Quality Enhancement Plan Topic Selection Committee Meeting
June 7, 2016 3pm JO 4.122
Agenda

1. Introduction of new committee members
2. Distribution of packet
      2A. QEP Proposals by 5 Topics
      2B. NSSE Summary by 5 Topics
      2C. Summary Statistics re: Retention Rates
      2D. DFW Rates
3. Discussion of Information in Item 2
4. Schedule Next Meeting after July 5th
5. Adjournment

UT DALLAS

2018 Reaffirmation Teams - Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection Committee

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection Committee

This committee organizes meetings and follow-up meetings with faculty, students, staff, alumni, and members of the corporate community to communicate the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) process and solicit input for potential topics. The data collected from these meetings are supported by email and website submissions. This committee will recommend the final QEP topic for implementation.

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection Committee Members

Jessica C. Murphy (Committee Chair)	Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Director; Associate Professor of Literary Studies, School of Arts and Humanities
Lisa Bell	Clinical Professor, School of Arts, Technology, and Emerging Communication
Euel W. Elliott	Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Professor, School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
Rebecca Files	Assistant Professor, Naveen Jindal School of Management
Walter E. Voit	Assistant Professor, Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science
Gene Fitch	Vice President for Student Affairs
John Johnson	Student Outreach and Academic Retention Advisor
Kimberly Laird	Associate Vice President and Controller, Office of Budget and Finance (Until Chief Budget Officer hired.)
Melinda Mendoza-Ellis	Senior Director of Alumni Relations, Office of Development and Alumni Relations (To include input from external stakeholders.)
Katherine Morales	Director of Media Relations, Office of Communications (To include input from external stakeholders.)
Ryan Dorman	Graduate Student Representative, School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences; Research Assistant, Provost's Office

Melody Henry . . . . .Undergraduate Student Representative, School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Rachel K. Meade . . . . .Undergraduate Student Representative, McDermott Scholars; School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Rajadhar Reddy . . . . .Undergraduate Student Representative, Student Government; McDermott Scholars; School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection Committee Principles

- **2.12 – Quality Enhancement Plan**
- **3.3.2 – Quality Enhancement Plan**
- **2.5 – Institutional Effectiveness**[1]

1. Principle assigned to multiple committees

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Communication #3*   p.32

UT Dallas should establish an undergraduate degree plan in Communication Studies. Communication Studies looks at the theory and practice of communication. Communication Studies is NOT a focus on Mass Communication or Emerging Media, which is the focus of the EMAC degree. Communication Studies is the study of communication: why we communicate in certain ways, how we can communication more effectively through any medium. EMAC focuses on the medium. Communication Studies focuses on communication theory. Additionally, Communication Studies could be made a major and a minor. As a minor, Communication Studies would enhance a degree in EMAC because Communication Studies courses would give EMAC majors practice in theoretical communication (interviewing, nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, small group communication) and in communication performance (public speaking, debate, negotiation, conflict resolution, oral interpretation, readers theater.

Create a Technical Communication undergraduate degree plan. Technical Communication is a hybrid between Communication Studies and Rhetoric. Technical Communication is a very hot field in the business world because companies need employees that can write and document the technological developments of the 21st century. As a major, technical communication would be housed in A&H because A&H currently has within its catalog of courses the COMM courses and RHET courses necessary to form the background of the degree plan.

I would like to propose a new COMM 2xxx course for the university core curriculum: Building Effective Teams. So many students are now having a group component to their 2000 - 4000 undergraduate degree plans and working within those groups is problematic at best.
The attitude of instructors is that they have group projects so they must be teaching their students how to function properly in teams - NOT. Building Effective Teams would be a 2xxx level class with the prerequisites of RHET 1302, COMM 1311 or equivalents. The class would be a basics version of Small Group Communication (COMM 4340.)
Building Effective Teams would teach: How to deal with difficult people (don't burst out laughing ladies), How leaders emerge, Roles people play in groups, Agendas, team rules, Gantt time lines, Project management software tools (beyond Google docs) Group format.

Get a National Communication Association (NCA) student chapter established on campus. NCA is one of the most important organizations for practicing communication professionals and a campus chapter would help students transition from student life to professional life.

Contains multiple submissions from one individual

Communication #4   p.34

As smart and talented as our UT Dallas students are, significant numbers struggle with professional communication. Some are unable to compose forceful, concise, effective sentences and paragraphs. Others fail to address faculty members properly in email, and write messages that are poorly constructed and disrespectful. Many quake at the thought of giving even a brief oral presentation, because they are unsure as to how structure a talk for maximal effectiveness. Others fail to understand the importance of maintaining an appropriate, professional presence on social media websites. Many do not understand how to evaluate the validity of information they find online. The fact that students at UT Dallas struggle with professional communication interferes with their academic success during their undergraduate years, reduces the likelihood that they will find meaningful, gainful employment upon graduation, and undermines their opportunities to pursue graduate education.

Digital Learning #1

Faculty | Marjorie A Zielke | margez@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

We wish to create a virtual professor for a STEM class such as Physics 1301. The live professor teaches the class in a large lecture style and then the TAs run the lab. Very little opportunity exists for questions and answer in the lecture, and then the TAs are left to answer questions in the lab. The TAs may not always have the same knowledge base and communication style as the live professor. Therefore, we will create a Virtual STEM Professor, based on the live professor, who can answer questions in the lab, along with the TA. The Virtual STEM Professor could also be used by students outside the lab. This will create learning consistency and extend the live professor for student access. The following link discusses a similar concept. http:www.utdallas.edunews20151217-31831_ATEC-Team-Developing-Virtual-Teachers-to-Help-Dysl_story-wide.html

References

Zielke, M., Zakhidov, D., Hardee, G., & Jacob, D. (2016). Beyond Fun and Games: Toward an Adaptive and Emergent Learning Platform for Pre-Med Students with the UT TIME Portal. IEEE SeGAH 2016. Orlando, FL.

Zielke, M., Zakhidov, D., Jacob, D., & Lenox, S. (2016). Using Qualitative Data Analysis to Measure User Experience in a Serious Game for Premed Students. HCI International 2016 Toronto. 2016.

Needed Programs

UT Dallas would not need to put any new classes in place for this QEP. This idea is a virtual STEM professor as an extension to the live professor in the lab. The idea is particularly suited to large STEM lecture classes with labs being run by TAs where students go for assistance. Further the Virtual Humans and Synthetic Societies Lab is already established on campus. Funding would need to be secured to develop the virtual STEM professor.

Expected Benefits

The primary benefit is consistent and highly qualified professional assistance to students in a lab setting. The proposal is particularly relevant to STEM classes with a high number of students who need help and a high drop or failure rate. Students would get the virtual professor to help them, who is an extension of the live professor-- in addition to traditional TAs. Consistency in knowledge, approach and communication would be achieved.

Supports Mission

UT Dallas is committed to innovative education and research and the Virtual STEM Professor certainly supports this component of the mission. Further Virtual Humans such as the one described here are likely to be a part of students' lives as they pursue their careers and lives in the 21st century and potentially beyond. Innovative assistive technology such as that described here will prepare students for similar human-machine teaming in the future. Further, the Virtual STEM Professor offers a unique way to capture and extend a professors knowledge -- this concept is relevant to many different campus scenarios.

Timeline

Year One: Virtual Stem Professor content and interface planning for curriculum integration. Year Two: Development and Testing. Year Three: Initial lab integration. Year Four: Assessment and Refinement. Year Five: Rollout and content additions.

Affects Culture

Virtual professors would enhance campus culture in terms of innovation recognition as well as creating new ways to achieve a student-centered focus. The Virtual STEM Professor has the potential to move well beyond traditional eLearning platforms and transform personalized student learning.

Associated Goals

Goals: 1. Create Virtual STEM Professor. (assessment: Virtual Stem Professor created) 2. Integrate Virtual STEM Professor into class lab. (assessment: Virtual STEM Professor integrated into lab) 3. Conduct virtual-live tutoring sessions with the Virtual STEM Professor. (assessment: sessions conducted) 4. Create reflective evaluation to measure enhanced student learning and access to professor through the Virtual STEM Professor. (assessment: see comments in next section).

Success Definition

Anticipated Outcome and Corresponding Effectiveness Measure: The Virtual STEM Professor

1. Assessment One: Student understanding of and expression of class concepts. Instrument: Student knowledge level captured with validated instruments and enhanced by other measurement types such a qualitative student feedback.

2. Assessment Two: 360 view of assessing project outcome effectiveness in representing STEM concepts. Instrument: Obtain feedback from students, TAs, professors, and other project publics as they are identified on the Virtual STEM Professors effectiveness.

3 Assessment Three: Integration with overall curriculum. Instrument: Guidance will be sought from administrators, professors and students on integration preferences and will be reassessed at project completion. Self-driven, self-practice, anytime, anywhere practice competency-based model for adaptive learning by students will be developed.

4. Overall Assessment: The Virtual STEM Professor will be driven by usage metric data capture on frequency, time of day, repeat, preferred scenarios and other similar measures to analyze the success of the design in providing these requirements. Summative experience measurement from instruments such as surveys and focus groups as well as behavioral usage data will be conducted and analyzed at the end of the trial. All of the above data will be aggregated into a final report to assess overall student benefit.

Curricular Globalization #1

Staff | Cristen Casey | cristen@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

This Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) proposes to enhance curricular globalization and global learning by leveraging strengthening existing resources to the extent possible, and by growing student participation in intentional global learning opportunities that support their preparation for life, work, and leadership.
Five main approaches:
1. Expansion of education abroad programs focused on existing Program Learning Outcomes.
2. Integration of global SLOs into the broader UT Dallas curricula (Graduate and Undergraduate).
3. Focused local engagement in programs of global relevance.
4. Development of a Global Scholars program.
5. Global Accelerator Program. (May work equally well in an FYE proposal).

References

Heiden, Christopher H. The Perceived Value among Employers of College Study Abroad for Engineers. The University of North Texas, dissertation. August 2012.

Franklin, Kimberly. Long-term Career Impact and Professional Applicability of the Study Abroad Experience. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad. Fall 2010, Vol. 19, p 169 190.

Marin, Noemi. Intercultural Challenges for Foreign Students into the Stressful Journey of Graduate School. 1996.

Standley, Henrietta J ; Bowater, Laura. International mobility placements enable students and staff in Higher Education to enhance transversal and employability-related skills. FEMS Microbiology Letters, 362, 2015, fnv157. 2015, Vol. 362(19).

Stebleton, Michael J. ; Soria, Krista M. ; Cherney, Blythe T. The High Impact of Education Abroad: College Students Engagement in International Experiences and the Development of Intercultural Competencies. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad, 2013, Vol.22, p.1-24

Wright, Newell D.; Clarke III, Irvine. Preparing Marketing Students for a Global and Multicultural Work Environment: The Value of a Semester-Long Study Abroad Program. Marketing Education Review. Summer 2010, Vol 20 Issue 2, p 149- 162.

More available by request.

Needed Programs

1. Education Abroad. Expansion of education abroad programs focused on existing Program Learning Outcomes.

- Expand strategic international partnerships (existing and new) to allow diversity of offerings while maintaining academic quality and increasing global exposure. Specific focus on programs that address globally oriented program learning outcomes that already exist in many UT Dallas schools, at all levels of education. List of program learning outcome examples provided in summary section.
- Develop STEM Abroad program to focus achievement of SLOs for students in the STEM fields. Nationwide, 23% of study abroad occurs in STEM fields (IIE Open Doors 201314 data), and STEM study abroad is the largest growing population. UT Dallas currently shows only 14% of study abroad occurring in STEM fields. A measurable outcome could be to increase this number toward the national averages.
- Develop International Internship programs to focus on SLOs that impact effectiveness in work and career in a global marketplace. Alumni working overseas, particularly the large international alumni network, can be leveraged to expand international internship options for domestic students. This also contributes to Alumni Center goals and international recruitment efforts.
- Scholarships to stimulate and incentivize improved education abroad offerings.

2. Curriculum Enhancement. Further integration of global SLOs into the broader UT Dallas curricula (Graduate and Undergraduate).

- A Curriculum Globalization grant program to incentivize new or existing courses in global topics and foreign languages designed to support and enhance a student's technical and professional development. A measurable could be the % of UT Dallas courses with global SLOs embedded. This could be modeled after Virginia Techs existing program (http:www.globaleducation.vt.eduindex.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Link_ID=C681F2F 5-A1DC-1AE0-FF6801DFAAA974E6).
- Faculty working groups to map international experiences into degree plans at all levels, particularly in STEM fields and other under-represented disciplines. Possible collaboration integration of Center for Teaching and Learning.
- Faculty working groups to develop international research relationships and collaborations. Possible collaboration with Office of Research Office of UG Education Graduate Studies. Intentional communication of international research grant and scholarship opportunities.
- Faculty committee to review the current course inventory for existing courses that address the QEP SLOs, and communicate intentionally to students interested in global competencies. Added integration of global perspectives in core classes for UG students.
- Further develop Freshman Seminar sections for each school that integrate global perspectives. Existing example: UNIV 1010, Section HON: This section of UNIV 1010 will be a School of

Management section. We will discuss topics relating to beginning college and college success, as well as global events and events relevant to the students' lives.

3. Local global engagement. Focused on-campus engagement in programs of global relevance.

- Focus the many existing programs for increased impact. Develop social media and other communication channels (global events calendar) and a way to thread existing programs together for increased impact, effectiveness, and efficiency. Measurable for student engagement.
- A UT Dallas global engagement board to provide intentional focus on program overlaps, gaps, communication channels, etc.
- Co-curricular events provided, including speakers, performances, global faculty/student presentations, etc., that thread into globally oriented program learning outcomes.
- Programs with focus on increased interaction between international and domestic students through planned social and intercultural learning events.

4. Global Scholars Program.

- A Global Scholar certificate/transcript notation or other recognition for students who engage in differing levels of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that develop relevant SLO- global competencies. Could apply to all majors, for students with a certain % of UG core taken in infused global coursework.
- Access to supplemental global advising.

5. Global Accelerator Program. Global Accelerator Program for international student success and integration. (May work equally well in an FYE proposal).

- Academic Accelerator programs. Peer mentoring programs between intl students and domestic students engaged in global scholarship.
- Strengthening and additional focus on international graduate student readiness for Masters and PhD level research projects and dissertations. Writing, American research methodology, etc.
- Provide supplemental English instruction for students at all levels, bridge program for those with high academic qualifications, but needing additional English support to be fully successful in American higher education. Research English, effective communications, etc. UT Dallas current contract with ELS Language Centers provides some of this support, however it is expensive and offered by outside instructors. The contract expires in spring 2017- this could allow us to re-negotiate the contract or provide additional supplemental instruction by UT Dallas instructors.
- Provide supplemental career readiness programs for international students, including effective interviewing communication, job skills, writing an effective U.S. resume, etc. NJSOM has developed a course that will be available fall 2016. It could be used as a model to extrapolate to other schools. Also could support Alumni Center goals.

Examples of existing UT Dallas global learning resources that could be leveraged:
Academic Centers: Asia Center, Center for US Latin America Initiatives.
Student Program Centers: International Center, Multicultural Center.
Student Academic Centers: Student Success Center, Writing Lab, Honors College.
Diverse human resources: Large international student and employee populations, large and engaged international alumni pool, engaged international community in the DFW area.
Expanding interest in international collaborations and partnerships. Demand from international institutions to partner with UT Dallas.

Expected Benefits
Students:
Transferrable skills for solving complex problems that face local, regional, and world communities.

On-campus programs will support integration of international student population into UT Dallas community, supporting a climate of diversity and increasing student satisfaction.
Global experiences are shown to contribute to long-term career success

Intl students: more successful in class, produce research, more publication, more of a contribution on the UG core level, bringing perspective. Alumni giving, relationship to institution.

Domestic students: UG: more interaction with intl students in intentional way, intercultural competence as theme, campus support. Promotes campus of support where students are able to voice perspectives without retribution.

Institution:
Career success influences school rankings, alumni giving.
Improving global visibility of UT Dallas as a worldwide leader in STEM, business, and liberal arts education.
Tying UT Dallas and the DFW area into the larger global community.
Improved diversity and campus climate. Students increasingly integrated and with varied formal and informal avenues to address items of interest to diverse populations.
Expansion of international networks. Recruitment of students into non-saturated programs (UG levels and GR programs with less than 5% intl enrollment).

Supports Mission
The UT Dallas mission includes a commitment to graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers in a constantly changing world. UT Dallas existing commitment to internationalization and global education is demonstrated by the large body of (largely decentralized) existing resources already at our disposal: large international student and faculty populations, students representing 24% of the study body and 100+ countries; multiple globally-oriented academic, research, and program centers; growing international research participation and programs; expanding partnerships with strategic international institutions. However, these resources are underutilized toward the effective globalization of the campus, and research shows that global experiences and intercultural competencies contribute to long-term career success, and prepare graduates for productive careers in a constantly changing world. Therefore, this quality enhancement plan is designed to focus existing resources so students are able to participate in global learning opportunities that support their preparation for life, work, and leadership.

Examples of existing Program Learning Outcomes with global threads- many more are available:
BS in Biomedical Engineering: The broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context.
MS in Intl Political Economy: Students will develop basic skills in professional communication appropriate to the international political economy research and analysis.
BS in Computer Science: An ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences. An ability to analyze the local and global impact of computing on individuals, organizations, and society.MA in Latin American Studies: Graduates will be adequately prepared for doctoral programs related to Latin American Studies and or for participation in professional fields related to Latin American Studies.
BS in Global Business: Fully appreciate the multicultural aspect of human relations and realize how multiculturalism impacts global business operations.
MBA: Organize and manage in a diverse, multicultural, global business environment.

Timeline
Phases Goals:
Year 1. Foundational year. Identify the global learning experiences available to students across the institution, on campus and abroad. Establish the necessary committees and stakeholder groups. Launch calendar of existing activities, using social media and other emerging technologies. Identify SLOs, targets, measures. Define success, and the measures to be used to assess student learning and the university's progress toward successful implementation.

Year 2. Design initiatives to address gaps, mitigate barriers, and focus resources on key initiatives.

Year 3-5. Implement initiatives, assess their effectiveness annually, analyze the results of these assessments, and revise the initiatives as needed based on this analysis.

Affects Culture

UT Dallas strives to be one of the great universities of the world, and with that comes preparing our graduates to be skilled at navigating within that world. Benefits of global experiences include higher employability, and transferrable skills for solving complex problems that face local, regional, and world communities. While UT Dallas benefits from many global resources, student participation in global programs and intercultural activities are disproportionate among discipline and groups. With a wealth of international students and faculty, often international students and U.S. students interact less with each other and more with their own cultural groups.

By engaging this QEP topic, UT Dallas students will have additional opportunities to engage in the global educational environment, and apply their academic disciplines in a global arena. By leveraging existing opportunities and focusing participation on and off-campus cross-cultural activities, UT Dallas students will become increasingly prepared for life, work, and leadership in a rapidly changing world.

Associated Goals

Engage students, campus, and local community in global learning. Measure: participation levels in study abroad, diversity of participation in study abroad by discipline are aetc, participation levels in on-campus global programs, diversity of programs offered with corresponding participation levels.
Expand opportunities for global knowledge and application to academic disciplines. Measure: number of degree plans with global experiences included encouraged offered, integration and assessment of intercultural learning outcomes into multiple disciplines. Interdisciplinary engagement in topics of global relevance.

Enhance student engagement on-campus. Measure: campus climate survey.
Higher numbers of qualified international students from varied backgrounds who, after participating in the Global Accelerator Program, improve in graduate program success measures. GPA, higher % passing qualifying exams, job placement, etc.
Improved student intercultural competencies. Measure: intercultural competence index levels
Improve language skill acquisition of UT Dallas graduates. Measure: fluency indicators.

Success Definition

Student Engagement levels. Attendance, awareness, participation in global events of relevance to their disciplines.
Participation in global education programs against national averages, peer institutions, aspiring institutions.
International internship participation rate, credits awarded for successful international internships.
Student learning on career readiness related to working with diverse companies and communities.
Programs with globally oriented learning outcomes.
Number of courses with globally oriented student learning outcomes.
Freshmen seminars or LLC with sections with global themes.
Students receiving Global Scholars honors certificates.

Wellness #1

Staff | Kacey Sebeniecher | knl101020@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

Students at UTD strive to learn, excel in math and sciences, but struggle to understand the impact of the environment on their health. UT Dallas has evolved into a more traditional campus over the past decade with the addition of residence halls and growth of student organizations. The campus culture is diverse, eclectic, and has been noted as a proud group of nerds, as stated in the most recent addition of the UT

Dallas magazine. While we embrace this culture, the intersection of this culture with the traditional college environment has resulted in some disconnect of the importance of safe behaviors. Furthermore, research has shown that unhealthy behaviors do have a negative impact on academic performance. We want the students to challenge not only what their brains can do, but what a healthy mind and body can accomplish in unison.

This Quality Enhancement Plan focuses on the implementation of a health education course that increases the students access to health and wellness information.

References

Downs M.F., Eisenberg D. (2012). Help seeking and treatment use among suicidal college students. Journal of American College Health, 60(2): 104-114.

Hunt J, Eisenberg D. (2010). Mental health problems and help-seeking behavior among college students. Journal of Adolescent Health, 46(1): 3-10.

Moore, E.W., & Smith, W.E. (2012). What college students do not know: where are the gaps in sexual health knowledge?. Journal of American College Health, 60 (6), 436-442.

Sparling, P.B. (2007, July). Obesity on Campus. Preventing Chronic Disease, 4(3), A72.

Turner JC, Keller A. (2011). Leading causes of mortality among American college students at 4-year institutions. Paper presented at : 139th Annual meeting go American Public Health Association; November 2, 2011; Washington, DC.
https:apha.confex.comapha139amwebprogramPaper241696.html. Accessed May 15, 2016.

Unwin, B. K., Goodie, J., Reamy, Brian V., Quinlan, J. (2013). Care of the College Student. American Family Physician, 88(9): 596-604.

Williams, P.M., Goodie, J., & Motsinger, C.D. (2008). Treating Eating Disorders in Primary Care. American Family Physician, 77(2), 187-195.

Williams, J., Pacula, R., Chaloupla, F.J., & Wechsler, H. (2004). Alcohol and marijuana use among college students: Economic compliments or substitutes? Health Economics, 13, 825-843.

Needed Programs

A 1000 level health and wellness elective course will need to be established. This course will educate across multiple areas of health and wellness, i.e. drug & alcohol use in society, human sexuality, mental health and stress management, nutrition and exercise, etc.

Expected Benefits

This course will provide students with the opportunity to increase their awareness and exposure to health topics across all pillars of health. The class will be taught in a team- teaching approach. This will allow professionals with expertise to instruct on the topic that they currently practice in order to enhance the student learning experience.

Supports Mission

The incorporation of a health education course will contribute to the university's mission by producing engaged and well-rounded students. Increasing students' knowledge in health and wellness will create a lasting impact on their community and their academic and professional performance. We would like to incorporate health and wellness into the unique culture that has been established at UT Dallas.

Timeline

The Summer and Fall of 2016 will be utilized as a planning period. This is will allow time to develop curriculum, contact and schedule the facilitators, create the syllabus, and reserve classrooms and teaching spaces. The first pilot course will begin in the spring of 2017. The course will then be evaluated and changes can be made during the summer of 2017.

Affects Culture

This course will enhance the campus culture by increasing mindfulness and well-being among our student population. This includes setting a new standard that students will consider health and wellness as important as their academic conquests. We want the students to challenge not only what their brains can do, but what a healthy mind and body can accomplish in unison.

Associated Goals

Reduced prevalence of high risk behaviors among students including, but not limited to alcohol and illegal drug use, risky sexual behaviors, and debilitating levels of stress among students is a main objective in the offering of a health education course. We strive to increase the utilization of on-campus health and recreation services and promote self-care among students. Including an emphasis on mental health and counseling services into course material will help reduce the occurrence of mental health crisis as well as reduce the stigma of mental health services.

Overall, we hope to support students in their desire to expand and challenge their intellect by offering the necessary tools to assist students to include their physical health as an area of focus. We want to see students implement healthy behaviors into their academic careers and establish long-term healthy lifestyles into their future conquests.

Success Definition

Evaluation of a health education course will include the continuation of health and wellness data collected from undergraduate students from the American College Health Association National College Health Assessment following the implementation of the course. Tracking the utilization of on-campus health education resources after the implementation of the course will help determine an increase in mindfulness and self-care among students as a result of the course.

Tests and quizzes will be incorporated into the curriculum to help track the progressions of students' knowledge in various pillars of health. Positive behavior change will be evaluated on an individual and group level with the incorporation of group and individual projects.

First-Year Experience #1

Staff | Courtney Brecheen | cdb076000@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

This QEP would expand an existing peer mentorship program for Academic Excellence Scholarship (AES) to include all first-year students.

References

Per the strategic priorities outlined by the Academic Excellence Scholarship (AES) Team in fall 2013, the AES Program increased participation in the AES Freshman Mentor Program during the fall 2014 term. Incoming freshmen from the 2014 cohort had the opportunity to request a mentor for the fall term. This program has recognized significant growth. Given its popularity, the Office of Undergraduate Education may utilize peer mentors who receive positive reviews from their freshmen, the opportunity to mentor at-risk students from other programs in the spring term. Freshmen who participate in the mentor program recognized an average GPA .5 higher than AES freshmen that did not participate. The following chart illustrates the growth of the mentor program. in fall 2014, 440 (47 percent) of the incoming AES freshmen requested a mentor. A total of 315 successful continuing students volunteer as AES mentors. One could speculate that based on the high number of scholarship recipients who self-select into the program and the positive impact on a group of students who enter the university highly qualified academically, could mean that the receptivity and significance of impact could be even higher for a non-scholarship population.

Mentors include both AES recipients and non-AES recipients who have demonstrated academic success and engagement in campus life. Mentors receive formal training and are required to meet with their assigned student(s) at least once per week. The mentors submit monthly reports that provide the AES Team with details about meeting productivity and how the freshmen are adjusting to UT Dallas socially and academically. Initial reports indicate that on average, AES mentors meet with their students in-person on campus for 30 minutes each week. At the conclusion of the fall semester, the AES Team surveys both mentors and freshmen in order to collect the data necessary to continuously improve the program. As a result of feedback provided by participants in fall 2013, the AES Team formed a Freshman Mentor Program Leadership Committee that organizes events for mentor-mentee pairs and assists with conducting the bi-monthly meetings with mentors. Given the programs popularity and need for peer support in other programs, the Office of Undergraduate Education began utilizing peer mentors who received positive reviews from their freshmen to mentor at-risk students from other programs in the following spring term. Specifically, in Spring 2015, mentors were used to support Undergraduate Success Scholars (non-scholarship underrepresented minority students) who earned below a 3.0 in their first fall term. Undergraduate Success Scholars reported positive outcomes regarding the assistance mentors provided them academically and related to strengthening their connection to campus

Needed Programs
As the AES population declines and current mentors demonstrate the ability to effectively assist non-scholarship freshmen, the Office of Undergraduate Education has developed a plan to pilot an expansion of the Freshman Mentor Program to all incoming freshmen. At the conclusion of two consecutive cycles of the program, mentors and freshmen reported in the end of semester survey that the program would have an even deeper impact if extended to an entire academic year of facilitated programming. Also in the end of semester survey, 100 percent of mentor respondents reported that they would recommend the program to another student as a great leadership opportunity. Although it is speculative, this implies that the program may also have a positive correlation to continuing student engagement and persistence.
Several departments and programs across campus utilize peer mentorship programs. Given the success of programs like the one described above and others, the number of mentor programs developed may continue to increase. As a result, the need to prevent duplication of effort, to share best practices, and to improve awareness of mentor programs, has emerged.

Area Alignment
The University of Texas at Dallas provides the State of Texas and the nation with excellent, innovative education and research. The University is committed to graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers in a constantly changing world; to continually improving educational and research programs in the arts and sciences, engineering, and management; and to assisting the commercialization of intellectual capital generated by students, staff, and faculty. Contribute to well-rounded development (and graduation rates) through a service-oriented experience outside of the classroom.

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2 The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement. (Quality Enhancement Plan) Coordinate mentorship efforts across schools and departments and all classifications of undergraduates

Assess both freshman success as a result of mentorship and engagement level satisfaction with the university of continuing students

Timeline
Fall 2016-Spring 2017: Office of Undergraduate Education runs first pilot of Freshman Mentor Program open to all freshmen. Capped at 900 (450 freshmen and 450 mentors) due to staffing limitations.
Summer 2017: Begin information gathering phase. Conduct outreach to identify all current mentorship programs on campus. Compile best practices and coordinate among programs to prevent duplication of

effort. Assess data and identify other mentor needs across campus. Plan for larger Freshman Mentor Program in Academic Year 2018. Dedicate additional staff to ensuring success of larger program.
Fall 2017 and Spring 2018: Develop strategic plan for creation of a centralized unit to assist departments across campus with the coordination of mentorship initiatives.

Affects Culture

A QEP oriented toward improving the coordination of mentorship initiatives across campus would positively affect campus culture by formally facilitating collaboration and coordination across schools and departments. This QEP idea would also further contribute to developing a culture of peer-to-peer service among the undergraduate population creating a culture that inspires students to feel accountable for the success of their peers.

Associated Goals

The following are a few metrics used by the Office of Undergraduate Education to assess the Freshman Mentor Program:
Percent retention of freshman participants compared to a comparable random sample of non-participant freshmen
First year GPA difference between freshman participants and a comparable random sample of non-participant freshmen
Percent of freshman participants who apply to serve as mentors during their sophomore year
Percent of freshmen participants who are satisfied with their mentor program experience
Percent of mentors who feel the mentor program served as a valuable form of engagement and leadership

First-Year Experience #2

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Idea Summary

The UT Dallas Four plus Experience (4+E) will be comprised of programs and events sponsored jointly by various offices within the university. The project will be designed on the basis of a four year developmental model in which Student Affairs and Academics partner to increase student retention by promoting academic, social, and professional success. The 4+E will also include programs at the graduate level. Research in higher education illustrates that student retention and persistence increase when students feel engaged and supported by their university. Although universities tend to foster engagement and support in freshman year programs, students may become confused and frustrated in their sophomore year and beyond (Powers, 2008). Additionally, there is often a disconnection between student affairs programs and academic programs designed to enhance engagement and support. However, the most successful initiatives are based on partnerships between those in student and academic affairs.

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Needed Programs

Currently, the Office of Student Affairs offers transition programs at the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior levels and for transfer students. In addition, freshmen are required to enroll in a school-specific required course, Freshman Seminar (FS). These programs will be enhanced and new initiatives will be implemented to improve student engagement and success. The programs and initiatives will most likely begin as voluntary workshops and may evolve into required workshops and/or courses. For example: Freshman Year Experience Research shows that first year seminar courses contribute significantly to an effective transition to college, the likelihood of persistence into the sophomore year, and overall academic performance (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Student Affairs and Academics will continue to work together on programs and events such as Freshman Orientation, Success Camp, and Living-Learning Communities. In terms of the FS, associate deans and faculty participated in a spring 2016 FS survey, and feedback was obtained from students and First Year Leaders (FYLs), upper level undergraduates who help teach the FS. Survey responses and comments revealed a number of problematic areas associated with the FS, including: poor preparation and the unclear role of the FYLs; faculty confusion about course content; lack of faculty buy in; poor communication between faculty and FYLs; too many assignments and time devoted to a one semester credit hour course; and the student perception of meaningless course content. To enhance the FS, meaningful content that is standardized and appropriate for a one semester credit hour class will be identified and integrated into the course. Faculty will be provided with various content delivery modes and a clearinghouse will be created that will enable them to review syllabi, assignments, etc. Meaningful FS elective content will also be made available to faculty. A mentor training certification program for FYLs that is research-based and includes a coherent curriculum will be instituted and their role in the FS will be standardized.

Sophomore Year Experience The second year in college centers on reflection and decision- making (Schaller, 2005). Sophomores may experience a crisis of confidence, meaning, and purpose based on academic and social difficulties during their freshman year. Furthermore, they may not have developed a sense of interdependence and support within the campus community (Sophomore/Junior Year Experience Research, 2016). Student Affairs currently offers Explore the WOW! (World of Work), which enables students to learn about job requirements, employer expectations and professionalism during a formal spring break externship. Student Affairs also sponsors Major Investigation, which focuses on job shadowing and internships, and Alternative Spring Break, during which students volunteer with non-profit agencies. In conjunction with Alternative Spring Break, sophomores can be (re)introduced to programs sponsored by the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE). Specifically, the VolunTIER program recognizes seniors who complete a required number of service hours each semester, and the Deans Service Milestone Recognition program recognizes students at the end of each long semester who serve UT Dallas and the community. In addition to these existing programs, Student Affairs and Academics can work together to

develop new initiatives that help students overcome sophomore year developmental roadblocks. For example, faculty and graduate students can participate in Major Investigation to discuss the majors they represent and related career fields. Faculty members can also share their passion for their field by hosting off-campus visits to organizations, labs, museums, screenings, trials, etc. Presentations by former study abroad students can motivate sophomores to participate in an intercultural experience, and on-campus dinners with alumni can additionally help students work through the sophomore slump.

Junior Year Experience - While the second year in college concerns the developmental phase of reflection and decision-making, the third year focuses on purpose and preparation and the in-depth exploration of the major (Calhoun, 2016). This is also a time to connect with professors, alumni, and career representatives (Welcome to your Junior Year, 2016). Student Affairs offers Junior Year Experience special events such as Comet Credit, a workshop that centers on how to avoid debt and build good credit; Career Advice and a Slice, during which students speak with employers in a casual setting; and Career Connections, which allows students to have their job search documents reviewed by Career Center staff and Alumni Relations professionals. In addition, transfer students are required to attend Transfer Orientation during which they learn what to expect at UT Dallas and hear from representatives of the Veteran Service Center, the Career Center, and their particular school. The OUE sponsors the Freshman Mentor program that requires mentors to meet with freshmen during their first two semesters at UT Dallas. Similarly, the Peer-to-Peer Service program engages students in academic and retention-oriented programs such as those offered by the Student Success Center (Peer Tutoring, PLTL leaders, Supplemental Instruction). Student Affairs and Academics can continue programs at the junior level such as faculty-student off-campus visits and on-campus dinners with alumni. Additionally, Student Affairs and Academics can create initiatives designed for juniors and transfer students such as workshops about cultivating relationships with professors (e.g., which can lead to research opportunities and reference letters); opportunities to practice informational interviews with potential employers; and faculty/graduate student panels that provide information about graduate and professional schools.

Senior Year Experience Seniors need to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to transition successfully to life after college (Hunter, Kelleher, Mattingly, & Ambrose, 2008). Students Affairs offers programs such as the Senior Etiquette Dinner, which teaches dining etiquette that may be critical to career success, and OMGraduation! a half-day workshop for seniors who have missed out on Career Center presentations. The academic portion of a senior year experience typically focuses on required portfolios and capstone courses. However, Academics and Student Affairs can work together to create workshops that focus on topics such as basic money management, buying a car, professionalism in the workplace, networking to find a job, creating a brand, and what to expect while transitioning to the post-graduation world.

A Community of Scholars First year graduate students, especially those who leave their home country to study at UT Dallas, may not be aware of the culture of their graduate department or the nuances of professionalism in their particular area of study. In conjunction with the Office of Graduate Education, new programs can be created or existing graduate level courses and/or workshops can be supplemented with general information about professional communication and topics suggested by survey research. Discipline-specific courses and workshops can focus on the particulars associated with a specific field (e.g., what to expect during qualifying exams, how to submit a proposal to a conference, etc.)

Expected Benefits

Research in higher education consistently supports the idea that students need academic and social support in order to succeed. The current definition of student engagement includes not only the college or university academic experience but also interaction with peers, faculty, and involvement in co-curricular activities. Student engagement is associated with a variety of desired education-related outcomes. For example, close faculty-student interaction is related to improved critical thinking and intellectual development on the part of students, which in turn promotes persistence and degree completion. Similarly, engagement in college-sponsored activities and having close on-campus friendships are correlated with student persistence and educational attainment. Furthermore, a high level of student engagement is correlated with a high level of knowledge acquisition and cognitive growth (Lane & Lewis, 2013). The proposed 4+E QEP includes opportunities for close faculty-student interaction, participation in university-

sponsored activities, and opportunities to make on-campus friendships; therefore, the QEP will benefit UT Dallas students by promoting intellectual development and degree completion.

Regarding the university, institutions with high retention rates engage faculty, administrators, and students alike in a shared goal (Coley, Coley, & Lynch-Homes, 2016). According to Imperative 7 in the UT Dallas Strategic Plan, graduation rates for UT Dallas are above the national average for public universities. Specifically, for the fall 2009 cohort, 622 students completed their degree in four years or less; 194 students finished their degree in more than four years but in five years or less; and 55 students completed their degree in more than five years but in six years or less (which results in a 67% six year graduation rate) (Common Data Set 2015-2016). None-the-less, the graduation rates are below expectations and an important initiative for all UT institutions is to improve the 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates for undergraduate students (UTD Strategic Plan: Creating the Future, 2012). We can improve retention and graduation rates by creating a comprehensive student support program based on a four year developmental model. Moreover, the 4+E will help bring the UT Dallas community together towards a shared goal, as Student Affairs and Academics aim jointly to contribute to students' academic, social, and professional success. Committees comprised of representatives from Student Affairs and Academics will meet to share information, create and conduct surveys, design new initiatives, review assessment data, consider marketing possibilities, and refine programs, workshops, and courses. Committee members will include faculty, administrators, and representatives from areas such as the Student Success Center, the Career Center, Alumni Relations, the Office of Student Volunteerism, Advising, and the Teaching-Learning Center, to name a few. UT Dallas aspires to be a first-rank public research university; a global force in research and education; a ground-breaking leader; a synergistic partner; and one of the most creative, innovative universities in the nation and world. According to the Strategic Plan, stakeholders must unite and work together to meet these goals, because without internal synergy without diversity of opinion, without dedication to transcending traditional boundaries, UTD will not be able to fulfill its promise (UTD Strategic Plan: Creating the Future, 2012).

Supports Mission
UT Dallas is committed to graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers in a constantly changing world. The 4+E will promote degree completion so that post-college, students will attain personal and professional success in a world that is dynamic and often unpredictable. Similarly, Initiative 2 in the UT Dallas Strategic Plan is to educate students and to prepare them for a lifetime of contribution, leadership, and personal fulfillment (UTD Strategic Plan: Creating the Future, 2012). The 4+E QEP will help students realize the importance of service, foster future leaders, and encourage personal fulfillment.

Timeline
Year One Create a committee of representatives from offices, programs, and schools that participate in the 4+E to share information about existing programs and initiatives. Conduct a needs assessment at the freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate levels. Conduct a needs assessment of Freshman Seminar FYLs and instructors. Attend conferences and make site visits to learn about best practices. Confer with deans and faculty to create buy in and to obtain ideas for content to include in the 4+E. Investigate possible grants. Create an online clearinghouse of sample syllabi, assignments, etc. for Freshman Seminar faculty. Brand the 4+E and brainstorm marketing and publicity.

Year Two Analyze data from needs assessments and meetings. Develop content ideas and student learning outcomes regarding 4+E programs and initiatives. Review and refine processes to facilitate communication among committee members and offices departments associated with the 4+E. Share survey results, research, and 4+E best practices. Write one or more F+E grants. Institute a FYL mentor certification program for the Freshman Seminar; create Freshman Seminar teaching workshops; increase and improve FYL participation in the Freshman Seminar; assess SLOs and evaluate procedures. Continue to meet with faculty to create 4+E buy in and obtain ideas for content. Market and publicize the 4+E.

Year Three Continue 4+E committee meetings. Pilot an enhanced Freshman Seminar with meaningful standardized and elective content, certified Freshman Mentors (FMs) in place of FYLs, and procedures for

consistent and effective faculty-FM communication. Pilot a Community of Scholars program at the graduate level. Consider expanding the 4+E to include components related to a service learning requirement, a common reader, a themed learning community, and a 4+E for undeclared majors and first generation college students. Assess the Freshman Seminar and the Community of Scholars program. Plan to pilot an enhanced Sophomore Year Experience and Junior/Transfer Year Experience program in year four. Continue to research and write grant proposals and to market and publicize the 4+E.

Year Four Continue 4+E committee meetings. Analyze assessment data and refine the Freshman Seminar and Community of Scholars as necessary. Pilot the enhanced Sophomore and Junior/Transition Year Experience programs. Plan to pilot an enhanced Senior Year Experience in year five. Continue to research and write grant proposals and to market and publicize the 4+E.

Year Five Continue 4+E committee meetings. Pilot and assess the enhanced Senior Year Experience. Analyze all assessment data and refine, eliminate and/or add programs as necessary. Continue to research and write grant proposals and to market and publicize the 4+E.

Affects Culture
Virtual professors would enhance campus culture in terms of innovation recognition as well as creating new ways to achieve a student-centered focus. The Virtual STEM Professor has the potential to move well beyond traditional eLearning platforms and transform personalized student learning.

Associated Goals
Goal one is to create and enhance 4+E content to support students' academic, social, and professional success. This goal can be assessed in terms graduation rates and student knowledge of content and participation in activities related to 4+E workshops, programs, and events. For example, SLOs associated with the Freshman Seminar may include:
Students will demonstrate knowledge of university resources (assessed via quizzes in the Freshman Seminar and/or evidence of visits to the Student Success Center, Career Center, etc.)
Students will develop a sense of community and engagement (assessed via participation in club meetings; attendance at arts-related, athletic and/or scholarly events; and/or participation in volunteer opportunities).
Students will demonstrate knowledge of university policy and information associated with their major (assessed via quizzes or assignments in the Freshman Seminar)
FMs will apply their training to mentor freshmen (assessed by surveying freshmen about the role that FMs played in the Freshman Seminar course and outside of class)
Goal two is to facilitate communication and cooperation among the various offices and departments associated with the 4+E. This goal can be assessed by surveying the 4+E committee, instructors, program and event coordinators, and FYLsFMs.

Success Definition
In addition to an annual assessment of the five components associated with the 4+E, we can monitor graduation rates and create a graduation survey in which students are asked to evaluate the 4+E. We can track alumni and ask if the 4+E has had a positive impact on their post-graduation life. We can also create and share survey data (e.g., regarding effective communication and relationships among the offices that participate in the 4+E) to evaluate and improve the QEP.

First-Year Experience #3
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Idea Summary
A great career the final goal after college. These are the voyages of first-year UT Dallas students. Their four-year mission: to explore career options, to network with professionals, and to hone career readiness competencies.
The project targets early career exploration and engagement with Freshmen, introducing the marketable skills employers seek in graduates. The Career Center will expand our Explore the WOW job shadowing program to include a First-Year Experience component. Freshmen will participate in one-day job

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shadowing experiences at up to six company sites over the course of an academic year. Career Center staff will monitor students through the program through structured checkpoints, fostering their professional development beginning in Freshman year and continuing through the undergraduate experience.

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Needed Programs

- One-day group job shadowing experiences at up to six company sites over the course of a fall and spring semester
- Follow-up meetings after job shadowing days
- eLearning seminar: assignments and progress reports that incorporate the NACE career readiness competencies (critical thinking problem solving, oral written communications, teamwork collaboration, information technology application, leadership, professionalism work ethic, career management)
- Career Center seminars and meetings with Career Consultants, through which freshman get assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviewing, and conducting informational meetings with professionals
- Mentorships with professionals, selected from the Career Centers employer and or alumni contacts Resources needed:
- Career Center staff meetings with students, managing eLearning seminar, chaperones for job shadow days
- Transportation small groups of students traveling to company sites with Career Center staff chaperone, budget for van rental and gas
- eLearning seminar
- End of year reflection celebration budget for food

Expected Benefits

The QEP will address the main goal that many students have in attending college: getting a good job. It will allow the Career Center to help students forge and attain tangible career-focused goals beginning during freshman year and continuing throughout the undergraduate experience. We will help students break their goals down into achievable steps, and keep them accountable. Ideally this QEP will contribute to retention at the institution by keeping students motivated and focused on their blended academic and professional aspirations, starting during year one.

Supports Mission

This QEP will assist in graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers in a constantly changing world. By providing students tools to help them set career-related goals as early as freshman year, we will show them the importance of career planning and professionalism throughout the undergraduate experience, not just at graduation time. Students will work toward these goals in conjunction with completing their studies and participating in academic and other activities on campus, utilizing time management, good judgment, and organization. This will empower them with increased knowledge and confidence, preparing them for life after college, as working professionals and citizens.

Timeline

- Academic Year 2016-2017: development
- September 2017: launch
- April 2018: complete first year, end of program reflection/celebration
- 2019-2020: monitor participants progress through undergraduate education and career planning, compare participants internship/job placements and academic achievement against those of non-participants

Affects Culture

- Early engagement in career preparation and professional development
- Increased awareness of major and career options

Associated Goals

- Improved student ability to articulate career goals and synthesis of academic training and workforce readiness skills.
- Participation in major selection, internship program experiential learning opportunities, student leadership, and or career-related workshops and seminars

Success Definition

- Monitor participants progress in degree at UTD Did they complete it? How long?
- Look at participants other academic and campus involvement: Well-rounded experience? Leadership on campus?
- Review and discuss students eLearning assignments related to competencies
- Survey students after the program, to learn about internships and jobs obtained
- Outcomes Survey at graduation: search to find which graduates participated in QEP

First-Year Experience #4

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Idea Summary

A great college experience begins with a great first year. This proposal outlines a plan for enhancing the first-year experience (FYE) for UT Dallas freshmen, transfers and graduate students in an effort to improve recruitment, retention and time to graduation as well as the overall student learning environment. This QEP would improve on a number of high-impact educational practices that are already in place, including undergraduate research, service learning, living learning communities, and collaborative assignments and projects. It also would bring together peer leaders, faculty, staff and administrators in working towards a common goal.

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Needed Programs

The university already has the 1100 series courses and other programs in place for the freshman first-year experience. However, these programs have been in flux over the years with a number of iterations that have had varying degrees of success. If the first-year experience is selected as the QEP, the current freshmen experience could be reevaluated on a larger scale and enhanced using the latest best practices in place at other universities as well as the newest data available through the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition. The appointment of Shelley Lane to oversee first-year programs is already a step in that direction. While we believe the model should continue to be decentralized, it is a good idea to have a coordinator of the various programs.

In ensuing years, the UT Dallas first-year experience program could be extended to our transfer students, following the lead of other major universities like California State University-Fullerton. UT Dallas could also consider creating specific first-year experience programs for graduate students, international students and first-generation college students. Another idea is to reimagine existing courses to include first-year experience common outcomes.

If selected as the QEP, many administrative departments throughout the university would ideally be involved in planning and execution, These would include the Office of Undergraduate Education, Office of Research, Office of Graduate Studies, Office of Admission and Enrollment, Office of Student Volunteerism, Living Learning Communities, International Center, Student Success Center, Career Services, and the Center for Teaching and Learning. Because peer leaders are an integral part of the first year experience, this QEP would require the participation of the First Year Leaders, Peer Advisors, Peer Led Team Leaders, and Orientation Team Members.

Most of the structures needed for a good first-year experience already exist, therefore there is no need for a large financial investment upfront. However, over time we might want to consider investing in financial compensation for FYLs and the first-year instructors as well as an certification training for peer leaders. In addition, we might want to dedicate resources to connecting with students before they ever come to campus. We could develop a task force to determine how technology could be used to engage students as soon as they are accepted to the university and then consider bringing them to campus for extended periods during the summer in an extension of the current academic bridge program. A summer bridge program for

first-generation college students would be particularly important since we are likely to see growth in that population in the years ahead, and must prepare to meet their special needs.

Expected Benefits
The benefits of the first-year experience are well documented in the academic literature. First introduced in the late 1800s at Lee College in Kentucky, the first-year seminar has been the focus of thousands of empirical studies. We must acknowledge, however, that we have not found the right formula for our first-year programs at UT Dallas, as evidenced by ongoing complaints by both students and faculty and the annual modifications to the program.

As DeAngelo (2014) points out, it is not enough to be simply have a first-year program in place. Institutions need to think more thoughtfully not only about the quality of their offerings but perhaps even more importantly about how well these experiences are integrated and central to the fabric of the institution. At its best and most successful, first-year curricula are part of a comprehensive campus-wide first-year initiative that has strong executive and administrative leadership and support from the entire campus community.

While the overarching goal of our first-year experience is to enhance students' academic and social integration into college, the benefits of a successful and well-implemented program would extend far beyond the first year and permeate every aspect of campus life.

Supports Mission
The first-year experience is clearly an important initial step in achieving our mission of graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers. Career planning should begin in year one, and be the focus of all student decisions as they navigate through the university.

Timeline
2016-2017: Shelley Lane can begin gathering information from all interested parties on campus as well as external resources such as the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. Plans could be in place in Spring 2017 for a roll out in Fall 2017.

2017-2018 The new and improved first year experience for freshmen officially rolls out in Fall 2017, but outreach to incoming freshmen students could begin in Spring 2017 and continue into the Summer 2017 Freshmen Orientations.. Training and certification for peer leaders begins in Spring 2018 along with special first-year experience training for instructors through the Center for Teaching and Learning. Assessment of the program also begins in this first year.

2018-2019 Based on the results of the first assessment, the freshman FYE expands and improves in Fall 2018. Information gathering then begins for new FYE programs for transfers, graduate students and special populations like international students and first-generation college students. We also consider expanding the summer bridge program and bringing vulnerable freshmen on campus the summer before their first year.

2019-2020 New FYE experiences are rolled out in Fall 2019 and assessed.

2020-2021 Assessments drive improvements to the program as well as expansion into new areas.

Affects Culture
Many students find that once they begin college, they are often isolated from peers, faculty and staff. Of course, the extent of the problem varies across individuals, but is applicable to freshmen, transfers and even graduate students. This program would ease that transition and in doing so create a greater sense of solidarity among students, and a greater sense of belonging to the university and the community. Importantly, it would develop closer and long-lasting ties between faculty and students, and go some ways toward creating an environment in which academic as well as social skills can flourish and develop. In

short, this program would help in breaking down traditional barriers between students, students and faculty and staff, and between the university and the community.

Associated Goals

Improve recruitment and retention across all schools.
Produce better and more informed citizens
Facilitate shorter time to graduation
Foster academic success
Support vulnerable populations such as first-generation college students and international students.
Build community

Success Definition

FYE End of the Semester Student Surveys
Focus Groups
Retention figures
Data on time to graduation
GPAs
Mid-Semester Evaluations
Internal and external review boards

First-Year Experience #5

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Idea Summary

This proposal outlines the creation of the First-Year Experience Committee to target retention and success in first-year students by providing intentional, consistent programming and support.

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Needed Programs

A committee would be formed to bring together key departments and programs from across campus that already participate in the existing Freshman Year Experience:
New Student Programs - First-Year Orientation, Comet Camp, Success Camp
Office of Undergraduate Education - University Convocation, UNIV 1010
Student Engagement - Welcome Week, Student Leadership Programs, Freshman Engaged in Service Together
Residential Life - First-Year Housing
Living Learning Communities
Student Transition Programs - Freshman Ignite
The committee would provide the opportunity for departments to coordinate existing programs and exchange dates for upcoming events. Initially, existing events would not need to be altered. The committee would meet at least once a semester and at minimum work to present a congruent theme with consistent language throughout the experience. The First-Year Experience Committee would work with outside departments such as Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Multicultural Center, Student Government, Spirit Programs etc. to include their programs and events throughout the First-Year Experience in a consistent manner. Ideally, the First-Year Experience Committee would incorporate a single initiative to create a common thread throughout all programming from before classes begin through the end of their first-year.

For example, all incoming first-year students could take the StrengthsQuests StrengthsFinder as part of First-Year Orientation. Students StrengthsQuest Themes would then be incorporated throughout all First-Year programming: used in Comet Camp to create small groups, written on door placards for Residential Life and Living Learning Communities for Peer Advisors to use when working with students, emphasized during the service events, etc.

Expected Benefits
First-year students are currently not receiving a consistent message or experience from program to program. A First-Year Experience Committee would be able to provide an intentional First-Year Experience from start to finish with a congruent theme and language. There would be less duplication of programming and effort.

Supports Mission
As part of the institutional goal of graduating well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers in a constantly changing world, the First-Year Experience Committee will provide holistic programming that will cover a variety of developmental issues for students. While First-Year Orientation and Comet Camp will address transitional issues, Residential Life will address social development, and Student Leadership Programs and the Office of Student Volunteerism will help students develop purpose, there will be a clean handoff between programs with only the appropriate amount of overlap.

Timeline
2017: Creation of the First-Year Experience Committee for the Class of 2021. The first committee meeting will be held in the spring semester of 2017, this will be to share information regarding the upcoming First-Year Orientations, Comet Camps, Success Camp, Residence Life move-in, and fall 2017 FYE event dates/information. The fall 2017 meeting will cover spring 2018 events and develop more common themes for the experience for the Class of 2022.

2018: The spring 2018 committee meeting will assess the fall programming initiatives of the First-Year Experience and finalize plans for the Class of 2022.

Affects Culture
The First-Year Experience Committee has the ability to improve campus traditions, involvement on-campus, and student retention. This can begin with emphasizing class year pride. The incorporation of class years into marketing language and promotional items can build identity around a graduating year, and let students appreciate being part of something bigger than themselves.

Associated Goals
The primary goal of the First-Year Experience Committee will be to positively affect first-semester to second-semester and first-year to second-year retention. This quantitative data can be measured through student enrollment. A secondary goal for the committee will be to increase the involvement of first-year students in First-Year Experience programs. The committee will work together to share participant information from self-selective programs such as Comet Camp, Living Learning Committees, and Freshmen Engaged in Service Together. It can be determined if participation in one program leads to participation in another program within the experience.

Success Definition
As mentioned in the previous field, success will be measure by tracking first-semester to second-semester, first-year to second-year retention, and participation across First-Year Experience programs.

First-Year Experience #6
Faculty | Joe Izen | joe@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

A chronic problem in first-year physics is that many of my students breezed through science and math in high school. They don't expect or believe they will have to study until they bomb a few tests, and then it is a crisis. No amount of warnings from profs or grown-ups seems to convince a cocky college student. I suggest recruiting more advanced students in the same or similar disciplines as a peer big brother/sister, particularly if that peer wrestled with and conquered the same obstacle.

Needed Programs
Program to pair up incoming and advanced students.

Expected Benefits
Hopefully avoid freshman meltdowns.

Supports Mission
improve freshman retention, improve freshman grades

Timeline
Trail program to gauge effectiveness of the intervention, and the willingness of more advanced students to participate.

Affects Culture
Create a social bond between incoming and more advanced students.

Success Definition
Monitor DFW rate from calcphysicschem courses with students participating in the intervention.

Communication #1
Faculty | Margaret L Hosty | mxh116930@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary
I propose that the University incorporate rhetorical analysis into every undergraduate course. This should be done in conjunction with the University's writing lab, and such an endeavor could simultaneously facilitate expansion of the courses included in the Certificate in Critical Communication Skills (C3) undergraduate program which the University is pursuing at present. I am suggesting a working title of Rhetorical Readiness for the QEP (which can then be referred to as the Double R Program, an appellation which would play nicely on the Texas notion of a ranch name). I will explain how the attentiveness to rhetorical analysis can kill two birds with one stone, benefiting both the QEP and the C3 programs, as will be detailed in the implementation portion of this proposal, as discussed in Section III regarding Phase B. Rhetoric is considered important enough to effective communication that even the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) recommended by our campus library has.

References
By habituating students to the process of thinking along rhetorical lines (regardless of their native languages), the University encourages students to develop and put to use those rhetorical skills which will be of inestimable value to them in their future personal, professional, and academic endeavors. This option provides an opportunity for students to increase their proficiency in rhetoric, as well as helps to increase their awareness of how pertinent rhetoric is in many aspects of everyday life; students tend to resist edification less if they can see how what they are learning is applicable to or relevant in their own lives. Because it would be onerous for faculty to assume experimental grading criteria for assignments on a regular basis for this phase, it is recommended that a form with standardized criteria be established and be made available online (such as the University's seven-point one for the assessing of dissertation proposals, e.g.), in order that students be mindful of what their assignments must contain specifically, that being the standards by which their assignments would be judged as being acceptable. After penning their assignments, students would be required to assess them personally, utilizing the standardized criteria; this practice gets students in the habit of checking their work for compliance of specific instructions (always

good practice), the reinforcement of which would be evident in their mindfulness of certain criteria in drafting future assignments, whether for curricular credit or not. Students would then be required to submit their work to the University's writing lab, at which time the personnel, utilizing the standardized checklist, would determine if the assignments meet the criteria specified for grading purposes.

It is here wherein the C3 Program would benefit most. According to the University's web site, the Office of Undergraduate Education is encouraging more faculty to evaluate their courses for inclusion. Assignments which incorporate rhetorical considerations would help achieve the University's goal of growing the number of courses which are eligible for certification in said program.

Dr. Sheila Amin Gutierrez de Piñeres is on record as stating The [C3] designation demonstrates that a given course will improve students communication skills, and that the assignments emphasize the writing or oral communication practices specific to the academic discipline of the course, and Dr. Michael Wilson has added After all, if you can't explain something to someone through your writing or speaking, who will care about your ideas? I repeat, therefore, my previously-tendered assessment: Rhetoric is an essential and indisputable aspect of education, being of considerable utility and benefit to students both when in and beyond the confines of the classroom. What better than the application of rhetoric to make for superior written and oral communication skills?

As Dr. Wilson astutely notes, the mere gaining of knowledge is a self-limiting pursuit if one cannot also articulate what one intends to do with knowledge gained and if one cannot articulate ones ideas (or readily comprehend those of others), then one is hardly in a position to inspire others or to work effectively with one's peers. Being a project coordinator, team member, or activist requires rhetorical adeptness no less than does being a maverick, trailblazer, or innovator, because an accomplished ability to draw others to ones ideas, gain support, work jointly towards a goal, or train others depends on an ability to convey ones thoughts or directions to others in language which is not merely relevant but also is clear, concise, and compelling. It is a commanding control of rhetoric which helps to communicate an understanding of knowledge one has gained and which communicates how that knowledge itself is gainful when employed in the work world, the artistic community, or in affairs of government and charity. Students do not need to be schooled in how to speak or write casually, but they must be educated so as to be able to perform in a professional capacity, whether their chosen professions be in the realms of mathematics or the sciences, the arts circle, the social sciences, or the world of finance.

The relatively recent, superb, detailed report researched and written by Dr. Shelley Lane confirms that phenomenon which many (if not most) of us in the education business already experience on a regular basis; exposure to an increase in the number of students who have shown themselves to be ill-prepared to enter the workforce because they have been ill-prepared to effectively communicate with others. It is my opinion that the University should make remedying this deficiency a top priority; it might produce some of the finest minds in the nation once it gains Tier One status, but if the student body cannot convey the knowledge it has gained in our classrooms and improve in aspects of performance which necessitate innovation, productivity, and coordination by means of constructive engagement with peers, supervisors, clients, and subordinates, then it has failed to provide students with the skills requisite to becoming successful members of society.

Habituating students to think along rhetorical lines is of inestimable value to them; by getting into the practice of constructing assignments in which contingent objections and tangential factors are considered, students promote divergent thinking skills and instead of merely augmenting soft skills for communication purposes, divergent thinking compels students to be more creative, contemplative, and reflective, practices which benefit students in the arts and the sciences.

Timeline
Phase A: Initial Faculty Solicitation & Departmental Standardization (one semester)
A.1 Solicit assignment ideas from faculty members in each department, one per person
A.2 Department heads collect, aggregate, and then distribute the composite assignment ideas (in a single Word document)
A.3 Faculty in each department vote for their top-five (anonymous) favored assignment ideas

A.4 Department heads collect votes and compile a list of the top-five faculty favored ideas (in a single Word document)

A.5 Department heads forward the top-five selected assignment ideas to the University IT dept

A.6 University IT dept. posts the selected ideas on each of the relevant departments web pages

A.7 Faculty in each department incorporate at least one assignment option into their syllabi

Phase B: (optional)

B.1 Faculty committee should be formed in order to draft a boilerplate paragraph and criteria checklist regarding the University-wide mission statement, eventually to be shared (electronically) with all University faculty for inclusion in syllabi of courses

B.2 Faculty senate members should vote on approval and acceptance of the language and parameters of the boilerplate paragraph and the criteria checklist for the extra-credit option

B.3 Faculty-approved boilerplate paragraph and criteria checklist to be forwarded to the University writing lab, with instructions for helping students with assessment

Phase B: Permanent University-wide Standardization (two semesters)

B.1 Faculty members select three scholarly articles in their respective disciplines which display effective use of rhetoric, and pen a (minimum) one-page essay on its relevance to the discipline (one essay may serve for an entire department, if a department so desires)

B.2 Faculty members each send department heads a single Word document which contains: the faculty members relevant contact information hisher one-page essay on the utility of rhetoric in the relevant academic discipline one of the five department-approved assignments students can expect to perform in the faculty members course(s) links to at least three scholarly articles which are discipline-relevant and which the faculty member believes to be well-written instead of being merely informative

B.3 Department heads aggregate faculty Word files into a ZIP file and forward these files to the University IT dept.

B.4 University IT dept. posts information online in the Rhetorical Readiness database The inclusion of at least three assignments which utilize rhetorical analysis should increase the number of courses eligible for the C3 Program; courses which meet this particular, added criteria can be designated in the course catalog with a small logo of C3, in order that students be aware when selecting courses that they count towards certification.

Affects Culture

If every department pursues this proposal, then the University will be in a position to fulfill a QEP goal involving increased awareness of rhetorical devices and the practice of application of rhetoric as a matter of professional development. It also significantly increases the potential for expansion of courses which could be included in the C3 Program. If the University chooses to pursue this recommendation, then it will be demonstrating to its students a commitment to professional development instead of merely the increase of content mastery; it is not what one knows which counts so much as it is what one does with that knowledge, and more often than not, practice makes perfect (wax on, wax off).

By habituating students to be aware of rhetorical devices (in which they learn to identify techniques employed in effective communication) and to implement these devices (wherein they would practice employing them), the University will better prepare students for future endeavors by means of a methodology which both introduces them to theory and compels them to praxis. The University, of course, would benefit considerably if its students become habituated to effective communication, for all future proposals could benefit from student readiness resulting from an enlarged awareness of rhetoric coupled with practical experience in rhetorically-inclined thinking when reading, speaking or writing. In a perfect world, ideally, I would recommend that all undergraduate students be required to enroll in RHET 1302, because it would help prepare them to do better work in the remainder of their courses, but a change in University's core curriculum assuredly involves more than can be determined by the given limitations of a QEP committee; so long as rhetoric remains a mere elective, and traditional speech courses are not required, I believe the C3 Program will have its work cut out for itself.

Of course, the requisite precursor to all of this being accomplished involves each faculty member being aware of what rhetoric entails in a somewhat formal capacity, and this is a pre-requisite which can be

remedied quite easily; its fulfillment should involve an effort spearheaded by those individuals best able to speak to what a formal understanding of rhetoric entails. Members of the Literary Studies faculty can form a committee to draft a statement to be shared University-wide (electronically) with all faculty, and faculty can be provided with a list of reference links which expound upon the principles and components of rhetoric and or which extol the virtues of its study and application. (If students are to be expected to model success, then it behooves us to provide pertinent models for our colleagues and peers.) Or perhaps more expedient and less confusing, one faculty member can craft an argument and provide a list of the most-crucial and often-used rhetorical devices in academic writing and speaking. (I do not mean to exclude visual rhetoric, which is just as important and ubiquitous in our modern world of media; students in the fine arts and graphic technology programs have just as much need of rhetoric as do students in other disciplines, but I will leave it to the faculty in those disciplines to make the case for their areas of concentration. I think Dr. Gooch is likely the best candidate for leading this charge, as he already had proven himself quite proficient in this discipline, and clearly it is a subject with which he is quite beholden.)

The University's faculty members doubtless employ rhetoric successfully in their own teaching, public speaking, and written works, but that does not mean that they can identify the devices which strengthen their communication skills and which make for powerful or persuasive delivery, nor is it likely that they can articulate a satisfactory, unequivocal definition of the word rhetoric because it has been employed in so many diverse contexts. Also, a simple, universal worksheet/checklist created for the use of faculty (and the University's writing lab) to quickly and easily grade assignments gleaned from the department-approved lists would clear up any confusion, and would assure students that grading of such assignments was not arbitrary. In fact, I would be only too willing to help draft the universal checklist for University consideration, and to submit it to the faculty senate for approval or modification. Once approved, the checklist can be sent electronically to all faculty members and to the University's writing lab.

(In fact, it would be my added recommendation that all assignments which are gleaned from the department-approved lists must be assessed by the University's writing lab, wherein it would work with students to ensure that all items on the checklist are met prior to assignment submission to faculty for grading purposes. If writing lab assistance is mandated for these assignments, that practice not only compels students to make use of that resource, it reduces headaches for faculty at grading time. I always require students to initial each item on my checklist and to sign it; the University could mandate that a member of the writing labs personnel do likewise, and have the students submit both checklists for the assignment. Failure to perform the full check and submit the checklists could result in the lowering of a single letter grade, as is the practice for my courses. Faculty could then focus on grading the accuracy of the discipline-specific content in the assignment, and not concern themselves greatly with the rhetorical aspects already pre-approved by the writing labs qualified personnel.)

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions per this regard. I hope I have made my proposal quite clear, and that the University will consider it seriously. As a collegiate instructor of English and other humanities courses, I have personally witnessed a steady decline in the ability of students to articulate their thoughts clearly and to argue their positions effectively, and I think habituating them to rhetorical analysis would help stem and reverse that tide.

Associated Goals
In your capacity as a faculty member (in which committee participation is de rigeur), you are doubtless aware of the constraints placed upon faculty and administrators when it comes to successful solicitation, adjudication, and implementation efforts in University affairs; the number of employed individuals available to undertake these efforts is relatively meager, and the number of hours requisite to their timely completion is both demanding and limited. Why tax an already burdened faculty with added responsibilities when many hands make for light work? As conceived, the Double R Program would involve two (2) phases, a plan which would build a well-established practice benefiting the students both immediately and long-term.

Phase A - Initial Faculty Solicitation & Departmental Standardization
Phase B Permanent University-wide Standardization

Phase A: Initial Faculty Solicitation & Departmental Standardization

In phase A, each department chair will collect from its faculty one suggestion from each faculty member for an assignment incorporating an awareness of rhetoric, to be included as a graded assignment as listed on all syllabi. (The weight of the assignment in the total grade calculation should be consistent within the departments course offerings, thus faculty will need to vote as to how much a rhetorical awareness assignment will count for determining final grades.) The department chair will cull these assignment ideas and include them in a single document, the composite of which will be provided (electronically) to each faculty member in their respective departments. (The composite document will not disclose the identity of the proposers, and will merely serve as an aggregate repository for faculty consideration.) Faculty in each department will be asked to vote on the provided proposals, numbering their order of preference for the top five which they believe would be amenable to their courses. This is an important step because it is faculty who will be responsible for grading such assignments, and they must believe the assignment to be relevant to their respective fields; every one resents busy work, and chores without utility are resented by both faculty and students.

Upon collecting and tallying the final votes, the department chair will cull and present (electronically) the five assignment proposals which have received the most votes, and the department will then utilize those five proposals as the standard means of meeting the criteria for the QEP in the Double R Program; this list of assignment options ultimately will be posted on the University's website, in the pertinent area for each department, which will then be accessible to faculty and students at all times. Any and all faculty (including new hires) then need only visit the web page for his or her department, in order to ensure compliance with a standardized assignment option aligned with the QEP. (In the event of new hires or new ideas, additional proposals can be submitted at any time in the future, and their inclusion/substitution voted on at normative department meetings, discussed through its regular channels.) Faculty solicitation for this phase can be completed within a single semester, and the standardized list of assignment options for each department, once decided, could be quickly posted online, if the assignment option lists are submitted electronically to the University's IT department.

Phase B: Permanent University-Wide Standardization
In phase B, the University will demonstrate its commitment to underscoring the importance of acquiring rhetorical readiness in preparation for academic, personal, and professional success; attentiveness to rhetoric should not expire when the QEP committee has moved on in five-years' time to a new undertaking. Why? Because the study and use of rhetoric is foundational to everyday life in incalculable ways. This phase involves creating a rhetoric database of sorts, in which every single faculty member (regardless of contractual designation) will have a web page contained within the University-hosted site on which will be contained the following items: (a) relevant faculty contact information; (b) a one-page statement [minimum] regarding the applicability of rhetoric in the profession(s) for which their courses are preparing students; (c) a sample assignment (culled from the departments approved list), in order to demonstrate to students that course preparation is (minimally or principally) for the professional application of rhetoric; and (d) a link to at least three scholarly articles in the faculty members particular discipline(s) which successfully employ rhetoric in order to articulate the ideas of the author(s), done in order to provide students with professional examples on which to model their own writing. (Here is a link to a somewhat surprising example of how crucial rhetoric is in the medical practice of midwifery.) It is not enough merely to tell or explain to students what must be done, nor is it enough simply to show them what must be done; students also must be compelled to do what must be done. Good habits must be put into practice under the expert guidance of their instructors, therefore the entire tripartite pursuit must be in play if students are going to succeed. All good education involves the tripartite undertaking of explication, demonstration, and habituated execution. Think of the wax on, wax off method employed in the film The Karate Kid; when students get into the practice of communicating by means of rhetorical habituation, those skills become so developed that they become second nature.

Although this might sound to be a prohibitively expensive and time-consuming aspect of the QEP proposal, it needn't be the case. Once each faculty member has put together: (a) his or her department-sanctioned assignment in which rhetoric is stressed; (b) his or her statement about its application to the relevant discipline; and (c) the links for the three scholarly articles which successfully employ rhetoric (or which

make the case for it even further), that information (along with the contact information) can be contained within a single Word document and submitted to the department chair. Once the department chair has collected the pertinent file from each faculty member under his or her auspices, they can be sent as a departmental Zip file to the IT department. The IT department then can parcel out the Zip files it has accrued from the multiple departments. The IT staff may work with faculty to personalize their web pages in the rhetoric database, or the University may opt to standardize the page formatting, in which case the IT department would need only post the pertinent information online within each faculty members web page in the Double R database. (I recommend utilizing a University boilerplate template, since that would permit for implementation of this phase at a much accelerated pace.)

Not only would proceeding in this manner greatly expedite demonstration of meeting the QEP criteria for University-wide implementation, it would be incredibly cost-efficient because the University's IT department would need only to manage disbursement of the department Zip files and to perform a final proof and edit of any web pages for faculty. This phase likely could be achieved within one-to-two semesters time: one semester allowing for the faculty to draft their one-page statement and select three scholarly articles, and one for the disciplinary departments and the University's IT department to collect and allocate the departmental Zip files and create the web pages within the Double R database (which the IT department would set up beforehand). This second phase takes a bit longer to complete, but once finished, it would provide a permanent, composite repository of arguments for and demonstrations of the professional employment of rhetoric, across all disciplines. (The emphasis is on learning, recognizing, and incorporating standard elements of effective communication, as opposed to merely its grammar, an important distinction since so many of the University's students are foreigners whose disparate tongues do not necessarily conform to English syntax. If students are habituated to think along the lines of incorporating rhetorical elements, then, regardless of their mother tongues, their professional speaking and writing will possess the foundational structures for successful communication.)

Communication #2

Student | Kevin Wells | kxw112530@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

This project seeks to establish a 7000-level HUSL course of rotating topics in composition theory and pedagogy. Implementing this course in the School of Arts and Humanities (A&H) would benefit the writing education of A&H graduate students as well as the majority of undergraduate students across the University who complete their first-year writing coursework under the guidance of A&H graduate student instructors.

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Needed Programs

This project recommends a single three-credit-hour advanced graduate course in rotating topics relevant to composition theory and pedagogy. This course could be taken multiple times for credit throughout a students graduate school career. Topics might include the following: writing assessment issues and strategies, teaching digital rhetoric, and teaching composition praxis (investigating how to translate the insights of composition theories into practical classroom and coursework applications). The School of Arts and Humanities already employs faculty qualified to teach such a course, particularly Drs. Gooch, Ryan, and Lambert.

Expected Benefits

The vast majority of undergraduate students at the University complete their college writing prerequisite coursework under the tutelage of an A&H graduate student instructor, yet the A&H program currently offers only one graduate course to prepare these instructors for the responsibility. The curriculum of that course, HUSL 7383 Teaching First-Year Writing, is extensive. It surveys the broad range of modern composition theories, explores multiple pedagogical approaches, and discusses localized issues that arise in various sections of the undergraduate writing course over the semester. Consequently, this single course can offer graduate student instructors only a brief and broad overview of the rich literature that the composition discipline has created. Implementing the proposed course could benefit the writing education of nearly all UTD undergraduates by equipping their graduate writing instructors with more advanced guided study of composition concepts than is currently available.

Implementing the proposed course would also benefit A&H graduate students in at least three ways: It would offer them increased opportunity to develop their own writing competence through research in composition theory; it would allow them more time and motivation to cultivate their composition

pedagogy; and it would provide an additional credential for those who plan to position themselves in the academic job market as composition specialists.

Supports Mission

Implementing this proposed course would contribute to UTDs mission of continually improving its educational programs. This QEP would help advance the writing studies not only of A&H graduate students, but also of undergraduate students across the University by providing them with better-equipped graduate student instructors of writing.

Timeline

The timeline would correspond to the established procedure for proposing and approving new courses in the School of Arts and Humanities.

Affects Culture

A team of graduate student instructors equipped with advanced education in composition theory and pedagogy would help inspire more undergraduates to approach the first-year writing course as an opportunity for personal and communal exploration rather than as a prerequisite to suffer through. The first-year writing course, capped at 19 students, features one of the smallest class sizes on campus. Under the guidance of a prepared instructor, this provides an excellent opportunity for undergraduates to feel the joy of belonging to an intimate community built around shared communication. The proposed QEP would help more graduate student instructors foster this class quality by, for instance, equipping instructors with advanced education in pedagogical strategies of expressivist and social-constructivist composition theories that encourage this communicative connection.

Associated Goals

Improved performance in undergraduate writing coursework as a result of advanced graduate student instructor pedagogy.
Increased preparedness of graduate writing instructors to teach sections of first-year writing with sound theory and innovative pedagogy.

Success Definition

Compare the pedagogical performance of graduate student instructors of writing who have taken the proposed course with instructors of commensurate experience who have not taken the course. Elements for this comparison might include supervisor class session observation, student course reviews, and instructional plans and tools for the same course topic.

Compare the class averages of first-year writing sections taught by graduate student instructors who have taken the proposed course with graduate instructors of commensurate experience who have not taken the course.

Track A&H alumni who teach undergraduate composition at other institutions and survey their satisfaction with the writing education attained through the UTD A&H program. Compare responses from alumni who completed the proposed course with alumni who did not.

Survey all A&H alumni to rate their satisfaction with how well the UTD A&H program prepared them for the composition tasks they encounter both professionally and personally. Compare responses from alumni who completed the proposed course with alumni who did not.

Communication #3

Faculty | Maribeth Schlobohm | mls077000@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

UT Dallas should establish an undergraduate degree plan in Communication Studies. Communication Studies looks at the theory and practice of communication. Communication Studies is NOT a focus on Mass Communication or Emerging Media, which is the focus of the EMAC degree. Communication Studies is the study of communication: why we communicate in certain ways, how we can communication more effectively through any medium. EMAC focuses on the medium. Communication Studies focuses on communication theory. Additionally, Communication Studies could be made a major and a minor. As a minor, Communication Studies would enhance a degree in EMAC because Communication Studies courses would give EMAC majors practice in theoretical communication (interviewing, nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, small group communication) and in communication performance (public speaking, debate, negotiation, conflict resolution, oral interpretation, readers theater.

Idea Summary #2

Create a Technical Communication undergraduate degree plan. Technical Communication is a hybrid between Communication Studies and Rhetoric. Technical Communication is a very hot field in the business world because companies need employees that can write and document the technological developments of the 21st century. As a major, technical communication would be housed in A&H because A&H currently has within its catalog of courses the COMM courses and RHET courses necessary to form the background of the degree plan.

Needed Programs

All courses necessary for creating a Communication Studies degree are currently contained within the current A&H course catalog. 1-3 tenure-line faculty would need to be hired within 3-5 years to grow this program.

Expected Benefits

The most essential benefit would be that UT Dallas would remain a cutting edge and innovative university keeping pace with the speed of business by being responsive to the 21st century needs of business and industry.

Supports Mission

The new Technical Communication degree would provide business and industry with productive and prepared new hires.

Timeline

As A&H already has the courses within its current catalog to teach these courses, implementation could take place as early as the 2017 - 2017 academic calendar year.

Affects Culture

Technical Communication would create another bridge between ECSATECA&H because students could receive a minor (18) hours or a major in Technical Communication. As a minor, Technical Communication would enhance the skills of ATEC and EMAC majors by giving them technical writing (as opposed to emerging media) writing skills. For ECS majors, it would be an enhancement to any engineering or computer scientist skill set to be able to know how to create all of the technical documents associated with documenting new advances in technical fields.

Associated Goals

Technical Communication would enhance the university's degree offerings.

Success Definition

As with all degree plans, evaluation success would be determined through CLOs, PLOs, and SLOs.

Idea Summary #3

I would like to propose a new COMM 2xxx course for the university core curriculum: Building Effective Teams. So many students are now having a group component to their 2000 - 4000 undergraduate degree plans and working within those groups is problematic at best.

The attitude of instructors is that they have group projects so they must be teaching their students how to function properly in teams - NOT. Building Effective Teams would be a 2xxx level class with the prerequisites of RHET 1302, COMM 1311 or equivalents. The class would be a basics version of Small Group Communication (COMM 4340.)

Building Effective Teams would teach:
How to deal with difficult people (don't burst out laughing ladies)
How leaders emerge
Roles people play in groups
Agendas, team rules, Gantt time lines
Project management software tools (beyond Google docs) Group format

Needed Programs

COMM 2xxx

Expected Benefits

Building Effective Teams would teach:
How to deal with difficult people (don't burst out laughing ladies)
How leaders emerge
Roles people play in groups
Agendas, team rules, Gantt time lines
Project management software tools (beyond Google docs) Group formation theory

Supports Mission

COMM 2xxx would support the university's commitment to graduate well-rounded citizens whose education has prepared them for rewarding lives and productive careers by making sure that all students within the university can function effectively as productive team members and contributors. COMM 2xxx would also ensure that all undergraduates would know how to make professional team presentations so when they transition to their careers, they will be prepared to contribute as quickly as possible to their employers.

Timeline

during the 2017 - 2018 academic calendar year

Affects Culture

Students would become more aware of their groups and teams environments both in the classroom and in their social lives and extracurricular activities.

Associated Goals

Create course CLOs and SLOs. Assess accordingly.

Success Definition

Evaluate the course as any course should be evaluated by establishing CLOs and SLOs.

Idea Summary #4

Get a National Communication Association (NCA) student chapter established on campus. NCA is one of the most important organizations for practicing communication professionals and a campus chapter would help students transition from student life to professional life.

Needed Programs

No classes are needed for this QEP.

Expected Benefits

Students would be able to transition more effectively from student life to professional life by having an active NCA student chapter on campus.

Supports Mission

Students would be members of one of the most important professional organizations for communication professionals and would be able to make a smoother transition into professional life.

Timeline

Implementation could be as soon as the 2017-2018 academic calendar year.

Affects Culture

A NCA student chapter on campus would offer students the opportunity to build their communication skills through interacting with communication professionals.

Associated Goals

Once a student chapter of NCA is in place, the students would be able to see the value added to their course work in EMAC, Communication Studies, and Technical Communication.

Success Definition

Success might be evaluated by the employment level of students within the NCA student chapter vs. the students who are not NCA student chapter members.

Communication #4

Faculty | Marion Underwood | undrwd@utdallas.edu

Idea Summary

The Challenge

As smart and talented as our UT Dallas students are, significant numbers struggle with professional communication. Some are unable to compose forceful, concise, effective sentences and paragraphs. Others fail to address faculty members properly in email, and write messages that are poorly constructed and disrespectful. Many quake at the thought of giving even a brief oral presentation, because they are unsure as to how structure a talk for maximal effectiveness. Others fail to understand the importance of maintaining an appropriate, professional presence on social media websites. Many do not understand how to evaluate the validity of information they find online. The fact that students at UT Dallas struggle with professional communication interferes with their academic success during their undergraduate years, reduces the likelihood that they will find meaningful, gainful employment upon graduation, and undermines their opportunities to pursue graduate education.

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Gopen, D. (2005). Why So Many Bright Students and So Many Dull Papers?: Peer-Responded Journals as a Partial Solution to the Problem of the Fake Audience. The WAC Journal, 16, 22-48.

Needed Programs

UT Dallas would need to offer first year courses in professional communications for all undergraduate, transfer, and graduate students. UT Dallas would need to invest in training in Reader Expectation Theory for instructors for these first year courses, for teaching assistants, for peer tutors, and for new faculty. This approach to teaching writing is simple, pragmatic, and applies to all disciplines and all type of writing,

offline and online. Reader Expectation Theory can be taught well in a 2-day format and thoroughly in a weeklong workshop. UT Dallas would need to establish a Communication Counts Writing Center in each school.

Expected Benefits

A university wide intervention to strengthen communication skills would help our bright, talented students to tell their stories more clearly: to each other, to their teachers and their supervising faculty members, and to future employers or graduate school advisors. A university wide intervention to strengthen professional communication would elevate the stature of our university by making us all more articulate, effective, engaging speakers and writers, and would greatly enhance the research productivity of students and faculty alike.

Supports Mission

A university wide program to improve the writing of scholars at all levels would prepare our students for productive careers in all disciplines, would enhance research productivity for students and faculty alike, and would increase the impact of research done on UT Dallas on the constantly changing world. Precisely because the world is changing so quickly and most students will do jobs many do not know exist when they matriculate here, students with powerful communication skills will be better prepared to reinvent themselves, to tell their own and the university's stories, and to disseminate knowledge widely.

Timeline

Year 1 - Train the new faculty in Reader Expectation Theory, select and hire and train instructors for the first year courses in professional communication for undergraduate and graduate students, develop syllabus templates for the first year courses, develop assessments of professional communication skills to be used before and after the first year writing courses ; Year 2 - Begin offering first year courses in professional communication, administer pre and post-assessments, hire directors for the Communication Counts Writing Centers in each school, select and train peer tutors; Year 3 - First year courses with assessments continue, Communication Counts Writer Centers open, peer tutoring begins, writing groups start, first year courses are modified on the basis of the initial assessments; Year 4- Writing Centers launch writing groups for faculty and graduate students, assessment of first year courses and writing groups continues, Year 5 - Continue to offer and assess first year courses, Communication Counts Writing Centers continue to offer individualized help, support for grant writing, and writing groups for students and faculty.

Affects Culture

The QEP would provide students and faculty with formidable skills in writing and speaking. The Communication Counts Writing Centers would foster a culture of acknowledging that writing and speaking are challenging for scholars at all levels, and a climate in which it is normal to seek help and support with writing and professional communication.

Associated Goals

Goals would include: improving the writing skills of students and faculty, improving the oral presentation skills of students and faculty, improving the professional communication of students and faculty, both online and offline, raising the research productivity of students and faculty, making our students more employable and increasing their average earnings.

Success Definition

The success of the first year professional communication courses could be assessed in several ways: student evaluations of what they learned in the course, students' academic success at UT Dallas, completion rates, rates of finding employment after graduation, and average salaries in the first five years after graduation. The success of the faculty training could be evaluating by faculty ratings of the effectiveness, measuring the research productivity of the faculty (number of papers, impact factors, and in the relevant fields, grant dollars earned), and assessing success rates for tenure and promotion. The success of the Communication Counts Writing Centers could be assessed by carefully tracking frequency of use by students and faculty,

asking students and faculty to rate the helpfulness of the guidance they received, and by comparing users of the Writing Centers to non-users on GPA, completion rates, and employability (for students) and research productivity, teaching effectiveness, success at earning tenure, and grant dollars generated (for faculty).

NSSE Data as it relates to the top 5 QEP topics

Digital Learning

First-years students at UTD indicate that they do not receive feedback from instructors on a draft or work in progress compared to other first-year students.

Curricular Globalization

NSSE data shows that at UTD in 2014 and 2015 students claim to interact with racially, economically, religiously, and politically diverse populations throughout the school year more so than students in all other comparison groups. Yet, simultaneously students' beliefs that their experiences at UTD have helped them understand people of other backgrounds falls short compared to the students in the comparison universities. Students also rate their interactions with other students poorly at UTD compared with students interactions documented at other select universities. Students state that they do not regularly include diverse perspectives (e.g., political, religious, racial, gender, etc.) in their course discussions and assignments, or attempt to connect their learning to societal problems or issues compared to students across the comparison groups. Further, students do not believe that UTD emphasizes student attendance for events that address important social, economic, or political issues compared to the comparison groups.

Wellness

NSSE data from 2014 and 2015 indicates that UTD does not provide sufficient support for students' well-being in realms such as recreation, health care, counseling, etc. compared to other universities.

Communication

NSSE data indicates that at UTD in 2014 and 2015 first-year students do not commonly draft papers 2 or more times when compared with the first-years students at other universities. In general, seniors at UTD for both years suggest they are assigned less writing (based on number of pages assigned) in their coursework than students at comparison universities. Even more specifically, students report that UTD contributed poorly to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in the areas of writing and speaking both effectively and clearly compared with students in comparison universities for both years.

First-Year Experience

First-year students in 2015 reported writing more and spending more time on homework than students from other UT system schools. First-years students at UTD indicate that they do not receive feedback from instructors on a draft or work in progress compared to other first-year students. First-year students also indicate that they were not challenged to do their best work by their coursework at UTD for 2014 and 2015. In 2015, first-year students discussed their

academic performance with faculty members less than students at other universities. First-year students also indicate they evaluate points of view, decisions, and information sources less than students at other UT system schools. In 2015 first-year students claim to spend more time preparing for class (e.g., studying, reading, etc.) at UTD compared to students at other universities. Students also report that UTD emphasizes, more than other comparison universities in 2014 and 2015, that students should spend significant amounts of time studying and working on academic work, provide support to help other students succeed academically, and use learning support services (e.g., tutoring services, writing center, etc.).

In 2014 first-year students indicate that they participate or want to participate in internships, co-ops, field experiences, student teaching, and faculty research during their time at UTD more than first-year students at other universities. And, in 2015 first-years students more often report that they participate or plan to participate in a learning community or formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together. Senior students in 2014 and 2015, however, report low levels of participation in internships, co-ops, field experiences, student teaching, learning communities, and study abroad programs compared to students at other Carnegie institutions and select universities. Yet, seniors in 2015 did report high levels of research participation with faculty members during their time at UTD compared to students at other UT system and Carnegie schools.

In regards to student reports on the use of quantitative analysis at UTD, students in 2014 and 2015 report that they do not commonly use numerical information to examine real-world problems or issues at UTD compared to students in the other comparison groups. On the topic of classroom participation, first-years students report not asking as many questions or participating in class discussions when compared with students in the comparison groups in 2014 and 2015. In the case of social and non-academic activities, students at UTD indicate that the university does not emphasize opportunities for its students to be involved socially, provide support for students' overall well-being, help students manage non-academic responsibilities (e.g., work, family, etc.), emphasize campus activities and events that are extracurricular (e.g., performing arts, athletics, etc.) or that relate to societal issues (e.g., social, economic, or political issues) compared to students at other universities.

The contributions UTD made towards students' knowledge, skills, and personal development reported in 2014 and 2015 are also noteworthy. Reponses indicate that, compared with other universities, UTD's contribution to students' writing, speaking, critical and analytical thinking, job- or work-related knowledge, ability to work on a team, development of personal values and ethics, understanding of people with diverse backgrounds, ability to solve real-world problems, and ability be an active and informed citizen were low compared to other universities. In fact, when it comes to the knowledge and skills students learned, students at UTD only report high levels of numerical and statistical analysis compared to students at other universities. And, one deviation from the aforementioned trend can be seen in 2015 when seniors reported a higher ability to understand people from diverse backgrounds compared to students at other universities.

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR THE 2013 AND 2014 COHORTS

The 2013 cohort represents 2 full years of retention data.
The fall 2014 cohort data will be updated, if necessary, when the fall 2016 semester census is taken.
Reading the tables:
For the 2013 cohort, 111 female FTIC students left UT Dallas in the first year, during the second year an additional 58 either stopped or dropped or transferred out.
For the entire 2013 cohort, the loss after the first year is an additional 8.38%.

2013 Freshmen Retention-Return Fall 2014			
By Gender			
Gender	Not Return	Return	Retention
Female	111	806	87.90%
Male	201	1115	84.73%
Total	312	1921	86.03%
By Ethnicity			
Ethn	Not Return	Return	Retention
White	119	629	84.09%
Black	16	79	83.16%
Hispanic	67	293	81.39%
Asian	75	713	90.48%
Native	1	3	75.00%
International	10	73	87.95%
Unknown	7	36	83.72%
Hawaiian	0	3	100.00%
Two or More	17	92	84.40%
Total	312	1921	86.03%

2013 Freshmen Retention-Return Fall 2015

By Gender			
Gender	Not Return	Return	Retention
Female	169	748	81.57%
Male	330	986	74.92%
Total	499	1734	77.65%
By Ethnicity			
Ethn	Not Return	Return	Retention
White	186	562	75.13%
Black	27	68	71.58%
Hispanic	101	259	71.94%
Asian	122	666	84.52%
Native	1	3	75.00%
International	20	63	75.90%
Unknown	13	30	69.77%
Hawaiian	1	2	66.67%
Two or More	28	81	74.31%
Total	499	1734	77.65%

2014 Freshmen Retention-Return Fall 2015

By Gender			
Gender	Not Return	Return	Retention
Female	144	930	86.59%
Male	255	1191	82.37%
Total	399	2121	84.17%
By Ethnicity			
Ethn	Not Return	Return	Retention
White	158	670	80.92%

Black	20	101	83.47%
Hispanic	88	335	79.20%
Asian	104	796	88.44%
Native	0	1	100.00%
International	10	73	87.95%
Unknown	5	41	89.13%
Hawaiian	0	3	100.00%
Two or More	14	101	87.83%
Total	399	2121	84.17%

2014 Freshmen Retention-Return as of Spring 2016

By Gender			
Gender	Not Return	Return	Retention
Female	172	902	83.99%
Male	319	1127	77.94%
Total	491	2029	80.52%
By Ethnicity			
Ethn	Not Return	Return	Retention
White	196	632	76.33%
Black	23	98	80.99%
Hispanic	110	313	74.00%
Asian	124	776	86.22%
Native	1	0	0.00%
International	14	69	83.13%
Unknown	6	40	86.96%
Hawaiian	0	3	100.00%
Two or More	17	98	85.22%
Total	491	2029	80.52%

DFW RATES

In a short presentation to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, we briefly discussed courses that consistently *"trip"* FTIC students. We used the 1000-3000 level organized courses as the course population. The table below provides a summary.

In 2014-15, the average DFW rate was 9% and the standard deviation was 6%--meaning that 67% of the courses for that year had DFW rates <= to 15%. The remaining courses had higher rates. For each year we performed this procedure. The table below flags the courses that appear for 5 or more of the 8 years. The results might inform your discussions about how to improve first year results.

Poor Performing Courses that were Outliers (for 5+ years) by Academic Year									
	Percent DFW by Course								
Course	AY 2007-08	AY 2008-09	AY 2009-10	AY 2010-11	AY 2011-12	AY 2012-13	AY 2013-14	AY 2014-15	# of Acad. Yrs. as an Outlier
BIOL 1318	28%	31%	26%	32%	41%	17%		22%	7
BIOL 3101	23%	21%	23%	27%	25%	19%	20%	21%	8
BIOL 3301	23%	21%	23%	27%	26%	18%	20%	21%	8
CE 2310		38%	20%		22%	19%	20%	21%	6
CE 3301			31%		33%	25%	36%	19%	5
CHEM 1311	29%	26%	20%	29%	21%				5
CHEM 1312	28%	24%	27%	27%	26%				5
CHEM 3341	28%	32%		22%	21%	25%	29%		6
CHEM 3361	23%	21%	23%		28%	20%		18%	6
CS 1335				22%	18%	20%	27%	16%	5
CS 1336		24%	23%	41%	27%	17%	20%	18%	7
EE 2310	22%	20%		22%	20%	17%			5
EE 3301	28%		21%		36%	28%	27%		5
EE 3350		22%	20%	24%	20%		21%	17%	6
HIST 2301	31%	33%	27%	30%	27%	27%	26%	21%	8
ISNS 3371		26%	25%	27%	29%	26%			5
MATH 1314	33%	29%	32%	25%			17%		5
MATH 1316			21%	26%		17%	22%	24%	5
NATS 1311			21%	23%	33%	22%	22%	31%	6
PHYS 1301	34%	26%	23%	33%	21%				5
PHYS 3330	27%	20%	21%	21%	25%	21%	24%		7
PHYS 3416			30%	36%	32%	29%	28%	19%	6
PSCI 3325				23%	22%	16%	26%	19%	5
PSY 2317	31%	27%	21%	23%	29%	18%	19%	18%	8
PSY 3331		23%	22%	25%	20%	16%			5
PSY 3339			21%	20%		27%	17%	22%	5
Average	13%	12%	11%	11%	10%	9%	9%	9%	
Standard Dev.	8%	7%	7%	8%	7%	6%	6%	6%	
Avg. + Std. Dev.	21%	19%	18%	19%	17%	15%	16%	15%	