

Quality Enhancement Plan

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SACS Reaccreditation Process
2005-2009

So, what is a “Quality Enhancement Plan”

“The QEP describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses *a well-defined topic or issue(s)* related to enhancing *student learning*.”

Foundations of a QEP

A QEP is based on a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the institution in :

- supporting student learning
- accomplishing the mission of the institution

“Student Learning” ?

“Student Learning” is left broadly defined for the purpose of the QEP. It may include changes in students’:

- knowledge
- skills
- behaviors
- values

A QEP topic / issue:

- may arise from exploration of the institution's culture, strategic planning, goals, mission, & assessment
- may be original or it may extend or strengthen an improvement that is already underway
- should be based on empirical data and analysis
- must not be fully completed prior to onsite review (October 2008)

Examples of topics / issues

- enhancing the academic climate
- strengthening the general studies curriculum
- developing creative experiential learning opportunities
- enhancing critical thinking skills
- introducing innovative teaching and learning strategies
- increasing student engagement
- exploring imaginative ways to use technology

QEP's are:

- Complements to ongoing institutional evaluation & planning
- forward looking & on-going (vs. episodic)
- directed towards a future characterized by by an increase in *creative, engaging, & meaningful* student learning experiences
- the result of a process involving the *entire institutional community* : faculty, administrators, students, & perhaps alumni & trustees

Evidence of Institution-wide involvement:

- *consensus that the QEP can result in significant improvements in student learning*
- *broad participation in the identification of the QEP topic or issue*
- a careful review of the best practices related to the topic
- an adequate allocation of resources
- a clear implementation strategy
- a clear evaluation structure

A Recursive Process

- The focus and framework for the QEP should be expected to shift and evolve with: research, writing, talking, and campus participation.
- “To achieve the strongest possible focus, an institution must be willing to experience substantial ambiguity and maintain flexibility in thinking during the creative process.”

QEP at RBC: Fall 2005

- Fall: QEP Chair researches QEP's of other institutions & possible topics for RBC
- Dec: QEP Chair attends SACS conference
- DEC: Provost appoints a QEP committee

QEP at RBC: Spring 2006

- Jan: QEP committee establishes a method for gathering campus wide input on a topic
- Jan-Feb: *Campus wide participation in consideration of the QEP topic*
- Feb: the QEP topic is presented to the SACS Steering Committee (&, contingent on their approval, to the President)

Reference

Handbook For Reaffirmation of Accreditation,
Southern Association of Colleges and
Schools: Commission on Colleges,
www.sacsoc.org