evaluation rubric, and marketing materials to reflect the QEP’s target of introductory and developmental courses (100 and 200 level courses). Appropriate marketing of the revised QEP targets will commence with the Year One cohort. (*See: throughout, with special attention to Assessment, Learning Outcomes and Rubrics, and appropriate Appendices*)

Four: “The information literacy student learning outcomes between GAP courses and non-GAP courses do not align. In the comparative non-GAP courses (First-Year Seminar or FSEM courses) there is only one student learning outcome related to information literacy, while in GAP courses there are six student learning outcomes. The institution could consider mirroring those student learning outcomes between non-GAP and GAP courses to make the assessment more comparable.”

We have formally designated the FSEM as the comparison group. To ensure appropriate comparisons, the FSEM IL outcome will be changed to the new QEP IL outcome statement. Leadership from Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the University General Education Committee and the Director of the FSEM Program have collaborated on the revision to ensure smooth processes including sampling, coding, collection of artifacts, rubrics identifying

assessment of achievement, and closure procedures. (*See: throughout, with special attention to Assessment, Learning Outcomes and Rubrics, and appropriate Appendices*)

Five: “During the on-site visit, faculty acknowledged that some faculty from schools and departments may not identify courses to contribute to the QEP; the institution could consider monitoring faculty participation by school and department and consider plans to do targeted outreach to schools or departments with lower participation.”

These suggestions do not affect the report as such. However, given the response to the QEP Call for Participation, I will continue to work with the QEP Assessment Team to target and recruit faculty from underrepresented areas.

The recommendations resolved a number of issues that QEP Leadership had found challenging. We appreciate the suggestions and the opportunity to revise and resubmit.