Principle 2.16: QEP

Supporting Documentation

E-mail Submissions

To: John Sibert, QEP Director
Cc: Robert Nelson

From: Brenda Seifi, Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Office of the Registrar

January 12, 2007

Necessity of a Program for Teaching English as a Second Language

The University of Texas at Dallas is currently incapable of attracting a large segment of international students: those who need to improve their English language skills prior to academic study. Establishing a program that teaches English as a second language (ESL) at The University of Texas at Dallas would not only allow the University to attract a vast international customer base, it is consistent with the University's Strategic Plan and would benefit the University, its students, and the surrounding area in numerous ways.

The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) Strategic Plan states that "future success will hinge on being able to engage a broad, diverse spectrum of people, cultures, and ideas." This and other statements within the Strategic Plan infer that international students may play a major role in UTD's success. Although UTD already matriculates a high percentage of international students, the matriculation of even higher numbers of internationals would not only boost enrollment numbers and help UTD attain the goals of obtaining 15,000 FTE students (most internationals enter the U.S. with a student visa, which mandates that they study full time), it would also increase the number of out-of-state freshmen attending (international students naturally pay out-of-state tuition, and many enter U.S. universities immediately after high school graduation).

At present, however, UTD lacks a major feature that draws international students to U.S. universities: a program for learning English as a Second Language (ESL). As very few international students speak English as a primary or native language, most who apply to U.S. universities need English language instruction before they can begin their academic studies. Although many foreign countries offer instruction in English as a foreign language, the best way to learn the language is by being immersed in an English-speaking culture. Most internationals understand this and choose to pursue their language studies within the borders of the U.S. Others may study English and attend TOEFL preparation courses in their home countries, only to find that their scores are insufficient or – upon arrival to the U.S. – that their verbal skills are lacking. In order to streamline their studies in the U.S., then, these students naturally seek universities that offer instruction in both ESL and their degree of choice

Currently, foreign applicants to UTD who have inadequate TOEFL scores are denied admission. Aside from language deficiencies, however, they may otherwise match or exceed the University's admission standards. It is very probable, then, that these students will pursue both ESL and academic education at institutions other than UTD, as they tend to 'look for' universities that cater to *all* of their academic needs, including language preparation. Students

tend to matriculate to universities where they initially study ESL for many reasons, including the following:

- They become comfortable with their initial university.
- Many universities offer incentives for ESL students to matriculate. For example,
    - The Bridge Program at The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) allows high-level ESL students to study up to eight credit hours at UTA while completing the Intensive English Program.
    - The TOEFL waiver program at The University of North Texas (UNT) permits ESL students to complete the highest level of the ESL program in lieu of submitting the required TOEFL score for most undergraduate and graduate programs.
    - UNT's Graduate Preparation Course replaces the GRE Verbal requirement for admission to many graduate programs at UNT.

The fact that UTD does not offer English language classes and matriculation incentives to international students needing ESL preparation, then, hinders UTD's ability to attract and retain some of the world's best minds when, in fact, most students' language deficiencies could easily be rectified within a six-month to two-year period of study prior to university matriculation.

Programs that teach English as a Second Language (ESL) can be found at almost every major university in the U.S. In addition, the existence of an on-campus ESL program is inherent to becoming a top-tier research institution. In fact, all three top-tier research institutions in Texas have ESL programs:

University of Texas at Austin: www.utexas.edu/student/esl
Texas A&M University: http://eli.tamu.edu
Rice University: www.esl.rice.edu/esl

In addition, with the exception of UT Dallas and UT Tyler, all of the UT System universities have ESL programs. Furthermore, UTD is the only Texas state university in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex that does not offer an ESL program (with the exception of Texas Women's University, which instead matriculates graduates of UNT's English Language Institute). UTD is clearly at a disadvantage, then, for attracting international students when compared to most other state universities within the DFW area and the state of Texas.

To my knowledge, there is no other university-led ESL program within a radius of 35 miles of UTD, the nearest of which is at The University of North Texas. In addition, since privately-operated Southern Methodist University (approximately 13 miles from UTD) also has no ESL program, there is currently a large portion of the eastern DFW Metroplex that is not being served in this capacity. Since – in my experience – many international students also choose to attend universities that are recommended by and neighboring their U.S. relatives, this leaves a unique opportunity for UTD to capture a large portion of the current local market whose overseas relatives need ESL classes prior to university study.

Besides the increased ability to attract and retain international students, there are many other benefits to establishing an ESL program at UTD. Some of these reasons are outlined below.

Promotion of diversity:

UTD's students, faculty and staff as well as the surrounding community could all gain from having an ESL program on campus. Local residents as well as some faculty and staff who speak English as a second language, for instance, could benefit from accent reduction classes taught by an ESL program; this would also benefit students who would be better able to understand their instructors. In addition, programs could be offered by an ESL office that would increase cultural and diversity awareness for the University and surrounding community, such as conversation clubs between American and international students, cultural events and performances, and partnerships between foreign language students and native speakers. University faculty could also undoubtedly find creative ways to take advantage of the array of skills available with a more diverse student population.

In a wider scope, an ESL program could also create opportunities for UTD to promote global understanding and tolerance, which are more possible when individuals are given the opportunity to learn about and interact with those of other cultures and nations. For instance, students from two warring countries may become good friends and facilitate intercultural understanding and tolerance instead of violence and hatred.

In addition, individuals from other nations may tend to think differently than those from American cultures, and their unique perspectives could inspire new avenues of thought and innovation at UTD, creating a richer, more creative learning environment for students, faculty, and staff with their apparent "diversity of opinion".

Funding:

In my experience, ESL programs are funded by student contributions and have the potential to bring supplementary funds to a university beyond what is needed to promote and run the program. Those students who attend the university to pursue academic degrees further provide funding in the form of non-resident tuition. After studying English, most international students who remain at a university to study a degree program will enter either as freshmen or as beginning graduate students and will stay for the duration of their studies. In addition, their studies are intensive and full-time, in accordance with immigration law. This type of long-term, full-time student would enhance funding to the University and help bolster overall student enrollment.

Additional finance-related rationale:

- International advertising for a university-operated ESL program is also advertising for the University.
- Individuals on student visas are healthy for the local economy, as they spend money in the local community on housing, food, clothes, souvenirs, entertainment, and tourist activities.
- The diverse DFW community might provide even stronger financial support to a university that caters to the unique language needs of their overseas friends and relatives.

Partnership opportunities:

The presence of an ESL program on campus would also undoubtedly create the opportunity for UTD to partner with cultural organizations and foreign businesses and governments. An ESL program would attract individuals and groups from around the world and facilitate UTD's goals to create international collaborations. Many ESL programs will custom design English-language and/or cultural courses (including university course components) to groups of students from foreign institutions, businesses, and governments. For example, I have worked with groups of foreign students ranging from elementary teachers to nurses to enforcement officers to architecture students, whose companies and governments send them to the U.S. to study English, teaching methodology, American culture, enforcement techniques, architecture, and so on. Groups can range from five students to more than 50 students.

Many companies in the DFW Metroplex are also owned by overseas investors or have a large number of employees who speak English as a second language. For example, many local hotels employ a large number of Mexican and South American citizens, these companies and their employees could benefit from English-for-special-purposes classes for those working in the hospitality industry. A university that provides English language instruction, then, in addition to excellent degree programs would provide even greater appeal to both local and foreign companies, as English language proficiency is fundamental for academic and business success in the U.S. and abroad, and such language training could fuel unlimited partnership possibilities.

Graduate education:

Graduate education could also benefit from an on-campus ESL program:

- An ESL program can provide professional readiness screening of teaching assistants prior to their teaching assignments as well as accent reduction and teaching methodology classes for those who do not meet standards.
- An MA TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) degree program is inherent to an on-campus ESL program, which can provide hands-on opportunities for graduate students learning how to teach ESL.

UT Dallas's vision to be "one of the great universities of the world" can only, I believe, be accomplished with a program that teaches English as a second language. I believe that UTD has some unique advantages over other local and state universities, such as its location within the DFW Metroplex, the Fast Track program and special emphases on business, management, and engineering, subject areas that naturally draw a large number of international students (Open Doors Report, 2005). UTD has the potential, then, to attract and retain a great number of brilliant and successful international students, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, with an ESL program serving as a springboard for their academic success.

Establishing and Marketing a New ESL Program

On-campus ESL programs may be outsourced to private companies, such as ELS Language Centers, or operated by a university itself. Although outsourcing an ESL program is less common, companies such as ELS Language Centers offer several clear advantages, including

- Already-established and time-tested curriculum, textbooks, course materials, class schedules and levels, administrative policies and procedures, hiring processes, teacher training programs, tuition rates, and marketing materials
- Resources to assume financial risk of establishing a new ESL program

In addition, ELS Language Centers

- Has several locations throughout the U.S., including locations at
    - 25 private institutions
    - 12 state institutions
    - 5 city centers (independent ELS offices)
- Creates little additional administrative or financial burden to institutions (schools must provide space, furnish/equip classrooms, and pay for space utilities and maintenance)
- Offers matriculation incentives to ESL students, including completion of a specified ELS-LC level in lieu of TOEFL scores
- Can offer TOEFL preparation courses
- Charges fair and competitive tuition rates to students (see Chart 1)
- Offers institutions 3-year contracts with a 9-month opt-out clause
- Can ready an ESL program within 9 months from signing
- Pays the institution a percentage of student tuition as space rental

In contrast, in order to establish a university-led ESL program, an institution must

- Provide start-up funding
- Develop and administer curriculum, class schedules and levels, administrative policies and procedures, hiring processes, teacher training programs, tuition rates, marketing materials and processes, matriculation incentives, and so on
- Pay faculty and staff wages and benefits

Whereas many facets (such as tuition, curriculum, and class schedule) of the ELS Language Centers (ELS-LC) program are set, a university-operated ESL program is more flexible and can be tailored to a university's needs. For example, whereas ELS-LC requires that a specified ELS-LC level must be accepted and conditional admission granted to all undergraduate students, a university-operated program can more easily differentiate which degree programs will accept an ESL level in lieu of the TOEFL.

In addition, ELS-LC graduates have the opportunity of using a TOEFL waiver, as such, at any of the approximately 600 U.S. universities that are contracted with ELS-LC to matriculate their graduates. Furthermore, ELS-LC only advertises abroad – not locally. A university-operated ESL program could tailor its marketing efforts to include the local area.

There are both advantages and disadvantages, then, to either type of ESL program. A university that is primarily concerned with the financial and administrative burden of instituting an ESL program should obviously outsource the program. On the other hand, a university that desires a more flexible, custom-designed ESL program should probably establish its own. Despite the university's preference, the need for an ESL program at UTD is clear: either option will bring UTD closer to its goal of becoming a top-tier university, will bring greater numbers of international students to UTD, and will undoubtedly increase student matriculation.

Chart 1

	# of Levels	4 weeks	5 weeks	7 weeks	8 weeks	9 weeks	10 weeks	14 weeks	15 weeks	16 weeks	$/Hr
ELS Lang Centers		$1395 30 hrs/wk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	$11 63
U North Texas	6	-	-	-	$1450 23 hrs/wk	-	-	-	-	-	$7 88
UT Arlington	6	-	-	-	-	$1650 20 hrs/wk	$1895 20 hrs/wk	-	-	$2895 20 hrs/wk	$9 04-9 48
UT Austin	4	-	$1080 18 hrs/wk	-	-	-	$2315 18 hrs/wk	-	$3495 18 hrs/wk	-	$12 00-12 94
UT Brownsville	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	$1120 18 hrs/wk	-	$4 19
UT El Paso	6	-	-	-	$945 25 hrs/wk	-	-	-	-	-	$4 75
UT Pan American	6	$800 24 hrs/wk	-	-	$1150 24 hrs/wk	-	-	-	-	-	$6 00-8 33
UT Permian Basin	6 + univ prep	$1200 30 hrs/wk	-	$2100 30 hrs/wk	-	-	-	$4200 30 hrs/wk	-	-	$10 00
" "	" "	-	-	$1200 20 hrs/wk	-	-	-	-	-	-	$8 57
UT San Antonio	3-4	-	$2650 31 hrs/wk	-	-	-	$2650 31 hrs/wk	$2650 24 hrs/wk	-	-	$7 89-17 10

Comparison of tuition at UT System ESL programs vs. tuition at an ELS Language Center

More on a university-operated ESL program

Since outsourced ESL programs are independently established and operated, a university is required to do very little to launch one, with the exception of researching the company and negotiating and signing contracts. However, much more thought and time must be invested into a university-operated ESL program. Therefore, this section outlines some of the basic elements of a university-led ESL program.

University-led ESL programs are typically established as either independent offices or through an Office of International Education, Department of Foreign Languages or School, or Continuing Education. With proper advertising and administrative efforts, and given that building and classroom space is available, an ESL program could likely be launched and offering courses within six months to one year. Most established ESL programs have from 50 to 250 students, and many offer summer programs for students who are minors, which allow prospective international students a glimpse of the ESL program and university prior to graduating from high school.

Many students are referred to ESL programs from local family and friends, so I believe a small amount of local advertising is important. Students are also easily recruited by overseas educational agencies that contract with ESL programs to refer students, such as UHAK.com and StudyESL.com. Contracting with agencies is free for ESL programs and agents. Agents are then paid a set commission (normally 10-20% of tuition for the first session of classes only) by the ESL program upon the successful enrollment of a student into ESL classes and after any refund periods. Most agents are eager to contract with ESL programs and provide an estimated 5-20% of student enrollments, depending on how aggressively a program pursues such agencies. Study in the USA is an agency that charges students an application fee (which is then waived by the ESL program) in lieu of a full commission; the application is then sent directly to the ESL program by email. By far, the most students are recruited, in my experience, through customer referrals and direct international advertisement, such as through Hobsons (a company that has teamed up with ETS to recruit students who earn low TOEFL scores) and StudyAbroad.com. There are also numerous foreign internet sites on which to place free advertisements for ESL study as well as annual education fairs that university representatives could attend to recruit prospective students.

As the majority of current ESL students are of Asian origins, marketing should be heavily focused upon those countries that bring the most ESL students, including Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. In fall of 2005, the Saudi Arabian government began allocating thousands of scholarships per year for the next five years for its young citizens to study in the U.S. Since the Saudi government will be offering these scholarships for a few more years, the timing for populating an ESL program is optimal. In addition, since many students will enter an ESL program at the beginning or intermediate levels, their attendance will span a period of six months to 1½ years, thus offering stability and customer retention to a program.

ESL programs can offer any number of instruction levels. Some offer instruction to students who have beginning language skills, whereas some restrict admission to those with intermediate or higher language proficiency. ESL programs typically invest the majority of class instruction to teaching the four major areas of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In addition,

some ESL programs offer elective classes, such as TOEFL preparation and accent reduction. Many programs also integrate computer-aided instruction and/or lab work, such as might be typical of any foreign language course.

Tuition rates can be set by the university based on their fixed and operating costs. As seen in Chart 1, ESL tuition rates vary throughout the UT System schools. However, other independent research indicates that the average U.S. tuition rate for ESL students at major universities is approximately $10 per hour of instruction.

Most university ESL programs hire faculty with a limited number of master's or doctoral degrees, including TESL/TESOL/TEFL (Teaching ESL), linguistics, and foreign languages (essentially any degree that offers instruction in language acquisition). In addition, universities that offer these graduate degrees may also offer teaching assistantships to their graduate students, who are then allowed to assist ESL program instructors and administrators, or even teach a class or two as second-year graduate students. Initially, most ESL instructors are hired as adjunct or temporary faculty, which allows an ESL program to hire or release instructors based upon the program's enrollment numbers for each session. Most ESL programs can afford to compensate their full-time adjunct instructors with a generous salary and benefits package for the length of the session.

More information about and assistance with launching an ESL program could be gleaned from local and state-wide institutions, especially with regard to their curriculum, course materials, preferred textbooks, teacher salaries, hiring methods, administrative procedures and policies, marketing materials and methods, and so on.

With one year of experience in ESL marketing, communications, and teaching for ESL programs as well as two years of experience in coordinating ESL programs, admissions, and student services, I would be happy to help in any way with the launching of an ESL program for UTD, and I am excited about the prospect. Please contact me at UTD campus extension 2196 or by email at < bld019100@utdallas.edu > or < brendaseifi@yahoo.com > if you would like any additional information or assistance.

Subject: <no subject>
Date: Tuesday, October 31, 2006 12:57 PM
From: Matthew Goeckner <goeckner@utdallas.edu>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Nelsen S. Robert" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>

John:

Here are the files that I promised you. (Sorry it took so long to get them to you!)) Also for your records are my thoughts on how to truly become a tier one university. (I dislike that term!)

1) High quality UG students - which we have
2) High quality UG curriculum - which we have issues (Teachers need to know how to teach; Students need to know how to learn and the Curriculum needs to have a strong overall structure. We are missing on these points.)

This leads to:

3) High quality Grad Students

Then we need

4) High quality Grad curriculum (We are probably close)

This leads to:

5) High quality research

then finally

6) High research funding.

It does not work the other way around. Think of building a house on sand vs. building a house on a good foundation.

My two cents....

Subject: Re: [faculty] The QEP: Improving Student Learning at UTD
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2006 9:07 AM
From: Ray R. Miles <ray.miles@utdallas.edu>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [faculty] The QEP: Improving Student Learning at UTD

John

A faculty suggestion - plea! - for quality across the board: Encourage Socratic dualogue in class - as opposed "instructor lectures from laptop slides, students take notes" approach. Better still, put in place a program with people responsible to make it happen. Here's why:

According to the unanimous opinion of my UTD SOM BPS 6310-501 Fall2006 class, they all unconditionally prefer the former, but are in vast majority of casses getting the latter.

Ask them directly to get more details yourself - their email addreses are below my signature.

Regards,
Ray Miles

beechum@utdallas.edu; dbernal@utdallas.edu; jjc027000@utdallas.edu; jcc045000@utdallas.edu; jmc011010@utdallas.edu; cdc046000@utdallas.edu; jtc041000@utdallas.edu; scortes@utdallas.edu; csc013200@utdallas.edu; jmd017500@utdallas.edu; sxd017210@utdallas.edu; tsf015000@utdallas.edu; jtg042000@utdallas.edu; nag041000@utdallas.edu; cng013000@utdallas.edu; bxi051000@utdallas.edu; nxk029000@utdallas.edu; aak044000@utdallas.edu; dgl031000@utdallas.edu; mcl011100@utdallas.edu; mbm062000@utdallas.edu; tjm042000@utdallas.edu; mwm043000@utdallas.edu; gbm021000@utdallas.edu; ttn034000@utdallas.edu; pxn018100@utdallas.edu; srp010200@utdallas.edu; gxr034000@utdallas.edu; mxr046000@utdallas.edu; wbs051000@utdallas.edu; spt061000@utdallas.edu; tma010100@utdallas.edu; jared1082@hotmail.com; baw044000@utdallas.edu; fmw031000@utdallas.edu; mxz019000@utdallas.edu; wxz043000@utdallas.edu

John Sibert wrote:

>I am writing to ask for your input on an important campus initiative. As
>many of you already know, I have been charged with directing UTD's effort to
>develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP is a required and new
>component of SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools)
>reaccreditation. However, it differs dramatically from much of the SACS
>work with which you may be familiar in that it is forward looking. The goal
>of this five-year plan is to significantly improve student learning at UTD.
>If done correctly, the results of the QEP will extend well beyond the
>required five-year period and be woven into the fabric of the university.
>This is a great opportunity for us. As such, I have spent the better part

Subject: QEP suggestion
Date: Thursday, July 13, 2006 4:16 PM
From: Lenes, Felicity M <fml041000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP suggestion

Dr. Sibert –

How do I access your blog?

Also, I was wondering if you thought an acceptable QEP could be targeting the way students can provide feedback about their teacher and instruction. Student Government used to have a teacher evaluation site we caught a lot of flak for because it was basically unregulated, like I understood you saying your blog would be. We had permission from the System, but it ended up being taken down last year after promises that the written evaluations would be transcribed and posted online, which hasn't happened yet. (I'm trying to find out why that is and when it will happen.) I am not allowed to publicly stray from the position the SG Senate has taken in removing the evaluation site from the web, but I think it would be very valuable to pursue other means of evaluating our instruction – and it seems that the most valuable feedback is from the people who are directly affected by the teaching. Granted, we already have the scan-tron ratings, but those tell prospective students very little, and are not at all flexible or specific. Relying on word-of-mouth sometimes works – but only to segregate those "in the know" in the "good" classes, with others stuck elsewhere. If there was a constructive means of feedback, we could not only use it to select classes, but the administration and various Deans could also use it to improve the quality of instruction campus-wide.

We want to help! Thanks so much for coming to the Senate meeting.

Felicity

Felicity Lenes
Vice President
Student Government
The University of Texas at Dallas
SU 2.412
(972) 883-2285
felicity.lenes@student.utdallas.edu

Subject: QEP thought
Date: Thursday, August 31, 2006 7:24 PM
From: Lenes, Felicity M <fml041000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP thought

Dr. Sibert,

Thanks for your email; I appreciate it so much. There's a lot we do that goes unseen, and that's fine as long as we help students and make UTD a better place, but it also makes sincere praise mean a great deal.

I'm in my office working and just had a thought I didn't want to lose (actually that's just an excuse – I'm really excited about it!) – and if it doesn't work for a QEP topic, as I'm not sure it's applicable in this case, I plan to pursue it anyway – but could the kind of thing you're looking for use academic honesty, specifically the establishment of an honor code at UTD that students sign upon matriculation and then on tests, etc...that's inculcated as a desired and desirable aspect of life on our campus, as a target for improvement of the University as a whole?

There is the obvious practical benefit of enhancing the value of degrees conferred. I think there is also a deeper value to our students to instill in us or at least encourage us to frame our thinking around honesty. I'll be at your meeting with the McDermotts next Friday and we can talk more then, but I guess I haven't done my homework adequately still, despite the volumes we've talked about at SACS meetings and what I've read, because I have a hard time getting a grasp on the boundaries of the QEP.

Thanks for the work you're doing, too. The only thing I regret about your SACS involvement is that I didn't get to have you for Ochem☺

Felicity

Subject: QEP Ideas
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2006 10:40 AM
From: Christopher Krailo <cdk051000@utdallas.edu>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Ideas

John,

I really enjoyed your presentation at the CV Lounge on Friday and being able to talk to you about our school, research, etc. Thank you for your ideas about staying broad with an undergraduate degree! While at a meeting with some Student Government members, I saw one of the QEP signs they made, and so I took the liberty of placing one in the lounge.

The following are a list of ideas in my head. If you would like me to go more in-depth over any of them, just let me know.
- More classes linking research to education (research classes, semester-long projects involving research, possibly ways of earning credit hours through a research program, etc)
- More events promoting student-professor relationships (sports events such as broomball, research presentations, luncheons, etc)
- Student activity... I know the school does a lot to promote student involvement, but I don't see it working! Perhaps a different approach should be taken, such as promoting the sports teams we currently have (I hear our soccer team is quite good!). If we can get a lot of people both on campus and in the community to care about our soccer, hockey, basketball, etc teams, then it will promote many different aspects of the University that we all want (raising money, raising awareness, bringing people to UTD, etc).

If I think of any others I'll submit them as well.

Thanks,
Christopher Krailo

Subject: QEP meeting: Dorms
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2006 9:55 AM
From: Barrus, Kristi R <bengal@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP meeting: Dorms

Dr. Sibert,
I wanted to add a few thoughts to the dorm debate that was briefly touched on Tuesday night.

I find it interesting that at UTD the topic of 'we need dorms' seems to surface every year or two. Many larger universities are actually trying to get away from having only traditional dorms. UNT has started offering campus housing more like Waterview (ie actual apartments) in addition to its dorms. Most universities that have dorms also now offer 'private rooms' where each student can have his or her own bedroom. The newer dorms have 'suites' which make them more like apartments in the fact that these are arranged with a private bathroom between each pair of bedrooms, so either two people (each with a separate room) or four people (two to a room) share a bathroom with each other, but not the whole floor.

I think it is very important to think about why people think we should have dorms. If they truly feel that there is some experience missed by students not getting to live in a dorm, that is one thing. If there is just some nebulous idea that it will help overcrowding, that is something else. Each needs to be considered carefully to make sure we aren't just falling for some sort of 'grass is greener' thinking.

Personally, one of the things I liked about UTD as a student was its lack of dorms. I'm independent and used to having my own room. Sharing an apartment was no big deal. Sharing a bedroom or having a community bath, however, did not appeal to me at all. Nor did the idea of residential advisors whose duties sometimes seemed more like babysitters.

Thank you for your time on this project,
Kristi

Subject: RE: QEP meeting: Dorms
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2006 10:23 AM
From: Barrus, Kristi R <bengal@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP meeting: Dorms

I've lived in Waterview and a lot of the complaints I had were with specific roommates, not the complex itself. As far as maintenance and such, Waterview seems fairly typical. I've had both better and worse experiences dealing with management at other apartments.

Having helped friends move in and out of tiny dorm rooms, I believe we have much better living arrangements than many universities.

-----Original Message-----
From: Sibert, John W
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2006 10:10 AM
To: Barrus, Kristi R
Subject: Re: QEP meeting: Dorms

Thanks, Kristi, both for your input and for taking the time to attend the meeting this past Tuesday. I don't know what it is like to live in Waterview - I just hear the typical complaints from the occasional student about on-campus living. As an outside observer, I have always been impressed with, at least, the general impression that UTD's on-campus accommodations creates. In other words, as I said on Tuesday, many universities have the sterile brick rectangular dorm with small windows and common bathrooms which traditionally seemed to serve as a "rite of passage" to becoming an independent human. However, we appear to have much better living arrangements. I think this is terrific.

Cheers,

--
Dr. John W. Sibert
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The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2006 8:26 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
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UTD has neither a language requirement nor a language lab for the language classes that are offered. In the age of globalization, and a time where it's not just desired but very much necessary to speak and understand a foreign language, it is critical that as a growing university UTD provide students with the capacity and resources to dive into language with more than just two and a half hours a week in a classroom can provide.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.116.188
> Request Time: 2006-11-16 08:26:19
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.8.1) Gecko/20061010 Firefox/2.0

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2006 8:54 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Classes and physical space should be disability accessible for students, instructors, and staff. The university should have an external audit to assess its ongoing ADA noncompliance, including input from people with disabilities. The university is unfriendly toward people with disabilities. Not only does it deny accommodations or promise them and never follow through, but the women's center and financial aid/bursar are completely disability inaccessible. The library and parking (often is no disabled parking) need improvement. How can we learn or participate fully when we don't have full access or reasonable accommodation to university resources? Diversity includes disability, but the opportunities of people with disabilities at the university are often limited.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.116.188
> Request Time: 2006-11-16 08:54:19
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.8.1) Gecko/20061010 Firefox/2.0

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2006 9:35 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Issues related to health and wellness of the student population could be enhanced by developing a Wellness Program for students. Learning content might include navigating health care systems - Now and in the future as well as recognizing real costs in health care.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.28.190
> Request Time: 2006-11-28 09:35:30
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; InfoPath.1; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2006 11:07 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
There needs to be improvement in the communication skills, particularly in accent reduction, with staff and faculty. I understand that the program that the Callier Center offers is excellent but that there is a waiting list and it is very difficult to contact the folks there. I called them two semesters ago to get information to pass along to students and never got a response. I hear from students all the time about how hard it is to understand the faculty. One student told me that he tells his friends not to come to UTD. I encourage students to tell the department heads but they are afraid of the ramification on their grades. I could tell you many stories that I hear from students regarding the problem understand faculty. I would be very frustrated paying tuition and not understanding my professor!

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.60.216
> Request Time: 2006-11-28 11:07:02
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 1.0.3705; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2006 2:13 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
I have one recommends.

First, the parking lot near Student Union can be take 4 hours after 5pm stand for 2 hours right now. 2hours is short and it distracts me. I can not focus on my study.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.24.223
> Request Time: 2006-11-28 14:13:00
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.8.1) Gecko/20061010 Firefox/2.0

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2006 3:20 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Student learning can be greatly enhanced by improving the oral communication of our TAs.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.28.186
> Request Time: 2006-11-28 15:20:15
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2006 3:36 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Aligning two of the UTD Srategic Plan goals [2.1 Education of Leaders and 3.2 Multicultural Issues in a Global World / Public Policy in a Flat World] seem to make a lot of sense in preparing UTD students for the future. Some kind of general education requirement that exposes all students, no matter their majors, to the global village in which we live would prepare them for what follows graduation.

Nancy Baumann, Staff
HRM Training Specialist
x5328
nbaumann@utdallas.edu

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 10.110.26.201
> Request Time: 2006-11-28 15:36:02
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; InfoPath.1; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Friday, December 1, 2006 10:25 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
I believe we need to be more hands-on in some areas. Traditional learning by lecture is no longer an option. We need to rely on our community experts to come in and add perspective and real world scenarios. Role playing in history or english would be entertaining and educational. Internships and externships are also of course a needed piece-but maybe expanding our horizons and offering out of area internships along with online learning for students who would opt for it.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.61.207
> Request Time: 2006-12-01 10:25:08
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50727; InfoPath.1)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Friday, December 1, 2006 3:05 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
I use Blackboard extensively to give my students access to Power Point, web resources, syllabi, and class announcements. It would be helpful to have the ability to get a class listserv email for direct forwarding of emails I have for them (so that I don't have to copy them into Blackboard). I hope also that UTD will keep Blackboard, as I believe it is a superior learning tool compared to Web CT. I have had great success in the classroom by using different learning tools-- a mixture of interactive lectures using Power Point media, guest lectures with distinguished community leaders in criminal justice, and using movies and documentaries as discussion tools. I encourage critical thinking and set a high bar for excellence in my classroom. I believe that our students at UTD are exceptional and that they will reach toward expectations of the instructor. As a new faculty member at UTD, I have been very impressed with our students and their abilities.

Thank you for your consideration of my ideas.

Dr. Denise Paquette Boots
Assistant Professor of Criminology
deniseboots@utdallas.edu

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 71.123.128.226
> Request Time: 2006-12-01 15:05:47
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.8.0.8) Gecko/20061025 Firefox/1.5.0.8

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Monday, April 30, 2007 7:04 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
UTD needs to do a much better job of working within the DFW community. Very few faculty devote the time due to needed efforts elsewhere. However, we have the energy and talents of terrific undergraduate students who, in many cases, would like to get involved in these types of activities. I would like to see $500.00 be given to each registered student organization for the specific purpose of community activities. The student organizations would need to write a brief request for funds and a followup post-activity report. These funds might allow for sponsoring a seminar either on or off campus. They could be used to work in the surrounding K-12 schools, libraries or, perhaps even museums. They could be used to provide tangible resources where resources are lacking. I would enjoy seeing the creative ways in which students would spend this money. Not only would this type of program benefit the UTD community, it would give student organizations important planning and implementation tasks that ensure an active, motivated membership. Further, it teaches students the importance of civic responsibility.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 10.110.9.144
> Request Time: 2007-04-30 07:04:53
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; U; PPC Mac OS X; en) AppleWebKit/419 (KHTML, like Gecko) Safari/419.3

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Friday, December 1, 2006 3:27 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Students need more experience writing, which means they need to be assigned more writing. As the courses I teach in Historical Studies get bigger, this becomes a more difficult to accomplish. UTD needs more professors in the Humanities so we can give more attention to the writing of our students.

Thank you!

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 70.246.60.147
> Request Time: 2006-12-01 15:27:50
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2006 10:30 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
I think the deans and other administrators need to be more accessible to students. ANY student (not just SG president or a McDermott scholar) with a valid concern should be able to speak with an administrator. After all, students are the reason the administrators are here. Dr. Daniel's email address, I know, is open for students. He reads everything students send him. Other administrators and deans should follow suit. They need to be more involved with students and not just locked away in their offices. In fact, I spoke with two deans at a reception who weren't even aware that this is finals week. Administrators shouldn't be so disconnected with students and the rest of campus, and that concerns me.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 76.185.100.245
> Request Time: 2006-12-02 10:30:34
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.8.0.8) Gecko/20061025 Firefox/1.5.0.8

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2006 12:36 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Clearly there are essential components necessary to enhance and improve student learning. These are not hard to identify:
1. Smaller classes. Students who are taught in "herds" are not in an effective learning environment. Material is pitched to the lowest common denominator, distributred via the most efficient means possible, and evaluative instruments are necessarily truncated and streamlined for more effecient grading to a point where nothing is really tested or judged other than attendance and memorization.. Writing and expressive components are reduced in proportion to class size; reliance on "graders" becomes the most frequent practice; professorial contact is also produced in ratio to class size; and opportunity for discourse and discussion virtually disappears. Education by means of "mega section" isn't education; it's processing.
2. A richer and better quality of library and laboratory facilities.
3. A larger faculty, particularly in traditional areas of learning that provide the foundations for more advanced study, especially in math, science, language, literature, history, and the social sciences.
4. Better campus morale, from top to bottom. For students, this means an more active and innovative student life program with more activities and opportunities to identify closely with the campus and school, not merely as students, but as part of the community of the university; for faculty, this means more equitable salary disbusement, with less emphasis on "superstar" and celebrity scholars and trendy programs and more on the nuts and bolts of foundation education. Fewer administrative and bureaucratic constraints and less micro-managing of programs and curriculum would also help, as would more resistance to standardization and quantifiable results.
5. Stronger emphasis on an intellectual atmosphere that emphasized learning fundamentals and their applications so graduates could feel that they have been properly prepared and are a cut above the average, especially in key areas such as math, science, writing, literature, history and philosophy, and social sciences. UTD graduates should be articulate and elastic in their thinking and imaginations, able to compete in a world that knows that "impactful" is not a word and that appreciating and understanding fields outside one's primary interest is not an unrealistic goal.

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Monday, December 4, 2006 1:07 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
The basement floor of McDermott Library has lots of student services offices (Bursar, Registrar, Career Center, etc). Physically disabled students are required to use these services. However, there is no way for students in wheelchairs to exit this floor during a fire drill, much less a real emergency. If there ever is a real emergency, even if no one is injured, there is the possibility of lawsuits. If it is not feasible to correct this problem with a wheel chair ramp then there are other remedies. Either all student services should be removed from this floor or all services must be provided to disabled students at another location.

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.60.211
> Request Time: 2006-12-04 13:07:45
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2006 7:41 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
As the university and many courses grow larger and larger, I am concerned with the old issue of writing across the curriculum. While it is presumably a commitment of UTD--and is built rather artifically into the curriculum--most of my colleagues would agree that it is more and more difficult to instructors (or even their TAs) to give the requisite attention to student writing, either in exams or lab reports or in real papers. If we have not already fallen, I fear we are falling into the regretable pattern of most large public universities. Our students are not writing enough, and too many instructors are merely glancing over what they do write. In my view, our chief efforts should go into helping students sharpen their analytical and writing skills. We are on an exciting venture to develop a fine research university, and we pride ourselves on high standards. Unless we focus more attention on serious constructive criticism of our students' writing skills, however, we are hypocritical in claiming to be a first-rate educational institution. To prove and implement our good intentions, we should encourage and reward individual instructors---give them smaller classes (or more and better trained TAs) and insist on our being a university that really does have serious writing across the entire curriculum.

Gerald Soliday
Emeritus, History, Arts Humanities

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 70.247.96.50
> Request Time: 2006-12-06 19:41:00
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2006 8:42 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Engineering School:
Problem: Being an Alumni, I have first hand experience with the employment opportunities that can be leveraged with a Erik Jonsson School Degree. Unfortunately, the school is not connected with the industry at all. The students cant depend on the university even remotely to help them find jobs.
Solution: Form more synergies with the computer and telecom industry. This can be done by hiring professors who are not only reasearch oriented but more connected with companies which can be prospective employers to students.

The business school has perfected this model in its ITM program and hence ranked as US News #24 for the program. The key is to hire good professors.

Concerned CS Alumni

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 68.224.207.76
> Request Time: 2006-12-06 20:42:08
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; Avant Browser; Avant Browser; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50215)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2006 8:43 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
start giving out scholarships to students who have history of involvement in student activities. The campus life yearns for excitement.

COncerned CS Alumni

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 68.224.207.76
> Request Time: 2006-12-06 20:43:33
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; Avant Browser; Avant Browser; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50215)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2006 8:44 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Greek Housing is absolutely critical.

Concerned CS Alumni

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 68.224.207.76
> Request Time: 2006-12-06 20:44:04
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; Avant Browser; Avant Browser; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50215)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2006 8:48 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Engineering School
Problem: There were hardly any challenging programming projects throughout my 4 years at the school. My programming experience as a CS major after college was very basic. Courses have to be made more challenging with challenging projects.

COncerned CS Alumni

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 68.224.207.76
> Request Time: 2006-12-06 20:48:20
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; Avant Browser; Avant Browser; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50215)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2006 2:32 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
To Whom It May Concern regarding the Quality Enhancement Plan at UTD:

The School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences requires that all psychology students complete an upper level psychology elective component of the degree plan, choosing from: an internship, an honors thesis, directed research, individual study, or a teaching internship. BBS has a similar requirement for those majoring in child learning and development where students must complete an internship, co-op fieldwork, honors thesis, or directed research.

With the exception of the honors thesis, I believe that all of these choices are evaluated on a credit/no credit basis. (The honors thesis is given a letter grade by two tenured staff members who act as readers and advisors for the student.). These internship and research opportunities are designed to expose all students to real life experience in teaching and research for their field. However, because of the dichotomous evaluation of these experiences, I feel that they are not a true reflection of the experience incurred. Students working in a lab under a professor or interning off campus are simply given "C" or "NC" on their transcripts. To group all students under these two categorizations regardless of their day to day professionalism, attitude, ethic, and work quality seems absurd.

What I am suggesting is that these opportunities be evaluated with a letter grade like most other coursework at the university. One might say that the benefit a hard working student receives is the great internal satisfaction of doing the job. This is true, but an "A" would support this quite nicely. In addition, these hard working students can also come back to these professors for letters of recommendation for graduate school. These letters are another priceless benefit in addition to the experience, but many students do not have graduate school in their plans for the future, and so they do not put forth the work and attitude that would support a boasting letter.

I understand that the simplification of the grading process is for the convenience of the faculty, but from my own personal experience, the staff is welcoming of this type of letter grade evaluation process for these research

and study experiences. They have usually worked very closely with their lab and research assistants and would be accurate in giving them a more specific evaluation of their contributions. Graduate schools and future employers could be more specific with their own interpretation of students' work as well. This type of evaluation would keep students on their feet every day and be beneficial to all parties.

Catherine Maggard
Class of 2006
cam020100@utdallas.edu

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 66.141.165.91
> Request Time: 2006-12-12 14:32:51
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; YPC 3.2.0; .NET CLR 1.1.4322)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2006 4:49 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Developing online tutor for any course (face to face or online).

==[message info]
==========
==========
> Remote Address: 129.110.110.219
> Request Time: 2006-12-19 16:49:32
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; InfoPath.1; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2006 6:59 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Improve core curriculae for School of Management undergrad. Courses like Management Information Systems are poorly taught, and the text and in-class lectures never coordinate. Furthermore, AIM students are required to take superfluous courses such as Production Management that have little pertinence to accounting or business information management. Another, International Business, is important, but is so conceptual and vague that it would be better left to Organizational Behaviour or Negotiation and Conflict Management to handle a more practical approach to addressing cultural and social differences across borders. Professors chosen for these courses have thus far been intolerably biased and only offer one perspective on a tremendously broad and far-reaching topic. Consolidation, elimination, or expansion into particual "focuses" or "concentrations" within a major would be the best choices, so a business or accounting student can concentrate on what they are particularly interested in doing as a career.

==[message info]
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> Remote Address: 68.88.72.45
> Request Time: 2006-12-21 18:59:56
> User Agent: Opera/9.02 (Windows NT 5.1; U; en)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Tuesday, January 30, 2007 5:50 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
I would recommend developing the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). The university should have a centralized resource to assist faculty in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of their courses.

The university should also develop more distance education programs. There is a growing demand for quality web-based classes and programs. As faculty will need assistance in the development of online courses, instructional designers should be hired (and perhaps housed under CELT).

Please let me know if you would like me to expand on this.

Thank you,
-Darren Crone, Instructional Designer, School of Management
darren.crone@utdallas.edu

==[message info]
==========
> Remote Address: 10.110.142.231
> Request Time: 2007-01-30 17:50:07
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50727; InfoPath.1)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Friday, February 16, 2007 11:42 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Create a Faculty Learning Community, perhaps by beginning with small discussion groups. These groups are sometimes called "Teaching Circles" or "Reading Circles" in which faculty share thoughts and ideas, either within or across disciplines, related to teaching and learning.
Thank you,
Karen Huxtable-Jester

==[message info]
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> Remote Address: 10.110.8.159
> Request Time: 2007-02-16 11:42:51
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1)

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Saturday, April 14, 2007 1:08 PM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
Our second semester should be one week longer, or we should have at least one week to study for finals without having to worry about learning new material and taking other exams right before having the final. I feel like I have to rush to learn things and that most of the students I talk to learn things simply to pass the test and hardly retain any of the knowledge. Most of the other universities do give their students at least a week before the final exams where they dont really have a lot going on so that they can actually study for the finals. Many students including myself find that they have exams the week right before the week of final exams and it feels like everything is being crammed in last minute.

==[message info]
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> Remote Address: 76.184.238.77
> Request Time: 2007-04-14 13:08:33
> User Agent: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; .NET CLR 1.1.4322)

Subject: QEP suggestion
Date: Monday, September 18, 2006 4:07 PM
From: Donald Fletcher <fletcherdx@gmail.com>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP suggestion

Dear Dr. Sibert,

A QEP topic: An Office of Undergraduate Research, that will provide support, fostering an academic community devoted to cultivating an atmosphere of inquiry among a variety of fields. Obviously, this support will not be limited to research in the natural sciences, and should include social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, to expose the undergraduates to the kinds of research, methods of inquiry, and knowledge that is developed in all academic areas.

Donald X. Fletcher ~~MD~~ PhD DDS JD

Prof. Jeff Husdahl
Mercer University

Subject: QEP Idea - Website Submission
Date: Monday, April 30, 2007 7:04 AM
From: qep_home@utdallas.edu <qep_home@utdallas.edu>
To: "sak043000@utdallas.edu" <sak043000@utdallas.edu>, "sibertj@utdallas.edu" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "huckaba@utdallas.edu" <huckaba@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Idea - Website Submission

==[qep idea - website submission]
==========
UTD needs to do a much better job of working within the DFW community. Very few faculty devote the time due to needed efforts elsewhere. However, we have the energy and talents of terrific undergraduate students who, in many cases, would like to get involved in these types of activities. I would like to see $500.00 be given to each registered student organization for the specific purpose of community activities. The student organizations would need to write a brief request for funds and a followup post-activity report. These funds might allow for sponsoring a seminar either on or off campus. They could be used to work in the surrounding K-12 schools, libraries or, perhaps even museums. They could be used to provide tangible resources where resources are lacking. I would enjoy seeing the creative ways in which students would spend this money. Not only would this type of program benefit the UTD community, it would give student organizations important planning and implementation tasks that ensure an active, motivated membership. Further, it teaches students the importance of civic responsibility.

==[message info]
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> Remote Address: 10.110.9.144
> Request Time: 2007-04-30 07:04:53
> User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; U; PPC Mac OS X; en) AppleWebKit/419 (KHTML, like Gecko) Safari/419.3

Subject: The Resource Center
Date: Thursday, April 26, 2007 1:18 PM
From: Ali Hooshyar <Ali.Hooshyar@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: The Resource Center

John,

Thank you very much for coming to yesterday's SACS meeting and presenting a fresh perspective on this whole DFW rating. I really liked the idea that you proposed; that is we all love to reduce the DFW rates, but we should also focus on how to move C students to B category. Your idea of providing students every opportunity and resources via a center to enhance their understanding and achieving their full potential is excellent. My only concern is about a suggestion made in the meeting that have "Education Specialist" teach service courses. I think implementing such an vision would be totally counter to your idea of enhancing students knowledge and understanding. Sure, it will greatly improve the DFW rate, but it will be short changing all UTD students and quality of our university.

Please keep me informed of your ideas and efforts for QEP. Thanks,

Ali

Subject: draft of course redesign decision process
Date: Wednesday, May 2, 2007 2:01 PM
From: Reed, Joylynn H <jhr010100@utdallas.edu>
To: "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: draft of course redesign decision process

While sitting here listening to this THECB webcast on course redesign, I thought I'd stay engaged by thinking about the areas in the learning/ teaching process that can be changed when redesigning courses. So, I brainstormed areas (e.g. The faculty, the students) and specifics under each area. These specifics are mostly based on what I know about learning theory but I've tried to use non-jargon words so something might have been lost in that translation.

Then, I thought I'd highlight some of the change processes I'm hearing these people using in two decision "matrices" (crudely labeled).

Anyway, for what it's worth.....thoughts on this? Possibly useful to us or anyone else? Remember, this is just a draft from a musing mind that's trying to sift through the info on this webcast.

****

JoyLynn Hailey Reed, Ph.D.

Director, Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

Clinical Assistant Professor

SACS Executive Team

University of Texas at Dallas

M/S AD 23

972-883-6562

joylynn@utdallas.edu <mailto:joylynn@utdallas.edu>

*"Bad teachers distance themselves from the subject they are teaching—
and in the process from their students. Good teachers join self and subject and students
in the fabric of life." Parker Palmer*

****

Course redesign appears to be a shifting from current learning to potentially better learning situations in the following aspects of the learning system:

The Students
Expectations for learning in college
Motivation to learn
Interests
Abilities
Willingness to be engaged
Concern with grades

The Faculty
Effective use of time
Helping students meet learning objectives
Willingness to update/change content
Willingness to update/change instructional processes
Willingness to try and assess new instructional methods
Interaction with students in various modes
Preferred and familiar feedback and assessment methods
Teaching interests

Learning Environment Characteristics
Not necessarily 3-hr/week face to face
Time involved in learning tasks
Use of media
Blended learning environments
Based on physical resources on campus
Based on needs of discipline-based learning
Supported by experts (e.g. lab techs, instructional designers, IT, SMARTTHINKING 24/7 tutoring)

Learning Task Characteristics
Just in time learning evoked by problems/scenarios
Problem-based-learning
Based on scenarios
Based on engaging questions
Pedagogical content stumbling blocks highlighted and communicated

Assessment of Student Learning
Based on explicitly-stated learning objectives and student outcomes
Possibly done by others than the instructor of record
Often involves peer feedback

Mastery-based instead of performance-based (formative, not summative)
Feedback intended for continuous improvement

Step 1: Here's a decision matrix that might allow us to focus where changes could and should happen:

Aspect of the Learning System	**Currently Going Well or Needs Improvement?**	**Could It Be Changed for Improvement?**	**Possible Ways to Change?**
The Students			
Expectations for learning in college			
Motivation to learn			
Interests			
Abilities			
Willingness to be engaged			
Concern with grades			
The Faculty			
Effective use of time			
Helping students meet learning objectives			
Willingness to update/change content			
Willingness to update/change instructional processes			
Willingness to try and assess new			

instructional methods			
Interaction with students in various modes			
Preferred and familiar feedback and assessment methods			
Teaching interests			
Learning Environment Characteristics			
Not necessarily 3-hr/week face to face			
Time involved in learning tasks			
Use of media			
Blended learning environments			
Based on physical resources on campus			
Based on needs of discipline-based learning			
Supported by experts (e.g. lab techs, instructional designers, IT, SMARTTHINKING 24/7 tutoring)			
Learning Task Characteristics			

Just in time learning evoked by problems/scenarios			
Problem-based-learning			
Based on scenarios			
Based on engaging questions			
Pedagogical content stumbling blocks highlighted and communicated			
Assessment of Student Learning			
Based on explicitly-stated learning objectives and student outcomes			
Possibly done by others than the instructor of record			
Often involves peer feedback			
Mastery-based instead of performance-based (formative, not summative)			
Feedback intended for continuous improvement			

Step 2: Direct comparison of existing course with areas designated for change:

Area Targeted for Possible Change	**Ideas for Change**	**Resources Needed for Change**	**Criteria for Assessing Change as Improvement**	**Methods for Assessing Change as Improvement**
The Students Specifics noted here				
The Faculty Specifics noted here				
Learning Environment Characteristics Specifics noted here				
Learning Task Characteristics Specifics noted here				
Assessment of Student Learning Specifics noted here				

Subject: RE: QEP Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, May 8, 2007 2:02 PM
From: Aaron, Kimberly A <kaa023000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Council Meeting

Hey John,

I know I'm late in responding to last week's assignment, but I went out of town the next day and - frankly - didn't think about QEP while I was gone! I see from the agenda that you have compiled a list, but I'll go ahead and throw in my marginally-conceived nickle's worth. (I did actually read all of the website and email submission and I skimmed the QEP examples.)

My initial thoughts are actually in the form of two questions - are we looking for a QEP topic that cuts across the entire campus and has the "ability" or "opportunity" to affect all students? If so, does something focused on math/science accomplish that? And to me, UTD has two campus "identities" - undergraduate students who probably want the full university experience (short of sitting in a football stadium on a breezy fall day) and graduate students who are likely looking for some mechanism for career advancement. Are we looking for a topic that hits both?

In reviewing the submissions, I saw a few themes arising that were interesting - writing/communications skills, research-linked education, experiential learning/career prep, distance learning/interactive classrooms, and global focus/identity. I could argue that most of these topics could be massaged into something along the times of "The Student Professional" or "The Student Professionalized" - some type of programmatic process that links students into tracks that better prepare them for whatever profession they plan on pursuing. It could be accomplished through communication skills development, specific research opportunities that provide real-world experiences, distance-learning that links to real world companies/organziations, etc.

And if I just wanted to throw out another idea from left field - I like the concept of a Center for Student Leadership.

Finally, if I have to come up with something specific to math/science - the essential practitioner in me says that it needs to be something that makes math/science "real" - maybe the development of a math/science curriculum that integrates into each school in some very pragmatic way - kind of like the "How Things Work" book written by the physicist whose name escapes me. For example, I teach in the Public Affairs program - math is critical to PA in what manner - well, as I think about it - quite a few. Public Administrators are responsible for getting buildings constructed - geometry. They are responsible for budgets - algebra. You get the idea...the focus is away from how a formula works and towards what does the resulting information tell you.

Anyway, more dialogue that you probably wanted - better late than never?

Kim A.

-----Original Message-----
From: Sibert, John W

Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 1:09 PM
To: Nelsen, Robert S
Cc: Nelsen, Jody; Rogers, Susan A; Taylor, April A; Harpham, Jessica M; Aaron, Kimberly A; Gregg, Arthur L; Wright, J. Scott; McIntyre, Christa; Holmes, Jennifer S; Chaffin, Mary C; Goeckner, Matthew J; Montgomery, Homer A; Lewis, David L; Butler, Lynn K; Venetis, Mary J
Subject: Re: QEP Council Meeting

Dear All,

For those that were unable to make the Monday 9 AM meeting this week, please note that we are meeting tomorrow (Wednesday) at 2 PM in BE 2.532 (my earlier e-mail erroneously listed the room as 2.352). It is the same room as last Wednesday's meeting and next door to the Monday meeting room. I have attached tomorrow's agenda. See you then.

Cheers,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: QEP Action Items
Date: Wednesday, May 9, 2007 9:29 AM
From: April Taylor <aat053000@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Action Items

Hi, Dr. Sibert,

All of the action items you listed on the agenda sound great! When you begin planning specifics on the Chem Lab redesign, I'd like to talk with you more about the Gen Chem lab I took at UNO, how it was structured, and the work it required. After skimming through the emails, I'd like to agree that allowing students some time to work independently in the lab and updating equipment would enhance the science coursework.

Carrying the QEP ideas across the curriculum, courses in other departments could include "labs" of their own. For example, a writing lab could be included in RHET courses and government classes could have a lab in which they perform mock trials or elections. Also, English courses could use readings from scholarly journals to enhance reading skills (I couldn't find current readings lists for RHET courses or even if there is some standard listing). The general curriculum could also benefit from some sort of class that teaches research skills and evaluation of resource credibility (student deficiency in this area was pointed out by one of the articles you copied for us).

Another transition to be considered for the alternate QEP theme is the transition from college student to working professional. This could still be tied into a math/ science QEP topic since many people in all fields find the day to day activities of working life vastly different from their expections, which were unrealistic & based on years spent as a student.

Have a great weekend & see you again on Monday!
April

Subject: QEP
Date: Thursday, May 10, 2007 9:26 AM
From: Gregg, Arthur L <agregg@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP

Dr. Sibert,

Here are some idea's I have for the QEP:

1. Utilizing the Living and Learning Communities to set up a Math & Science community. This community would be for math and science majors and it would be staff (the Peer Advisors would also be math and science majors). This idea was suggested by Dr. Darrelene Rachavong, Vice President for Student Affairs, and could be a part of the new Residential Life building which will have a classroom and office space.

1. The Math & Science "Mobil". As a kid growing up in a low income area there were no libraries in my neighborhood. However, every two weeks a large bus called the Book Mobil would park on our street and it became our library on wheels. My concept is a Math & Science Mobil (staffed by students) that would go into low income areas or any community and provide tutoring and help with math and science for kids. This would engage the community and the students in the excitement for learning math and science.

1. On the same line of the Math & Science "Mobil", partnering with Boys and Girls Clubs, the Y's and Recreation Centers to hold math and science camps. The camps would be staffed by students, student organizations and faculty.

Arthur L. Gregg M.Ed
Multicultural Center, Director
The University of Texas at Dallas
Conference Center 1.126
P.O. Box 830688, CN 10
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-6290 wk (972) 883-6101 fax

"One's work may be finished someday but one's education, never".
Alexandre Dumas, the Elder

communication with university personnel. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individuals corresponding and the security of the transmitted information.

The Department of Information Resources at U. T. Dallas provides a method for students to forward email from other accounts to their U.T. Dallas address and have their U.T. Dallas mail sent on to other accounts. Students may go to the following URL to establish or maintain their official U.T. Dallas computer account: http://netid.utdallas.edu/ <BLOCKED::http://netid.utdallas.edu/> .

Subject: Idea
Date: Wednesday, May 16, 2007 10:19 PM
From: Matthew Goeckner <goeckner@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Idea

John:

Here is an idea that can increase our number of high quality freshman - Fast-track for HS students. We could set up to teach Calculus and pre Cal at the local HS. Then if they come here, they can get credit from UTD..

M

Subject: Proposal to improve Student Learning in Precalculus and Calculus Classes at UTD
Date: Tuesday, May 15, 2007 11:46 AM
From: Bernardin, Charles P <cpb021000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>, "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Coleman, Dean Michael" <coleman@utdallas.edu>, "Hooshyar, Mohammad A" <ali@utdallas.edu>, "Lewis, David L" <dlewis@utdallas.edu>, "Cantrell, Cyrus D" <cantrell@utdallas.edu>, "Ntafos, Simeon C" <ntafos@utdallas.edu>, "Hunt, Louis R" <hunt@utdallas.edu>, "Redlinger, Lawrence J" <redling@utdallas.edu>, "Khorrampanahi, Mehrdad" <mpanahi@utdallas.edu>, "Pervin, William J" <pervin@utdallas.edu>, "Reed, Joylynn H" <jhr010100@utdallas.edu>, "Alsobrook, Metta P" <mpa051000@utdallas.edu>, "Lou, Xinchou" <xinchou@utdallas.edu>, "Ferguson, John F" <ferguson@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Proposal to improve Student Learning in Precalculus and Calculus Classes at UTD

The following could also be used as a SACS QEP topic:

Given the increasing number of transfer students enrolling in UT Dallas's math programs there is an increasing level of uncertainty in student readiness to complete the Calculus courses that are the foundation of the remainder of their undergraduate education. There are two basic issues 1) determining student readiness and 2) remediating students so that they may learn Calculus. **I propose adapting the TAKS methodologies already developed by the State of Texas for High School Education to UT Dallas's college entrants.**

I think this is a good idea for a number of reasons:

1) TAKS has already developed a great number of resources to help high school students learn mathematics. There are numerous tests and answer keys that are already public domain. The State of Texas has spent millions of dollars developing this methodology and after working with it for a year I believe it is a very effective method for teacing and assessing pre-college mathematics.

2) Third party vendors have also developed many learning aids in support of TAKS. There are already a few TAKS-oriented online tools to help students with their high school math.

3) TAKS has a built-in remediation strategy that can be easily adapted to each

student's specific weakness in mathematics. There are several study guides that already address these issues.

4) My son was able to improve his TAKS scores significantly by following the TAKS remediation study guides. He narrowly failed the 8th and 9th grade TAKS math tests with raw scores of 29/50 and 29/52. His scores rose to the commended levels (43/50 and 42/52, respectively) after 45 days of remediation. In addition, his score on the 10th grade TAKS math test rose to 41/56 a full year before he had to take the test. For more detail on this see: http://www.utdallas.edu/~charles.bernardin/Acing%20the%208th-9th-10th%20Grade%20TAKS%20Math%20Test.doc <blocked::http://www.utdallas.edu/~charles.bernardin/Acing%20the%208th-9th-10th%20Grade%20TAKS%20Math%20Test.doc>

Moreover, my son's official scaled scores on the Spring 2007 10th grade TAKS math test reached the commended level after following the recommended TAKS remediation strategy over the last year.

I propose 1) using the 11th grade (Exit Level) TAKS approach to UT Dallas's advantage for Precalculus learning assessment and remediation 2) adapting a similar approach for Calculus.

Common Arguments against using the TAKS Methodology for college readiness

1) **The TAKS approach prepares students for the doing well on the TAKS test, it doesn't really teach them to think mathematically.** If a similar statement were made about preparing college students for a university math test, I doubt that the associated professor would feel that way, even though they could not quantitatively disprove such a blanket hypothesis either. My experience with the TAKS system is that it identifies many learning problems encountered in college math courses and offers an effective teaching solution.

2) **The SAT test is a better predictor of college achievement.** A major problem with the SAT test is that it is not diagnostic. As an aside, my sister had approximate SAT scores of 430 on Math and 480 on English, yet she was an ***A*** student at Immaculata College and a ***B***+ student throughout her years at Temple Medical

School. She has had a successful medical practice for over 20 years. No test could ever measure my sister's desire to become a physician. It has not been proven that the SAT test is any better than the TAKS test at determining the success of college students (even though it has been almost exclusively for this).

3) **Most of our problem students have already passed the TAKS Exit Level test, what possible value could it be to college placement?** In fact, the 11th grade exit exam does not even attempt to assess math learning in the senior year. The Exit Level Test can be made relevant to college placement by requiring that students pass it at the commended level. There is a world of difference between barely passing the TAKS test and passing with commendations, just as there is a great difference between a ***C-*** and a ***B+*** in a college course. I believe that math learning throughout the 12th grade can be effectively assessed simply by raising the standard of our expectations on the 11th grade TAKS Exit Exam.

4) **The TAKS test is being phased out in 2010 because it has proven to be ineffective.**
The fact that the TAKS test is being phased out indicates to me that it is really working.
The best analogy to this is one that Milton Friedman used in comparing inflation to alcoholism:

"Inflation is just like alcoholism, in both cases, when you start drinking or when you start printing too much money. The good effects come first; the bad effects only come later. That's why, in both cases, there is a strong temptation to overdo it, to drink too much and to print too much money. When it comes to the cure, it's the other way around, when you stop drinking or when you stop printing money the bad effects come first and the good effects only come later. That's why it's so hard to persist with the cure."

The decision to not "*persist with the cure*" and phase out the TAKS test is being made by legislators who are being pressured by voters, not educators:

The TAKS test is too broad an indicator to determine what a student has learned and end-of-course exams are a more accurate indication of a student's ability said Sen. Kyle Janek, R-Houston, a co-author of the bill. "It's standardized testing at its best," he said. "It becomes a retention test and not a learning test." (http://

thefacts.com/story.lasso?ewcd=a39cea977f654b44)

If someone has seen the proof of this please send it to me. Otherwise, I recommend that we persist with the cure.

Just some thoughts,

Pete

Subject: Cal State's EAP College Readiness Approach - A Possible QEP Project
Date: Monday, May 21, 2007 8:54 AM
From: Bernardin, Charles P <cpb021000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Bernardin, Charles P" <cpb021000@utdallas.edu>, "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>, "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Coleman, Dean Michael" <coleman@utdallas.edu>, "Hooshyar, Mohammad A" <ali@utdallas.edu>, "Lewis, David L" <dlewis@utdallas.edu>, "Cantrell, Cyrus D" <cantrell@utdallas.edu>, "Ntafos, Simeon C" <ntafos@utdallas.edu>, "Hunt, Louis R" <hunt@utdallas.edu>, "Redlinger, Lawrence J" <redling@utdallas.edu>, "Khorrampanahi, Mehrdad" <mpanahi@utdallas.edu>, "Pervin, William J" <pervin@utdallas.edu>, "Reed, Joylynn H" <jhr010100@utdallas.edu>, "Alsobrook, Metta P" <mpa051000@utdallas.edu>, "Lou, Xinchou" <xinchou@utdallas.edu>, "Ferguson, John F" <ferguson@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Cal State's EAP College Readiness Approach - A Possible QEP Project

In today's paper (Metro Section) there is an interesting article **"Passing TAKS test doesn't mean that student is prepared for college"** (see attached pdf). The author describes Cal State's intensive approach to solving the student readiness problem with their Early Assessment Program (EAP). For more details check out: http://www.calstate.edu/college/

Here is an excerpt from their website:

The Challenge

More than 60 percent of the nearly 40,000 first-time freshmen admitted to the CSU require remedial education in English, mathematics or both. These 25,000 freshmen all have taken the required college preparatory curriculum and earned at least a B grade point average in high school. The cost in time and money to these students and to the state is substantial. Moreover, these students are confused by seemingly having done the right things in high school only to find out after admission to the CSU that they need further preparation.

http://www.calstate.edu/eap/

The **Early Assessment Program** (EAP) is a collaborative effort among the State Board of Education (SBE), the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California State University (CSU). The program was established to provide opportunities for students to measure their readiness for college-level English and mathematics in their junior year of high school, and to facilitate opportunities for them to improve their skills during their senior year.

Pete Bernardin

Passing the TAKS doesn't mean student is prepared for college

THINKING ABOUT EDUCATION

Kit Lively

[illegible]

High school seniors who just learned they won't be graduating with their friends because they failed some part of the TAKS graduation test are naturally disappointed. It's tough to have taken all the required courses only to stumble on the big test.

But thousands of kids who passed the TAKS and are headed to college in the fall are in for a big surprise of their own. They will flunk a freshman placement test and be shuttled into remedial classes.

Almost half of all freshmen at Texas public colleges have to take at least one remedial course. Many have to take two or three.

It's a big problem. Colleges are essentially re-teaching high school English and math, and students are not earning college credit though they often have to pay tuition or use up scholarship money.

What's more, kids who spend time in remedial courses are more likely to fall by the wayside and not graduate from college. Most of them are students from low-income families or those whose parents don't attend college — students whose college enrollment is already lower than officials want.

It's a common problem in all states, and one that has generated a lot of talk in Austin. Representatives from higher education and K-12 are deep in talks about what college-bound students need to learn in high school and how colleges can make those expectations clear.

That's a good step. It's hard work. Both sides will have to agree to a lot of give and take — and giving is a lot harder than talking in Austin.

I would suggest that they take a look at the California State University System.

See CAL, Page 2B

Subject: <no subject>
Date: Monday, May 21, 2007 1:01 PM
From: Homer Montgomery <mont@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>

Hi John,

I don't know if you are interested in this, but I did some surveys of intro science classes at UTD. Both are correlated with cognitive learning. The immediacy survey has to do with the nature of student - instructor interaction. The CLES takes a look at what students would prefer the classroom to be like versus how they perceive it. Both measures are widely used. Both speak to enhancing Joylynn's program.

Homer

UTD Study of Immediacy in Undergraduate Classrooms

n = 202

	Never		Occasionally		Very Often			
		Rarely		Often				Terms to choose among and point values ( )
	0	1	2	3	4			
Questions	Verbal Immediacy questions 1-20					Averages		Statements to Students
1	19	47	74	48	14	1 96	395 00	Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class
2	4	18	70	83	27	2 55	515 00	Asks questions or encourages students to talk
3	15	64	67	42	14	1 88	380 00	Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan
4	12	23	56	61	49	2 56	514 00	Uses humor in class
5	58	66	35	20	13	1 29	248 00	Addresses students by name
6	95	45	30	14	17	1 07	215 00	Addresses me by name
7	14	38	76	48	25	2 16	434 00	Gets into conversations with individual students before or after class
8	97	41	34	18	12	1 04	211 00	Has initiated conversations with me before, after or outside of class
9	46	64	49	30	11	2 52	504 00	Refers to class as "my" class or what "I" am doing.
10	8	36	65	65	25	2 32	461 00	Refers to class as "our" class or what "we" are doing
11	65	54	45	24	5	1 22	236 00	Provides feedback on my individual work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc
12	79	59	39	21	4	2 93	592 00	Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk.
13	54	54	58	24	11	1 42	286 00	Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic
14	34	34	64	54	12	1 88	372 00	Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something
15	2	17	71	89	20	2 54	506 00	Asks questions that have specific, correct answers
16	33	67	58	37	5	1 57	314 00	Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions
17	26	52	70	45	9	1 80	363 00	Praises students' work, actions or comments
18	69	79	39	8	0	3 07	599 00	Criticizes or points out faults in students' work, actions or comments.
19	54	83	48	5	5	1 10	214 00	Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole
20	136	39	8	5	8	0 52	102 00	Is addressed by his/her first name by the students
						1.87		Average Verbal Immediacy
							36.94	Average Total Verbal Immediacy
							0 71	SD VIM
	Nonverbal Immediacy questions 21-34							
21	160	17	10	5	2	3 69	716 00	Sits behind desk while teaching.
22	11	16	44	72	52	2 71	528 00	Gestures while talking to class
23	81	61	31	12	9	2 99	581 00	Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to class.
24	3	5	20	58	110	3 36	659 00	Looks at class while talking
25	10	14	33	59	79	2 94	573 00	Smiles at the class as a whole, not just individual students
26	99	64	18	8	7	3 22	632 00	Has a very tense body position while talking to the class.
27	151	29	6	7	3	0 38	74 00	Touches students in the class
28	22	29	55	50	40	2 29	449 00	Moves around the classroom while teaching
29	147	23	17	6	0	3 61	697 00	Sits on a desk or in a chair while teaching.
30	27	53	68	33	13	2 25	436 00	Looks at the board or notes while talking to the class.
31	62	53	55	20	5	2 75	537 00	Stands behind podium or desk while teaching.
32	5	15	35	86	57	2 88	571 00	Has a very relaxed body position while talking to the class
33	21	56	50	47	24	1 98	393 00	Smiles at individual students in the class
34	7	32	56	68	31	2 43	472 00	Uses a variety of vocal expressions while talking to the class
						2.68		Average Nonverbal Immediacy
						2.27		Average Immediacy
							36.23	Average Total Nonverbal Immediacy
							73.16	Average Total Immediacy out of a maximum of 136
							0 83	SD NIM

UTD CLES

Spring semester 05

n=196

	What I Think the classroom is like					Averages	What I prefer the class to be like					Averages	
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5		
1	8	26	96	50	18	3.23	1	5	37	117	34	3.92	Participants learn about the world in and outside of the course/program.
2	8	30	77	64	15	3.25	2	3	38	105	39	3.94	New learning relates to experiences or questions about the world in- and outside-of-course/program.
3	2	15	66	86	24	3.60	0	3	30	102	58	4.10	Participants learn how science is a part of in- and outside-of-course/program life.
4	2	24	80	64	25	3.44	0	4	31	102	58	4.10	Participants learn interesting things about the world in and outside of the course/program
5	11	31	93	48	11	3 09	14	34	71	58	16	3 15	Participants learn that there are not always answers to problems
6	3	17	60	85	31	3 63	4	22	53	78	39	3 64	Participants learn that explanations have changed over time
7	25	49	63	48	11	2 85	22	28	63	58	23	3 16	Participants learn that ideas are influenced by people's cultural values and opinions
8	5	27	65	71	24	3 43	1	9	40	95	47	3 93	Participants learn that there is more than one way to raise questions and seek answers
9	18	35	71	48	21	3.12	1	13	46	88	45	3.84	It is OK for participants to question the way they are being taught.
10	6	26	80	52	26	3.35	4	11	56	71	47	3.77	I feel I learn better when I am allowed to question what or how I am learning
11	0	8	46	72	64	4.01	2	0	11	76	107	4.46	It is OK for participants to ask for clarification about activities that are confusing.
12	3	23	69	54	40	3.56	2	5	34	77	74	4.13	It is acceptable for participants to express concern about anything that gets in the way of their learning.
13	67	74	25	19	4	2 04	9	25	69	62	25	3 36	Participants help plan what they are going to learn
14	29	63	57	25	16	2 66	6	14	49	83	39	3 71	Participants help to decide how well they are learning
15	39	66	57	22	6	2 42	2	11	66	78	35	3 69	Participants help to decide which activities work best for them
16	29	59	59	30	12	2 67	2	15	52	78	41	3 75	Participants let instructors know if they need more/less time to complete an activity
17	4	22	68	68	28	3.49	3	6	30	100	54	4.02	Participants talk with other participants about how to solve problems.
18	7	39	76	53	15	3.16	6	5	49	96	37	3 79	Participants explain their ideas to other participants.
19	15	52	65	45	13	2.94	7	9	60	85	31	3.65	Participants ask other participants to explain their ideas.
20	31	57	61	36	6	2.63	13	15	88	60	16	3.27	Participants ask me to explain my ideas.
Totals	308	743	1334	1040	408	3 13	101	237	973	1669	863	3 77	

CLES Category	M	SD
Personal Relevance	3.38	0.17
Uncertainty	3 25	0 35
Critical Voice	3 51	0.36
Shared Control	2 45	0 29
Student Negotiation	3.06	0 36
	3 13	0 08

CLES Category	M	SD
Personal Relevance	4.02	0.10
Uncertainty	3 47	0 38
Critical Voice	4.05	0.31
Shared Control	3 63	0 18
Student Negotiation	3 68	0.32
	3 77	0 12

Subject: Re: Proposal to improve Student Learning in Precalculus and Calculus Classes at UTD
Date: Friday, May 25, 2007 11:12 AM
From: Xinchou Lou <xinchou@utdallas.edu>
To: "Bernardin, Charles P" <cpb021000@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>, "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Coleman, Dean Michael" <coleman@utdallas.edu>, Mohammad A Hooshyar <Ali.Hooshyar@utdallas.edu>, David L Lewis <dlewis@utdallas.edu>, "Cantrell, Cyrus D" <cantrell@utdallas.edu>, "Ntafos, Simeon C" <ntafos@utdallas.edu>, Louis R Hunt <hunt@utdallas.edu>, "Redlinger, Lawrence J" <redling@utdallas.edu>, "Khorrampanahi, Mehrdad" <mpanahi@utdallas.edu>, "Pervin, William J" <pervin@utdallas.edu>, "Reed, Joylynn H" <jhr010100@utdallas.edu>, "Alsobrook, Metta P" <mpa051000@utdallas.edu>, John F Ferguson <ferguson@utdallas.edu>, John H Hoffman <jhoffman@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Proposal to improve Student Learning in Precalculus and Calculus Classes at UTD

Dear Pete,

Physics faculty have some thoughts on 1) determining student readiness in math. I am submitting the following on behalf of the Physics faculty:

(a) TAKS level is probably lower than what we need at UTD,
TAKS results fluctuate year by year (2003-2006)

(b) SAT II Math is preferred (alternatively AP or CLEP might be used).

(c) Another alternative is to use one of the UTD calculus final exams, though this needs manpower and coordination.

Thanks,

--Xinchou
Physics

On Tue, 15 May 2007, Bernardin, Charles P wrote:

> The following could also be used as a SACS QEP topic:
>
>
>
> Given the increasing number of transfer students enrolling in UT
> Dallas's math programs there is an increasing level of uncertainty in
> student readiness to complete the Calculus courses that are the
> foundation of the remainder of their undergraduate education. There are
> two basic issues 1) determining student readiness and 2) remediating
> students so that they may learn Calculus. I propose adapting the TAKS
> methodologies already developed by the State of Texas for High School
> Education to UT Dallas's college entrants.
>
>
>
> I think this is a good idea for a number of reasons:

>
>
>
> 1) TAKS has already developed a great number of resources to help high
> school students learn mathematics. There are numerous tests and answer
> keys that are already public domain. The State of Texas has spent
> millions of dollars developing this methodology and after working with
> it for a year I believe it is a very effective method for teacing and
> assessing pre-college mathematics.
>
>
>
> 2) Third party vendors have also developed many learning aids in support
> of TAKS. There are already a few TAKS-oriented online tools to help
> students with their high school math.
>
>
>
> 3) TAKS has a built-in remediation strategy that can be easily adapted
> to each student's specific weakness in mathematics. There are several
> study guides that already address these issues.
>
>
>
> 4) My son was able to improve his TAKS scores significantly by following
> the TAKS remediation study guides. He narrowly failed the 8th and 9th
> grade TAKS math tests with raw scores of 29/50 and 29/52. His scores
> rose to the commended levels (43/50 and 42/52, respectively) after 45
> days of remediation. In addition, his score on the 10th grade TAKS math
> test rose to 41/56 a full year before he had to take the test. For more
> detail on this see:
> http://www.utdallas.edu/~charles.bernardin/Acing%20the%208th-9th-10th%20
> Grade%20TAKS%20Math%20Test.doc
> <blocked::http://www.utdallas.edu/~charles.bernardin/Acing%20the%208th-9
> th-10th%20Grade%20TAKS%20Math%20Test.doc>
>
>
>
> Moreover, my son's official scaled scores on the Spring 2007 10th grade
> TAKS math test reached the commended level after following the
> recommended TAKS remediation strategy over the last year.
>
>
>
> I propose 1) using the 11th grade (Exit Level) TAKS approach to UT
> Dallas's advantage for Precalculus learning assessment and remediation
> 2) adapting a similar approach for Calculus.
>
>
>
> Common Arguments against using the TAKS Methodology for college
> readiness
>
>
>
> 1) The TAKS approach prepares students for the doing well on the TAKS
> test, it doesn't really teach them to think mathematically. If a
> similar statement were made about preparing college students for a
> university math test, I doubt that the associated professor would feel
> that way, even though they could not quantitatively disprove such a
> blanket hypothesis either. My experience with the TAKS system is that it

> identifies many learning problems encountered in college math courses
> and offers an effective teaching solution.
>
>
>
> 2) The SAT test is a better predictor of college achievement. A major
> problem with the SAT test is that it is not diagnostic. As an aside, my
> sister had approximate SAT scores of 430 on Math and 480 on English, yet
> she was an A student at Immaculata College and a B+ student throughout
> her years at Temple Medical School. She has had a successful medical
> practice for over 20 years. No test could ever measure my sister's
> desire to become a physician. It has not been proven that the SAT test
> is any better than the TAKS test at determining the success of college
> students (even though it has been almost exclusively for this).
>
>
>
> 3) Most of our problem students have already passed the TAKS Exit Level
> test, what possible value could it be to college placement? In fact, the
> 11th grade exit exam does not even attempt to assess math learning in
> the senior year. The Exit Level Test can be made relevant to college
> placement by requiring that students pass it at the commended level.
> There is a world of difference between barely passing the TAKS test and
> passing with commendations, just as there is a great difference between
> a C- and a B+ in a college course. I believe that math learning
> throughout the 12th grade can be effectively assessed simply by raising
> the standard of our expectations on the 11th grade TAKS Exit Exam.
>
>
>
> 4) The TAKS test is being phased out in 2010 because it has proven to be
> ineffective.
>
> The fact that the TAKS test is being phased out indicates to me that it
> is really working.
>
> The best analogy to this is one that Milton Friedman used in comparing
> inflation to alcoholism:
>
>
>
> "Inflation is just like alcoholism, in both cases, when you start
> drinking or when you start printing too much money. The good effects
> come first; the bad effects only come later. That's why, in both cases,
> there is a strong temptation to overdo it, to drink too much and to
> print too much money. When it comes to the cure, it's the other way
> around, when you stop drinking or when you stop printing money the bad
> effects come first and the good effects only come later. That's why it's
> so hard to persist with the cure."
>
>
>
> The decision to not "persist with the cure" and phase out the TAKS test
> is being made by legislators who are being pressured by voters, not
> educators:
>
>
>
> The TAKS test is too broad an indicator to determine what a student has
> learned and end-of-course exams are a more accurate indication of a
> student's ability said Sen. Kyle Janek, R-Houston, a co-author of the

> bill. "It's standardized testing at its best," he said. "It becomes a
> retention test and not a learning test."
> (http://thefacts.com/story.lasso?ewcd=a39cea977f654b44)
>
>
>
> If someone has seen the proof of this please send it to me. Otherwise, I
> recommend that we persist with the cure.
>
>
>
> Just some thoughts,
>
>
>
> Pete
>
>
>
>

Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 3:46 PM
From: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Reply-To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
To: "nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu" <nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

Dear All,

As you may recall, our university is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The plan needs to be focused and should be driven by data. A QEP Council with broad campus representation was formed and has been discussing a plan centered on improving math and science education at UTD (based, in part, on data collected from gateway courses in math and chemistry). Considering our history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. As the director of the QEP, I am writing to request that the chemistry department compile a list of resources/actions that we feel would improve student learning and enhance the student experience within our department. I do not want the list to be resource limited. Obviously, our actual QEP will be tied to available resources. However, if our goal is excellence in math and science education, I think it is useful to identify everything that we would like to have/do. While the summer undoubtedly precludes a formal departmental meeting, I am requesting that a subset of the faculty get together Thursday or Friday of next week to discuss this list. Who is available next Thursday (June 7) or Friday (June 8)? I am also requesting that individuals e-mail their ideas to me over the next week. I am happy to compile and distribute them prior to the meeting. A sampling of suggested action items is as follows:

Creation of a Math and Science Success Center – perhaps placed in residential housing

Instructor/TA Development (It is difficult if not impossible to find a top notch research university that doesn't have a faculty/TA development center.)

Redesign general and organic chemistry laboratories

Offer Honors general and organic chemistry with lab (offer honors courses across NS&M)

Provide funds for student organizations to perform community activities (our students are potentially terrific ambassadors for the university and would benefit from the civic duty)

Align the existing curriculum in chemistry

Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at a conference

Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help "align" students coming to UTD

Expand the SI program

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Associate Professor
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: FW: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 3:50 PM
From: Gnade, Bruce E <beg031000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

John,
I am out next week.

Of the things you list, the one that stands out the most is the faculty / TA learning activity. To me, this seems like where we would get the biggest bang for the buck. If we do a great job on instruction, a lot of the other things go by the wayside - easy for me to say - I don't teach undergraduate chemistry.

Thanks,
Bruce

Bruce Gnade
VP for Research
UT Dallas
Office phone 972-883-6636
e:mail gnade@utdallas.edu

-----Original Message-----
From: nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu [mailto:nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu] On Behalf Of John Sibert
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 3:46 PM
To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

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Expand the SI program

Thanks,

John

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Dr. John W. Sibert
Associate Professor
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 4:00 PM
From: Warren Goux <wgoux@utdallas.edu>
Reply-To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
To: <nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I think that TAs in gen chem lecture would be very helpful. This would allow for more contact hours and free professors up to concentrate their energy on improving the course rather than hours spent grading exams/quizzes. We might even make attendance at workshops run by TAs mandatory. This would also allow for the possibility of having students turn in homework for grading at each workshop session. Given the scarcity of available TAs we might consider hiring undergrads to do the work.

Have undergrad TAs in the lab sections as well.

John Sibert wrote:
> Dear All,
>
> As you may recall, our university is required to develop a Quality
> Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The
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> Redesign general and organic chemistry laboratories
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> Offer Honors general and organic chemistry with lab (offer honors courses
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> Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings
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> Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at
> a conference
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> Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help
> "align" students coming to UTD
>
> Expand the SI program
>
> Thanks,
>
> John
>

Subject: Re: QEP Council Meeting
Date: Friday, August 10, 2007 8:12 AM
From: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
To: "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Council Meeting

> I have recently learned of an interesting new project at UT-Austin known
> as the Freshman Research Initiative (Va Tech has a Freshman Research
> Institute which is less exciting to me). I will mention details about
> UT's program next week. As a brief summary, students take a course on
> inquiry, methodology, etc. in their first semester and then work in labs
> designed just for this program on projects of interest to various
> faculty. They are not working in the faculty members labs yet as
> individual student researchers, but are working together in these
> special labs on projects developed for this initiative by faculty from
> across disciplines. These students can then serve as mentors in the
> same program to the next year's freshmen class and are able to
> fast-track into research groups across campus. It seems to be a
> terrific way to challenge and continue to nurture talented students in
> NS&M. The inquiry/methodology course component of their program
> intrigues me. I wonder if we can't use the RHET courses better. Could
> we push lectures on the scientific method, current topics in
> science/engineering, ethics, MASH-type content, business, etc. into a
> redesigned RHET for students who have interests in NS&M/engineering?
> Would this compromise the goals of RHET? I have had many discussions
> with students about the RHET offering. Maybe we need different flavors
> of RHET based on major or general interest area. I guess I am
> envisioning a course which could be taught using interdisciplinary
> instruction from a variety of our better instructors across schools that
> would both excite and challenge the beginning UTD student and provide a
> foundation for them to immerse themselves in quality learning
> experiences outside of the classroom setting as they matriculate through
> UTD. If done right, this could be a terrific introduction to both UTD
> and how learning is really different at the university level. Maybe I'm
> suffering from a Zinfandel (albeit a good one) - induced delusion, but I
> want to give some more thought to this. I'm interested in providing a
> relevant, technically sound and important course early in our student's
> university life that peaks their interest like an excellent book or
> well-organized documentary and is a stepping stone to research. It
> should demonstrate the significance of all university components in
> understanding and tackling problems. I recently learned of a course no
> longer offered at UTD that was apparently quite successful. It involved
> learning music from a music professor, physics professor and engineering
> professor. I would like to take a course like that now! We could also
> teach students how to learn in such a course - a big Matt Goeckner topic
> and alignment from high school issue. Obviously, these aren't refined
> thoughts yet. I have much to organize before the June 11/13 meetings
> where we will begin to hash out QEP specifics.
>
>
>
>
>
>

Subject: Physics Inputs
Date: Monday, June 4, 2007 5:02 PM
From: Xinchou Lou <xinchou@utdallas.edu>
To: John W Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Cc: John H Hoffman <jhoffman@utdallas.edu>, Roderick A Heelis <heelis@utdallas.edu>, Phyllis Jean <Phyllis.Jean@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Physics Inputs

Dear John,

Please find Physics faculty's input:

1. Coordinate our undergraduate service courses
more closely with the math department.

2. Institute "zero credit hour" recitation courses that
the students must attend.

3. Hire a "lab czar" whose job is to maintain demo
equipment, put together new demos, and set them
up prior to each lecture.

4. Support for student-faculty social events/trips.

5. Support for real release time for faculty supervising undergraduate
research. An undergrad requires as much attention if not more
attention than a grad student, but the rewards are pretty meager. The
coin of the realm should be release time.

6. Provide support for the Women in Physics summer camp so that the
organizers have more time to focus on activities outside of
fund-raising.

--Xinchou

Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, June 6, 2007 1:36 PM
From: Ahn, Jung-Mo <jungmo@utdallas.edu>
Reply-To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
To: <nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I agree. I would like to point out that TAs for Organic Chemistry lecture courses are also needed for grading and tutoring.

Jungmo

-----Original Message-----
From: nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu [mailto:nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu] On Behalf Of Warren Goux
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2007 4:00 PM
To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I think that TAs in gen chem lecture would be very helpful. This would allow for more contact hours and free professors up to concentrate their energy on improving the course rather than hours spent grading exams/quizzes. We might even make attendance at workshops run by TAs mandatory. This would also allow for the possibility of having students turn in homework for grading at each workshop session. Given the scarcity of available TAs we might consider hiring undergrads to do the work.

Have undergrad TAs in the lab sections as well.

John Sibert wrote:
> Dear All,
>
> As you may recall, our university is required to develop a Quality
> Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The
> plan needs to be focused and should be driven by data. A QEP Council with
> broad campus representation was formed and has been discussing a plan
> centered on improving math and science education at UTD (based, in part, on
> data collected from gateway courses in math and chemistry). Considering our
> history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science
> and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. As the
> director of the QEP, I am writing to request that the chemistry department
> compile a list of resources/actions that we feel would improve student
> learning and enhance the student experience within our department. I do not
> want the list to be resource limited. Obviously, our actual QEP will be
> tied to available resources. However, if our goal is excellence in math and
> science education, I think it is useful to identify everything that we would
> like to have/do. While the summer undoubtedly precludes a formal
> departmental meeting, I am requesting that a subset of the faculty get
> together Thursday or Friday of next week to discuss this list. Who is
> available next Thursday (June 7) or Friday (June 8)? I am also requesting
> that individuals e-mail their ideas to me over the next week. I am happy to
> compile and distribute them prior to the meeting. A sampling of suggested
> action items is as follows:
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> Creation of a Math and Science Success Center – perhaps placed in
> residential housing

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> Instructor/TA Development (It is difficult if not impossible to find a top
> notch research university that doesn't have a faculty/TA development
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> Offer Honors general and organic chemistry with lab (offer honors courses
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> a conference
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> Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help
> "align" students coming to UTD
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> Expand the SI program
>
> Thanks,
>
> John
>

Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, June 6, 2007 2:51 PM
From: Warren Goux <wgoux@utdallas.edu>
Reply-To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
To: <nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I know some TAs have a better knack for teaching than other but in general I think our undergrads often learn better from someone in their generation.

Ahn, Jung-Mo wrote:
> I agree. I would like to point out that TAs for Organic Chemistry lecture courses are also needed for grading and tutoring.
>
> Jungmo
>
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> From: nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu [mailto:nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu] On Behalf Of Warren Goux
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>> Expand the SI program
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>> Thanks,
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>> John
>>
>>
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>
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Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.
Date: Wednesday, June 6, 2007 3:49 PM
From: Donovan C. Haines <haines@utdallas.edu>
Reply-To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
To: <nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I probably won't make the meeting because I am showing the OrgII lab students the NMR and mass spec tomorrow afternoon.

Sometimes interest is a major issue. A medicinal chemistry lecture series/journal club might be helpful (nearly all students in Organic plan to go into health professions, not research science). I find HHMI Holiday lectures (biomedical lectures aimed at a good senior high school audience but given by top notch HHMI researchers) to be excellent lectures. Something along this line aimed at Chemistry in Medicine for a freshman level audience might really generate interest in the students. The talks would attempt to show the importance of chemistry in an area of medical research. Classes can give points or use other carrots to get students to attend one or two talks each semester. This can potentially be combined with visiting high school audiences.

Of course you may get a more technical talk out of a visiting speaker for the department as well.

A related idea that I understand has been attempted by Biology in the past is to have video feeds of good UTSW lectures combined with a faculty/grad student led follow-up discussion.

****
Dr. Donovan C. Haines

Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Department of Chemistry
University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688, M/S BE26
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

Ph: 972-883-4542
Fax: 972-883-2925
Office: Berkner Hall, BE2.518

http://www.utdallas.edu/~haines/
****

-----Original Message-----
From: nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu
[mailto:nsm.chem.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu] On Behalf Of John Sibert
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 3:01 PM
To: nsm.chem.fac@utdallas.edu
Subject: [nsm.chem.fac] Re: Request for input from Chemistry Dept.

I would like to invite all interested faculty to meet on Thursday, June 7th from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM in the large conference room to discuss the details in the e-mail below. If you cannot make the meeting, I encourage you to e-mail your thoughts on ways to improve education in math and science

(chemistry, in particular) at UTD.

Thanks,

John

On 5/30/07 3:46 PM, "John Sibert" <sibertj@utdallas.edu> wrote:

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>
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> Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help
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> Expand the SI program
>
> Thanks,
>
> John

Subject: FW: [lib] FW: Library Directors Award gets Home page billing at UTD
Date: Friday, June 8, 2007 9:10 AM
From: Venetis, Mary J <mxv062000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [lib] FW: Library Directors Award gets Home page billing at UTD

John,

FYI: This may be something for the QEP council to consider – embedding or incorporating librarian and library resources within the course(s). Whatever the ultimate project may be for QEP, I would like to see the library and our staff become part of providing information fluency and assisting in developing critical thinking, research and analytical skills. That includes finding answers to the "why" and "how" as discussed during the weekly meetings.

On a personal note, the QEP council meetings are also helping me to learn more about the university itself, and the various concerns. The more I learn, the better I can to provide some ideas.

I went back to the strategic planning document and I found two titles that may be tweaked into a QEP title.
Discovering Tomorrow's Inventions Today (Initiative One)
Preparing Students for Tomorrow's Challenges (Initiative Two)

QEP title:
Preparing Students in Discovering Tomorrow's Inventions and Challenges Today

Mary Jo

Mary Jo Venetis

Associate Library Director

Eugene McDermott Library, MC33

The University of Texas at Dallas

Richardson, TX 75083-0643

maryjo.venetis@utdallas.edu

From: lib-bounce@utdallas.edu [mailto:lib-bounce@utdallas.edu] **On Behalf Of** Safley, Ellen D
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2007 2:04 PM
To: lib@utdallas.edu
Subject: [lib] FW: Library Directors Award gets Home page billing at UTD

Kudos to Stephanie, Carol, and Loreen--

Stephanie worked with two faculty members, Drs. Ledbetter and Nix, to "embed" a librarian within online courses offered by our programs in Science Education. Stephanie used WebCT to hold online sessions with the students, build many online tutorials which simulated in-person instruction in the use of library databases and other tools, reminded all students when their assignments were due, and acted as a consultant for the instructors in how best to use the Library within this environment, and. She handled dozens of questions from these students. Many of them acknowledged Stephanie's assistance by asking if she would help them again during the summer. The entry from the Science Education program took top honors for the UT Library Directors' Award for Excellence in Library Resource Integration.

Loreen worked with Marilyn Kaplan in the School of Management by providing the same sort of instruction through Blackboard. Kaplan's application was a finalist.

Carol marketed this award to bring the librarians and faculty together within this program. She was on the awards committee

for 2 years.

The Library's Information Literacy program considers these relationships essential for handling instruction in the online environment of the future.

Congratulations to all of you for this achievement.

Ellen Safley
Senior Associate Director
University of Texas at Dallas Libraries

From: owner-offcamp@lists.cc.utexas.edu [mailto:owner-offcamp@lists.cc.utexas.edu] **On Behalf Of** Barksdale, Terry
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2007 1:26 PM
To: utlib-directors@lists.cc.utexas.edu
Cc: sfulton@mdanderson.org; Deirdre Mc donald; offcamp@lists.cc.utexas.edu
Subject: Library Directors Award gets Home page billing at UTD

The UT Library Directors' Award for Excellence in Library Resource Integration was presented to Dr. Cynthia Ledbetter and Dr. Rebekah Nix at IOL May 25th in Austin.

A big thank you goes to the awards committee for their work to recognize faculty who integrate library activities and resources into their curriculum and the librarians who support them. This committee raised awareness about the award, encouraged nominations, reviewed nominations and recommended the winners slate, attended the conference, prepared notes for the award presenter, and took care of a myriad of other details that go into a successful award process.

UT Dallas has posted an announcement about the award winners on the front page of the UTD website in addition to a more lengthy story about the award winners.

http://www.utdallas.edu/ (top left corner)

http://www.utdallas.edu/nsm/scimathed/news/2007/nix-ledbetter.html

We appreciate UTD Librarians who have worked with faculty and generated a finalist and the winning nomination this year. Well done.

Terry Barksdale
UT TeleCampus
www.uttc.org <http://www.uttc.org>
www.uttclibrary.org <http://www.uttclibrary.org/>
1.888.TEXAS16 (Monday through Friday, 8 to 5 Central)
1.866.321.2988 (24 x 7 Technical Support)

Subject: Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP
Date: Friday, June 8, 2007 4:02 PM
From: Don Gray <dongray@utdallas.edu>
To: <mcb-faculty@utdallas.edu>, <mcb-lecturers@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, Myron Salamon <salamon@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP

MCB faculty,
John Sibert would like our input regarding a QEP quality enhancement plan centered on math and science education for UTD. His email request and explanations are below.
My thought is that a good plan for our location in the North Texas area would be one that provides the faculty release time, space and funding to accommodate HS students, and our own majors, in science laboratory projects. I think we all receive many requests from our majors and from students in Plano and Richardson who want to be involved in science projects, but we are limited in the time and space that can be committed to help very many of them. Ross Perot commented just this past Tuesday on how poorly we are doing in encouraging the next generation of students to succeed in science.
I do not think that the QEP should emphasize the subject matter of a specific science.
Please send directly to John Sibert any comments or suggestions you may have. I would appreciate being copied.
Thanks.
Don

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: Request for input from Biology Dept.
Date: Wed, 30 May 2007 15:21:20 -0500
From: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
To: Gonzalez, Juan E <jgonzal@utdallas.edu>
CC: <dongray@utdallas.edu>

Hi Don and Juan,

As you may recall, our university is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The plan needs to be focused and should be driven by data. A QEP Council with broad campus representation was formed and has been discussing a plan centered on improving math and science education at UTD (based, in part, on data collected from gateway courses in math and chemistry). Considering our history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. As the director of the QEP, I am writing to request from you a list of resources/actions that you feel would improve student learning and enhance the student experience within your department. When compiling your list, please do not be resource limited. Obviously, our actual QEP will be tied to available resources. However, if our goal is excellence in math and science education, I think it is useful to identify everything that we would like to have/do. While the summer undoubtedly precludes a formal departmental meeting, perhaps a departmental leader can poll the faculty by e-mail or speak for the department and develop this list. A sampling of suggested action items from chemistry is as follows:

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Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at a conference

Use ATEC (see below) to create media that will supplement existing courses or help
"align" students coming to UTD

Expand the SI program (see below)

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Associate Professor
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

ATEC is Arts and Technology - it is run through A&H, but, as I understand, began as a joint venture between A&H and ECSS (http://iiae.utdallas.edu). Tom Linehan is in charge of it. They have the potential to provide creative mechanisms for helping students learn.

"SI" refers to "Supplementary Instruction", a program run by Mary Kaye Adams, the Director of our Learning Resource Center (http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/ugraddean/lrcsupp.html). In short, this program puts our best undergraduate students in the roles of supplementary instructor in various courses. It has been quite popular and successful in general chemistry.

Please keep in mind that these are just a few suggestions that have come from chemistry and are by no means an exhaustive list. Nor do they represent a final list of what we plan on doing. I provided them to give some examples of some ideas that have been considered. I am

actually hoping to get new ideas from other departments in addition to thoughts about some of these suggestions.

Thanks for you help, Don.

Subject: RE: [nsm.mcb.fac] Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP
Date: Saturday, June 9, 2007 1:06 AM
From: Pace, Betty S <bxp031000@utdallas.edu>
To: <dongray@utdallas.edu>, <mcb-faculty@utdallas.edu>, <mcb-lecturers@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Salamon, Myron B" <mxs068100@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: [nsm.mcb.fac] Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP

Dear John:

This sounds like a worth while endeavor and you have our support.

As you know (or may not know) the Sickle Cell Disease Research Center has since 2003 conducted a formal training program for high school, undergraduate student and post baccalaureate students. It would have been nice to have representation or an invitation to join the campuswide committee. Currently we have ~15 students participating in summer research that is run by Ms. Rosie Peterson. Faculty from chemistry, MCB, engineering and computer science have participated every year!

I agree with Ross Perot, we are not doing enough to encourage young people to pursue science as a career. It is unfortunate there is a lack of communication in NS&M about the effort that my staff put into supporting these students each year. My hope is that this will improve in the future.

Thanks
Betty Pace

From: nsm.mcb.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu on behalf of Don Gray
Sent: Fri 6/8/2007 4:02 PM
To: mcb-faculty@utdallas.edu; mcb-lecturers@utdallas.edu
Cc: Sibert, John W; Salamon, Myron B
Subject: [nsm.mcb.fac] Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP

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Associate Professor
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
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Conversation: [nsm.mcb.fac] Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP

John,

I agree with Don's idea. I would expand it and give it a different twist to create something similar to what I saw some years ago on a visit to Northern Colorado. I was very impressed by their Mathematics and Science Teaching (MAST) Institute. This institute is devoted to improve mathematics and science education, within the University, the State, and nationally. It is sponsored by UNC's School of Biological Sciences; School of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Physics; and School of Mathematical Sciences (which correlates closely with our school's units) and at UTD, it should also be sponsored by EE and CS. Please visit their web page (http://mast.unco.edu/) at your convenience. As I mentioned, I was very impressed by the way in which they brought together all the University stakeholders, the surrounding community and the state to create new programs with the goal of improving science and math education. This could fit beautifully with our plans to build the new science education building and the effort to reenergize the SciEd program.

Juan

Juan E. González
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-----Original Message-----
From: nsm.mcb.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu [mailto:nsm.mcb.fac-bounce@utdallas.edu] On Behalf Of Don Gray
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2007 4:02 PM
To: mcb-faculty@utdallas.edu; mcb-lecturers@utdallas.edu
Cc: Sibert, John W; Salamon, Myron B
Subject: [nsm.mcb.fac] Request for input from Biology Dept. for QEP

MCB faculty,
John Sibert would like our input regarding a QEP quality enhancement plan centered on math and science education for UTD. His email request and explanations are below.
My thought is that a good plan for our location in the North Texas area would be one that provides the faculty release time, space and funding to accommodate HS students, and our own majors, in science laboratory projects. I think we all receive many requests from our majors and from students in Plano and Richardson who want to be involved in science projects, but we are limited in the time and space that can be committed to help very many of them. Ross Perot commented just this past Tuesday on how poorly we are doing in encouraging the next

generation of students to succeed in science.
I do not think that the QEP should emphasize the subject matter of a specific science.
Please send directly to John Sibert any comments or suggestions you may have. I would appreciate being copied.
Thanks.
Don

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: Request for input from Biology Dept.
Date: Wed, 30 May 2007 15:21:20 -0500
From: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
To: Gonzalez, Juan E <jgonzal@utdallas.edu>
CC: <dongray@utdallas.edu>

Hi Don and Juan,

As you may recall, our university is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The plan needs to be focused and should be driven by data. A QEP Council with broad campus representation was formed and has been discussing a plan centered on improving math and science education at UTD (based, in part, on data collected from gateway courses in math and chemistry). Considering our history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. As the director of the QEP, I am writing to request from you a list of resources/actions that you feel would improve student learning and enhance the student experience within your department. When compiling your list, please do not be resource limited. Obviously, our actual QEP will be tied to available resources. However, if our goal is excellence in math and science education, I think it is useful to identify everything that we would like to have/do. While the summer undoubtedly precludes a formal departmental meeting, perhaps a departmental leader can poll the faculty by e-mail or speak for the department and develop this list. A sampling of suggested action items from chemistry is as follows:

Creation of a Math and Science Success Center – perhaps placed in residential housing

Instructor/TA Development (It is difficult if not impossible to find a top notch research university that doesn't have a faculty/TA development center.)

Redesign general and organic chemistry laboratories

Offer Honors Chemistry with lab (offer honors courses across NS&M)

Provide funds for student organizations to perform community activities (our students are potentially terrific ambassadors for the university and would benefit from the civic duty)

Align the existing curriculum in chemistry

Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at a conference

Use ATEC (see below) to create media that will supplement existing courses or help
"align" students coming to UTD

Expand the SI program (see below)

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Associate Professor
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e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

ATEC is Arts and Technology - it is run through A&H, but, as I understand, began as a joint venture between A&H and ECSS (http://iiae.utdallas.edu). Tom Linehan is in charge of it. They have the potential to provide creative mechanisms for helping students learn.

"SI" refers to "Supplementary Instruction", a program run by Mary Kaye Adams, the Director of our Learning Resource Center (http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/ugraddean/lrcsupp.html). In short, this program puts our best undergraduate students in the roles of supplementary instructor in various courses. It has been quite popular and successful in general chemistry.

Please keep in mind that these are just a few suggestions that have come from chemistry and are by no means an exhaustive list. Nor do they represent a final list of what we plan on doing. I provided them to give some examples of some ideas that have been considered. I am actually hoping to get new ideas from other departments in addition to thoughts about some of these suggestions.

Thanks for you help, Don.

Subject: Re: Math/Science Center
Date: Monday, June 11, 2007 3:04 PM
From: Michael Biewer <biewerm@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Math/Science Center

In an ideal world, where we start from scratch and build this center the way it should, I see it encompassing many things already present on campus and building upon them. For example, the SI system on campus should be assumed by this new center. The SIs currently have to beg for rooms to handle their SI duties. As a consequence the rooms are often not assigned until ~three weeks into the semester. This center could make the entire SI system more efficient.

Things I envision the new center should include:

Rooms for SIs to handle meetings (the rooms should be able to accommodate ~50 people).

Rooms which may be used as office hours for professors who need sites on campus. Professors in WESTEC and NSERL need places to offer office hours. While I do not think everyone needs to schedule hours there, many people need a place and others might prefer to have a convenient place for office hours.

Computer resources that can be accessed by students at various hours. Many lower division classes can benefit by having software available for students (e.g. organic could have ChemDraw and Spartan type programs which are not available to students in these large classes at all). Students in upper division classes can also have capabilities to do computer work. In chemistry, many upper division experiments use computer resources which are only available in the computer room during class hours. Having a place where programs can be accessed at different hours will help the professor and students.

An area can be used for "dry" labs for the lower division students. This is somewhat of a dirty word around here, but I think there is some benefit to dry labs if done properly. In organic, for example, this space can be used for NMR interpretation. Spectra can be accessed and assigned. Modules could be made for studying NMR, IR, MS, etc. which could enhance the labs we currently offer.

Perhaps we can install a room equipped with state-of-the-art electronic interaction systems. We have been hesitant to install response systems in the large lecture halls, but perhaps this ~50 seat room could be equipped with systems where the students can respond in real time (either by answering questions or drawing structures real time). Such a room would aid the SIs and also allow professors to use the room for test preps.

At universities with a language department, they have sites where students can listen to recorded texts in various languages to learn the spoken word. We can have a similar setup for the students in math/science by having a place where electronic help can be placed for the students. The student shows up and loads some organic help tutorial (similar to the dry lab scenario above) which has been prepared and goes from there.

Resources needed:

Besides the physical space and equipment needed, the center would need someone in charge who runs the facility. The person in charge can coordinate the SIs (who I see in greater numbers with this setup). The schedule can be made where people are available for help in the specific areas during whatever hours are established. The SI for example might be available one night a week for walk-up questions (while another SI has the next night) and still have a specific hour each week where they run a more established help session in the break out room (similar to what they do now). The center can also be a resource to help faculty/TA/SIs become better instructors. Either the person in charge, or other employees will have the specific task of helping improve teaching on campus. We currently have people doing some of these jobs now, but it is not organized and not known enough by everybody.

That is what I see off the top of my head. If I thought about it more and looked at some things being done elsewhere, the ideas might coalesce to something more coherent.

On Jun 11, 2007, at 2:22 PM, John Sibert wrote:

> Actually, we can just do this by e-mail. I would like to get your
> thoughts
> on specific capabilities/resources that you would like to see the
> Math/Science Success Center have. How do you see it being used? I
> agree
> that the Center is better placed in the proposed quadrangle (i.e.
> the old
> cafeteria/physics labs in Founders North) and that it should be
> visible and
> inviting. Thanks for your input.
>
> John
>
>
> On 6/11/07 1:54 PM, "Michael Biewer" <biewerm@utdallas.edu> wrote:
>
>
>> Come to my office whenever you are ready. Earlier probably would be
>> better for me.
>>
>>
>> On Jun 11, 2007, at 1:49 PM, John Sibert wrote:
>>
>>
>>> Hi Mike,
>>>
>>> Can we chat for 15 to 30 minutes about a proposed Math and Science
>>> Success
>>> Center? Are you free this afternoon - 4:00 ish?
>>>
>>> John
>>>
>>>

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>>>
>>
>>
>
>
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Subject: Re: QEP Council Meeting
Date: Wednesday, June 13, 2007 1:30 PM
From: David L Lewis <dlewis@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Nelsen, Robert S" <nelsen@utdallas.edu>, "Jester, Debbie J" <jester@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Nelsen, Jody" <jnelsen@utdallas.edu>, "Rogers, Susan A" <sxr061200@utdallas.edu>, "Taylor, April A" <aat053000@utdallas.edu>, "Harpham, Jessica M" <jmh047000@utdallas.edu>, "Aaron, Kimberly A" <kaa023000@utdallas.edu>, "Gregg, Arthur L" <agregg@utdallas.edu>, "Wright, J. Scott" <jsw062000@utdallas.edu>, "McIntyre, Christa" <cmr067000@utdallas.edu>, "Holmes, Jennifer S" <jholmes@utdallas.edu>, "Chaffin, Mary C" <chaf@utdallas.edu>, "Goeckner, Matthew J" <goeckner@utdallas.edu>, "Montgomery, Homer A" <mont@utdallas.edu>, "Butler, Lynn K" <lbutler@utdallas.edu>, "Venetis, Mary J" <mxv062000@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Council Meeting

John,
The attachment contains a list of action items from the mathematics department.

--On Sunday, June 10, 2007 11:18 PM -0500 "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu> wrote:

> Dear All,
>
> We will be meeting this week at the usual times. The agenda for the
> next two weeks is the same: Develop the specific action items for the
> QEP.
>
> Thanks,
>
> John
>

David L. Lewis, Senior Lecturer
Dept. of Mathematical Sciences
University of Texas at Dallas
Phone: 972.883.6037
email: dlewis@utdallas.edu

QEP

Math Dept proposed action items

1. Develop a mentoring system, with upper division math students assisting students in our service courses and majors.

2. Have a NSM person charged with looking at students grades to determine the effectiveness of any adopted action item.

3. Alter the precalculus course so that it better prepares students for the science calculus sequence.

4. Look at the College Algebra course content and determine if it adequately prepares students for Precalculus.

5. Develop honors courses.

6. Strengthen Math Learning Center: have more staff able to assist students in more of our service courses and encourage students to get the help they need.

7. Develop readiness tests and measure their effectiveness.

8. Come up with a method to identify 2417 students that are at risk and devise a plan to help them succeed or create a new preparatory course for them to fall back into.

9. Establish a math common room for students and professors to meet and talk. Obtain and use more notice boards for math related items. For example, current or published student research and upcoming conferences.

10. Survey the students themselves to see what they think would enhance their mathematics learning experience or install suggestion boxes in the various classrooms and lecture theaters.

11. Encourage an exchange of ideas between instructors for ways to improve various aspects of the teaching process.

Concerns: implementation, workload credit for faculty, senior lecturers, stipend for mentoring students.....

Subject: RE: Quality Enhancement Plan
Date: Thursday, June 14, 2007 4:33 PM
From: Hulse, Russell A <rah043000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Keithly, Beth K" <keithly@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Quality Enhancement Plan

Hi John,

Good to hear from you, and also good to learn that you are heading up the QEP! I agree that this fits in well with UTD's goals, and I like the ideas you mentioned.

I will be at UTD next week and I would enjoy chatting with you about this. I have asked Beth Keithly to arrange something on my schedule. I will be spending almost all my time next week at planning meetings at the MNS, but should have some time Wednesday afternoon, if I recall correctly.

Here are a few thoughts off the top of my head. Not surprisingly, they correspond to things I have already been trying to do at UTD:

- Adding exciting and intriguing science and technology exhibits to public spaces, student gathering areas, etc. I have already had some discussions with Nicole Small at MNS about doing this. My idea is that students would also play a significant role in making this happen, as well as being the "audience".
-
- A more advanced version of the above is an idea to have a significant (multi-million $) science museum / science center facility on campus, again as a joint project with MNS. We actually started to plan on this recently, but came to the conclusion that it was premature, given present limitations on resources, including both people and fundraising capacity. However, we have just deferred this idea off into the future, we have not abandoned it. Such a center would be oriented for public use as well as use by UTD students, and UTD students would be involved with exhibit design, serve as docents for school groups, etc.
-
- Independently of the above, we can have UTD students work with MNS to create / support exhibits at MNS. These could include ones they already are planning as well as ones which highlight UTD research. As you know, I have already worked with students on such projects, and this is also very much in the spirit of the great things you are doing with the Chemistry students association.
-
- I am also an advocate of increased emphasis on project-based learning, and of starting this as early as possible and across as wide a range of students as possible. My friend and colleague Chris Rogers is the Director of the Center for Engineering Education at Tufts. The CEEO focuses on project-based learning from grade school through undergraduate, with a special emphasis on using Lego

robotics kits to foster this. Chris is very interested in collaborations, and I would be happy to bring him in to these discussions. Partly as a result of my advocacy efforts in this area, the Engineering School will be using robotics in their summer experience for entering freshmen.

I note that these ideas have some significant overlap with what you are also thinking about. I look forward to discussing all this further with you!

Russell

From: Sibert, John W
Sent: Tue 6/12/2007 6:19 PM
To: Hulse, Russell A
Subject: Quality Enhancement Plan

Hi Russell,

I hope all is well. As you may know, our university is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The plan needs to be focused and should be driven by data. A QEP Council with broad campus representation was formed and has been discussing a plan centered on improving math and science education at UTD (based, in part, on data collected from gateway courses in math and chemistry). Considering our history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. As the director of the QEP, I would greatly appreciate any suggestions that you may have concerning resources/actions that would improve student learning and enhance the student experience at UTD in math and science. I am particularly interested in your thoughts on the best methods for successfully implementing faculty and/or TA development. I, of course, would enjoy chatting with you next time you are in Richardson (if you are brave enough to head our way in the summer months!).

A sampling of suggested action items from chemistry is as follows:

Creation of a Math and Science Success Center

Faculty/TA Development (It is difficult if not impossible to find a top notch research university that doesn't have a faculty/TA development center.)

Redesign general and organic chemistry laboratories to make them more problem-solving based

Offer Honors Chemistry with lab (offer honors courses across NS&M)

Provide funds for student organizations to perform community activities (our students are potentially terrific ambassadors for the university and would benefit from the civic duty)

Align the existing curriculum in chemistry

Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings to better engage students

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at a conference

Use ATEC (Arts and Technology) to create media that will supplement existing courses or help "align" students coming to UTD

Expand the SI (supplementary instructors - our best undergraduate juniors and seniors) program

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Associate Professor
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: Re: Input request from math/sci ed.
Date: Sunday, June 17, 2007 6:56 AM
From: Homer Montgomery <mont@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Input request from math/sci ed.

Hi John,

I have had little (actually, no) success getting input from my faculty. They are absorbed with other issues including hiring a new department head. I am also so far away that I am out of mind. All of your points below have strong merit as far as I am concerned.

Particularly:
Creation of a Math and Science Success Center – a definite!! Certainly Joylynn can spearhead this effort. A second part of it can be worked into the UTeach program just as has been done in Austin.

Instructor/TA Development - again, yes. Many of the TA are excellent. I don't see why they cannot be given release time to mentor their peers in addition to a more formal and structured effort.

Redesign general and organic chemistry laboratories - and many other general laboratories. You provided examples of how to better do this. There are plenty of studies to support this remodeling.

Offer Honors Chemistry with lab (offer honors courses across NS&M) - and across NS&M. The incentive is good. The culture in some departments needs improvement.

Provide funds for student organizations to perform community activities - UTD seems to be headed this way anyway. I will have a new program online within a year based on this one although leave out the religious flavor: http://www.mercer.edu/mom/ Course will be a hybrid of service and academics and conducted in Africa and other places.

Align the existing curriculum in chemistry - as well as others.

Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings - or across NS&M.

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at
a conference - wishful thinking? - would certainly be a strong positive. Probably wishful thinking.

Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help "align" students coming to UTD. ATEC is not all that well-respected I am finding. Many NS&M types think it is squishy. This might not be easy.

Expand the SI program - yes.

Homer

On May 30, 2007, at 14:49, John Sibert wrote:

Hi Homer and Cynthia,

As you both know, our university is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that will enhance student learning on campus. The plan needs to be focused and should be driven from data. A QEP Council with broad campus representation was formed (Homer is on it) and has been discussing a plan centered on improving math and science education at UTD. Considering our history as a research center/university with an emphasis on math, science and engineering and our strategic plan, this QEP topic fits us well. I am writing to request from you a list of resources/actions that your department feels would improve student learning and enhance the student experience in math and science at UTD. When compiling your list, please do not be resource limited. Obviously, our actual QEP will be tied to available resources. However, if our goal is excellence in math and science education, I think it is useful to identify everything that we would like to have/do. Also, do not be concerned with how minor or major the individual items on the list are. While the summer probably precludes a formal departmental meeting, perhaps a departmental leader can poll the faculty by e-mail or speak for the department and develop this list. A sampling of suggested action items from chemistry is as follows:

Creation of a Math and Science Success Center – perhaps placed in residential housing

Instructor/TA Development (It is difficult if not impossible to find a top notch research university that doesn't have a faculty/TA development center.)

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Offer Honors Chemistry with lab (offer honors courses across NS&M)

Provide funds for student organizations to perform community activities (our students are potentially terrific ambassadors for the university and would benefit from the civic duty)

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Rethink our current general chemistry I and II offerings

Provide funds for undergraduate student travel to present their research at a conference

Use ATEC to create media that will supplement existing courses or help "align" students coming to UTD

Expand the SI program

Thanks,

John
--
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Subject: UG stuff from EE
Date: Monday, June 18, 2007 10:54 AM
From: Matthew Goeckner <goeckner@utdallas.edu>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: UG stuff from EE

FYI

Matthew Goeckner
Associate Professor
Electrical Engineering
Director - International Center for Advanced Materials Processing
PO Box 830688 M/S EC33 (2601 N. Floyd for packages)
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My definition of a free society is a society where it is safe to be unpopular. <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/1383.html>

Adlai E. Stevenson Jr. <http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Adlai_E._Stevenson_Jr./> **(1900 - 1965)**, *Speech in Detroit, 7 Oct. 1952*

Undergraduate curriculum committee Recommendations

Fixing the Labs

Do the following to the labs

- Junior / senior labs
    - Cut back on cookie cutter labs
    - Lab sequences tied tightly to class – as much as possible
    - Push design at end of labs (~Last half of the semester)
    - Somewhat follow T Tech's model inside of the labs (Nathan considers this to be the 'gold standard')
        - Labs meet twice each week
            - One session a project review (Keeps projects in line and on time)
            - One session a 'professional development class (One of the labs was working through the "7 Habits" book)
            - Students must schedule lab time to work on their project
            - Students must 'check out' lab equipment and bench space as needed
            - Must be staffed by senior TA – no students in lab by themselves (Seniors were given a little more leeway on this item.)
            - All classes follow the same format
                - 2 classes/ week
                - Students work independently
                - Equipment checked out as needed
            - Level of complexity increases as level of class increases
- 1102
    - Compress what is currently taught into the early weeks of the class
    - Add an excitement project at the end (probably via Legos)
    - Make the lab 3 hours long but keep it 1 credit hour
    - Add some professional development and learning skills to the class (mixed into the above)

Consider (For later?)

- Possibly cut labs to zero hours (making the class and lab 3 hours total) – or tie them into the classes (making the class & lab a four hour combination)
    - This would mean that the labs would have to be the same size as the class so that there would be a single lab section for each class. (There was some thought that this might cut out our part time students.)
- *Need to talk to the Dean about funding overhaul of ~2 labs / semester until all redone. (This funding will be in both faculty time and equipment costs.)*
    - Start at lowest level and work upward

Fixing the global concept map

- Setting up the committees to fix the Fundamental concept chart (The eye chart)

    - a) Currently there are clear disconnects
    - b) Each committee will have 6 to 8 people (Tenure/Tenure track/Senior Lecturers)
    - c) Each committee chosen from a general area in EE (Systems, Circuits, Applied Science, Cross over terms(?))
    - d) Committee chair from senior faculty
- How the committees will proceed
    - a) Use the class assessments tools that we have created - so the result from these will need to be gathered (KAMRAN!)
    - b) Use the current version of the fundamentals chart
    - c) Have committee chair from each area create a 'straw man' fix
    - d) Have each committee meet to discuss and improve straw man fix = > committee approves suggested changes by vote
    - e) Have committee chairs of each committee meet to fix linkage of proposed solutions
    - f) Reports back by fall.
- Implementation path will be determined after final "Fundamental Concept chart" is complete. (We do need to know what we are doing before we do it!)

Global Issues raised from the class assessments that need to be considered during fix of concept map

- Recitation sessions – which classes need them?
    - Can we get TAs to run these? (Maybe not!)
    - How are they graded
    - They need to be officially scheduled!
- Should entering engineering (EE/TE/CE) students take a mandatory course in MATLAB?
- Better time synchronization of the topics covered in the various sessions of a given class
- Students are ill-prepared in logical thinking and problem solving showing up in simple programming tasks
- Very little skill in the basics of procedural programming is demonstrated by a large population of students (60% - 70%); many have had a course in Java, but a course in C or C++ or similar language would be better suited
- It would be beneficial to have a pre-requisite course presenting the Fourier series and Fourier transform from a pure mathematical stand point, to better prepare for EE3302,
- In general, the mathematical background available to students taking this course is not adequate to the material covered in and the pace of the EE3302 lectures.
    - To alleviate the above obstacles, the TA should offer a 1h/week extra session regularly (as opposed to the currently offered 6 problem solving sessions per semester) to expose students to various practical applications of the material covered.
- At the SACS Day everyone was in agreement that we should IMMEDIATELY start offering 2300, 3300, and maybe 3341 in the two hours lecture, two hours recitation (for three credits) just like Math does now and so do UT-Austin and others.

- You can play with your charts all you want (and I still think numerical methods are not being taught even though of the highest importance) but we really should actually accomplish at least this.
- In EE3350, instructors in both semesters felt that tutorial/problem solving sessions can be beneficial.
- In EE3150, the instructors in both semesters felt that the Lab. Manual needs to be revised.
- Differential Equations issue we identified regarding EE/TE 3301
- Engineering Economy?

Fixing EE 3390 (Professional Communications)

- The timing of 3390 needs to be changed so that it is at the same time as the first lab. (First semester of Junior year)

- 3390 need to include "How to learn", "How to teach", "How to study" leading into how to communicate in technical fields. ("How to study" includes rewrite of lecture notes, index cards, etc)

- It is the understanding of the committee that it is hard for students to get into 3390 – it is basically done on an 'as needed' basis. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT THERE ARE OPEN SPACES IN EACH SEMESTER! We need to students to be able to get in earlier

Subject: RE: QEP Council Meeting
Date: Monday, June 18, 2007 11:47 AM
From: Holmes, Jennifer S <jholmes@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP Council Meeting

Hi John,

Sorry I missed this morning. Got caught up with some things for my son. I have three places to be on Wed at 2 (Faculty Senate, QEP, and proctoring a final exam), so I will miss that meeting.

Here are some thoughts about the working list of items for the QEP.

First, I like the spread of items that are of interest to specific programs and the university in general. I think faculty across the board will appreciate the Math & Science Success center and the Faculty TA/Dev't center.

Second, the NS&M incentives for honors courses (you may want to talk to the Senators from NS&M last year about this), expand SI program, and the realignment of the Chem labs/coursework sounds great.

I think Homer & Robert's comments about the SO money may be on target - it may dilute the effect of the QEP and may duplicate other efforts.

As for ATEC to help "align" students coming to UTD - this is a great idea and highlights one of our most innovative programs. There is no better way to sell UTD than to highlight actual students doing cutting edge work.

Let me know if you need any new input - I'll see you at HPAC tomorrow.

Best,

Jennifer
Jennifer S. Holmes, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Economy and Political Science
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences GR 31
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From: Sibert, John W
Sent: Monday, June 18, 2007 7:55 AM
To: Nelsen, Robert S; Jester, Debbie J
Cc: Nelsen, Jody; Rogers, Susan A; Taylor, April A; Harpham, Jessica M; Aaron, Kimberly A; Gregg, Arthur L; Wright, J. Scott; McIntyre, Christa; Holmes, Jennifer S; Chaffin, Mary C; Goeckner, Matthew J; Montgomery, Homer A; Lewis, David L; Butler, Lynn K; Venetis, Mary J
Subject: QEP Council Meeting

Reminder of this week's meetings: If your schedule permits, please come either to the Monday, 9 AM (BE 2.528) or Wednesday, 2 PM (BE 2.532) slots. We are discussing the QEP action item list with the goals being to provide details for each item and integration of all the items into a cohesive plan.

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: RE: QEP update
Date: Tuesday, June 26, 2007 9:44 AM
From: Venetis, Mary J <mxv062000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP update

John,

I was in Washington DC attending a library conference and returned late last night. Sorry to have missed this meeting.

Are we still scheduled for a 2 pm meeting on Wednesday or is that cancelled due to your meeting with the president and provost?

I also learned two things at the conference that is related to our QEP topic. Miami University at Ohio offers a Faculty/TA development center that is run by librarians and IT department. It has been successful because they did not emphasize remedial assitance. Instead, they focused on how to integrate the latest technologcial tools into the curriculum, and used it as a "launching pad" to draw in faculty in using the center. This may be similar to what Mary Dziorny is doing -- offering new faculty an opportunity for a WebCT bootcamp. Perhaps we could incorporate some elements into the faculty/TA development program within the math/science center.

The University of Delaware has a SI program that is student driven. The program focuses on assisting students in a wide variety of disciplines.

I also am reading the book, Higher Education in the Internet Age by Patricia Senn Breivik. Although this book focuses on information literacy in libraries, there are also "GEMS" throughout the book, discussing the successes of an educational center and faculty/TA development centers.

The library has the book - call number is Z675.U5 B816 2006. Let me know if you would like me to pick up this book for you.

I do not have my QEP notes with me at the moment, but there was a note from the QEP suggestions about offering a partnership with elementary schools for field trips in relation to science and math. I think this is an excellent opportunity for UTD / QEP to get involved in order to provide an interactive exposure to elementary students to science and math. This is also another recruitment tool if we could engage these students at an early age and have them associate science and math with UTD.

Of course, we want the library involved in any aspect!

Mary Jo

From: Sibert, John W
Sent: Thu 6/21/2007 5:18 PM

To: Jester, Debbie J; Butler, Lynn K; Nelsen, Jody; Nelsen, Robert S
Cc: Rogers, Susan A; Montgomery, Homer A; Lewis, David L; McIntyre, Christa; Holmes, Jennifer S; Venetis, Mary J; Taylor, April A; Harpham, Jessica M; Chaffin, Mary C; Goeckner, Matthew J; Gregg, Arthur L; Wright, J. Scott; Aaron, Kimberly A
Subject: QEP update

Dear All,

I will be meeting with the president and provost to update them on the QEP next Wednesday AM. I, therefore, would like to convene as much of the Council as possible on Monday at 9 AM, BE 2.528. There will, of course, be food and coffee. I will have more information to share with you about our action items. I strongly encourage each of you to give some thought to the ways in which a Success Center can be used, how to engage students early and often, the continuing student challenge (i.e. transfer students) and specific details associated with faculty/TA development. You can e-mail your thoughts or bring them to the meeting. We will need to have a vote to approve the QEP topic. I am also attaching the powerpoint presentation of Robert Hilborn, the speaker in today's Sci/Math Education seminar. His research is in the area of STEM education at the undergraduate level. I think you will find this presentation self-explanatory and supportive of the themes in our QEP Talking Points.

Thanks,

John
--
Dr. John W. Sibert
Department of Chemistry
The University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 830688
Richardson, TX 75083-0688

phone: (972) 883-2918
fax: (972) 883-2925
e-mail: sibertj@utdallas.edu

Subject: QEP
Date: Thursday, June 28, 2007 10:45 AM
From: April Taylor <littlea22@gmail.com>
To: <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: QEP

Hi, Dr. Sibert,

In response to the discussion at Monday's meeting, my thought on a better name for "SI" is "PLUS" as an acronym for "peer-led undergraduate study." SI truly is an asset, a little lagniappe, for any course and can help raise a grade to the B- or A-plus range. A little corny, I know, but it emphasizes the "peer" element of the program and reflects my view of SI as well-guided study sessions.

One of the problems for continuing students that just occurred to me is the one-size-fits-all treatment they receive. When I officially transferred to UTD, I was required to attend freshman orientation even though I had already been a full-time student at UTD for a whole semester, had 27 university credit hours, and more than 35 additional credit hours from AP classes. Since then, I have learned that there is a transfer student orientation in place. Even so, the needs of a sophomore transferring from the community college are quite different than those of the post-bac student returning from the working world for a second degree. Such different needs seem to warrant more specialized treatment and preparation. I don't know what programs are currently in place or how logistically pheasable it would be, but I feel some method to differentiate the groups would be more effective in transitioning students into UTD.

Thanks & see you next week,
April

Subject: RE: Our meeting
Date: Tuesday, July 3, 2007 5:41 PM
From: Urquhart, Mary L. <mlk023000@utdallas.edu>
To: "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Our meeting

Hi John,

Sorry it's taken me a week to get back to you, but here is the overlap:

* UTeach Dallas will recruit from among the best and brightest UTD students entering STEM disciplines as freshman and will serve as a recruiting mechanism for bringing talented students interested in STEM fields in DFW area community colleges into UTD.

* The UTeach Initiative will provide increased opportunities for faculty within NS&M to be introduced to recent innovations in teaching and learning in STEM disciplines. Courses using research-based instructional methods are not only important to future teachers – who tend to teach how they have been taught – but to the general STEM undergraduate population. Following the lead of UTeach, we will pay special attention to introductory courses in STEM disciplines that have traditionally served as gatekeeper courses. Providing high-quality STEM course work is the best approach for serving all students.

* Some STEM majors at UTD are already future secondary STEM teachers. Through the UTeach Dallas Initiative we intend to recruit, properly train, and support the very individuals who will be critical in maintaining and strengthening the DFW area pipeline for future UTD STEM students.

* UTeach Dallas is a unique Initiative at UTD, bringing together administrators and faculty from across the university with partners in area school districts and industry for the purpose of providing talented, highly-qualified individuals to serve as secondary STEM teachers in DFW area school districts. This partnership is expected to impact more than secondary education. We fully expect UTeach Dallas will have a positive and lasting impact on general undergraduate STEM education at UTD.

* UTeach Dallas students will have opportunities to participate in paid internships that support the universities educational and outreach goals. We envision supporting UTeach Students as SIs for introductory STEM courses, in UTD's numerous STEM outreach programs such as those conducted by the Center for Space Sciences, the Women in Physics, Society for Women Engineers, the Chemistry Student Association, and Family Science Night events sponsored by NS&M faculty, as well as in informal educational institutions throughout the Metroplex.

You can tell I'm in proposal writing mode. Do you see any possibility that we could get

a (very) quick agreement that UTeach Dallas will work with QEP on the task of strengthening our undergraduate STEM course work and student support programs?

Mary

-----Original Message-----
From: Sibert, John W
Sent: Tue 6/26/2007 6:11 PM
To: Urquhart, Mary L.
Subject: Re: Our meeting

You should see my office! Thanks for talking with me. The outline is attached.

Also, you might wish to check out the article below. I'm sure you've read a tremendous number of these kinds of articles, but this one is relatively recent and has some good quotes.

http://www.aip.org/fyi/2006/039.html

Would you mind e-mailing me a few sentences/bulleted items that show overlap between UTEACH and the QEP? I should have written down what you told me in your office.

Cheers,

John

On 6/26/07 3:47 PM, "Urquhart, Mary L." <mlk023000@utdallas.edu> wrote:

> Thanks for coming by, John. I was very happy to see the suite of ideas you
> and your committee have come up with. Please let me know if I can be of
> assistance as you move forward. Sometime I would also like to get together
> with you to share more on the outreach programs we have going on in our
> departments and student organizations. For some time now I have been wanting
> to talk with you about your outreach efforts, and how we might be able to work
> together in the future.
>
> I also have a small favor to ask. Would you mind sending me an electronic
> version of the document you gave me? As you may have noticed in your visit,
> managing paper is not one of my strengths.
>
> Mary

>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Sibert, John W
> Sent: Tue 6/26/2007 11:29 AM
> To: Urquhart, Mary L.
> Subject: Re: Monday meeting
>
> 2 pm is great – I will stop by. Thanks.
>
>
> On 6/26/07 11:27 AM, "Urquhart, Mary L." <mlk023000@utdallas.edu> wrote:
>
>> > Hi John,
>> >
>> > Sorry for the delay in getting back to you. I'm available most of the
>> > afternoon. Would 2 pm work for you? If not, name another time, and I'll
>> make
>> > sure I'm in my office.
>> >
>> > Mary
>> >
>> >
>> > -----Original Message-----
>> > From: Sibert, John W
>> > Sent: Fri 6/22/2007 6:07 PM
>> > To: Urquhart, Mary L.
>> > Subject: Re: Monday meeting
>> >
>> > Hi Mary,
>> >
>> > Thanks for the quick response. While I have a great fondness for ice
>> cream,
>> > let's get together on Tuesday. My afternoon is free. Please let me know
>> > what time works best for you and I will be happy to come by your office.
>> >
>> > John
>> >
>> >
>> > On 6/22/07 2:05 PM, "Urquhart, Mary L." <mlk023000@utdallas.edu> wrote:
>> >
>>>> >> > Hi John,
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > Are you available on Tuesday afternoon? Monday is rather full,

>>>> unless you
>>>> >> > would like to meet after my afternoon physics class for teachers of
>>>> grades
>>>> >> > 4-8. Of course, you are welcome to visit my class if you like. It
>>>> will be
>>> >> our
>>>> >> > first session this summer and we'll be using the classic ice cream
>>>> making
>>>> >> > activity as a bridge between our study of thermodyamics last spring
>>>> and our
>>>> >> > introduction to the physics of phase change and chemical bonding.
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > Mary
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > -----Original Message-----
>>>> >> > From: Sibert, John W
>>>> >> > Sent: Thu 6/21/2007 5:26 PM
>>>> >> > To: Urquhart, Mary L.
>>>> >> > Subject: Monday meeting
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > Hi Mary,
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > Would you have 30 minutes to chat with me on Monday? I would like to
get
>>>> >> > your ideas on improving education in math and science at UTD.
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > Cheers,
>>>> >> >
>>>> >> > John
>> >
>> >
>> >
>
>
>

Subject: Request for Support for Project to Increase STEM retention at UTD (General Chemstry I)
Date: Wednesday, July 11, 2007 3:49 PM
From: Melton, Lynn A <melton@utdallas.edu>
To: "Salamon, Myron B" <mxs068100@utdallas.edu>, "Coleman, Dean Michael" <coleman@utdallas.edu>
Cc: "Ferraris, John P" <ferraris@utdallas.edu>, "Musselman, Inga H" <imusselm@utdallas.edu>, "Dieckmann, Gregg R" <dieckgr@utdallas.edu>, "Sibert, John W" <sibertj@utdallas.edu>, "Gavva, Sandhya R" <sgavva@utdallas.edu>, "Nielsen, Steven O" <son051000@utdallas.edu>, "Ledbetter, Cynthia E" <ledbeter@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Request for Support for Project to Increase STEM retention at UTD (General Chemstry I)

TO: Dean Myron Salamon
Dean, NS&M

Dean Michael Coleman
Dean of Undergraduate Studies

FROM: Lynn Melton

SUBJECT: Request for Support for Joint Chemistry/SME Project to increase STEM Retention (General Chemistry I)

Support requested from NS&M: Funding for work study student(s) to take attendance in General Chemistry (card swipes)

Support requested from Undergraduate Dean: Assistance in development of a system to intervene to retain "at risk" students

In Fall 2007, I taught an overflow section of CHEM 1311 (General Chemistry), a course which President Daniel has cited as a "STEM gateway course" with far too high a rate of D-F-W grades. In my section, I took attendance, and at the end of the semester, I analyzed the data to ask whether attendance correlated with academic performance. While the numbers (N = 40) are too small for definitive conclusions, one preliminary result stands out: Of the 14 students who missed four or more of the first 21 class sections (half the semester), one earn a B and the others earned D or F.

Stimulated by this pilot study, I developed ways to use inexpensive credit card readers to read the students' Comet Cards and to report the attendance for each student to the instructor in a timely fashion [hardware and software are being tested in Gregg Dieckman's General Chemistry class this Summer.]

This memorandum describes a proposal to make use of this technology in (up to) four sections of General Chemistry this Fall, and to design and carry out experiments to ask whether

- grades correlate with attendance, and
- effective intervention, triggered by attendance data, can be developed.

The overall goals are to increase student performance in the first semester of General Chemistry and to retain more of the enrollees as STEM majors at UTD.

We anticipate that the following NS&M faculty will participate (not all of the General Chemistry instructors have been asked as of this date) with roles described:

Steven Nielsen, Chemistry, instructor CHEM 1311-001
John Sibert, Chemistry, instructor CHEM 1311-002
Gregg Dieckman, Chemistry, instructor CHEM 1311-003
Sandyha Gavva, Chemistry, instructor CHEM 1311-004
Cynthia Ledbetter, SME, experimental design and data analysis
Lynn Melton, Chemistry/SME, hardware and software support

Dean Salamon: In order to take attendance with the Comet card swipes, it will probably be necessary to have two "swipe stations" supervised by a work study student. This student would also use our software to process the data into an attendance record and email that record to the course instructor. There are four sections of General Chemistry for Fall 2007, with starting times of 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 am, and 1:30 pm. We will need funds to pay for the work study student(s).

Dean Coleman: With the attendance data, one can address the question of whether grades correlate with attendance. However, we desire also to use the attendance data, even in Fall 2007, to intervene for students whom the attendance data suggests they are at risk. We will need for UTD to have an effective method for intervention.

I look forward to working with you to refine this proposal and to receiving your support for this effort to increase the number of STEM majors at UTD.

"The road to wisdom
is easy to express.
Err and err and err again,
But less and less and less."
--Piet Hien

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinion,
but not their own facts."
-- Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Subject: Alumni Meeting Notes
Date: Friday, August 10, 2007 8:58 AM
From: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
To: John Sibert <sibertj@utdallas.edu>
Conversation: Alumni Meeting Notes

Attachment is the summary notes for the meeting with alumni from 2001-2006.

Aug. 8 Alumni Meeting - Brief Summary

I had an interesting discussion last Tuesday night with a group of recent alumni (graduation dates ranged from Spring '01 to Spring '06) concerning the QEP and, perhaps more importantly, their varied experiences as students at UTD. Among many, three topics came to the fore during the ninety minute meeting. (1) Without exception, all agreed that issues associated with student life improved tangibly throughout their years at UTD. As a curious aside, some sincerely attributed this to their perception that UTD has changed its recruiting strategy to enroll students who are both academically-talented and well-rounded. (2) There was discussion concerning how their course work prepared them for the workplace. Several felt that the curriculum in their respective majors could have offered a more realistic expectation as to what they would ultimately do as professionals. Such exposure may manifest under the heading "experiential learning", a topic of major interest to classroom educators for at least the last quarter century and one that has been used as a component in QEPs at other universities. (3) Despite the clear recognition for the research and service related responsibilities of their professors, a significant component of the group would have liked a stronger teaching effort in the form of greater contact time and/or course interest.