

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
Quality Enhancement Plan
University of North Carolina Charlotte

Extracts prepared for discussion by Faculty Council 25th Oct, 2012, the titles for the sections that have been cut from this version have been left to indicate the topics covered in the full version. Faculty wishing to see the whole—draft—document may request a copy from John Smail (jsmail@uncc.edu).

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

THE ENGAGED CAMPUS, THE ENGAGED STUDENT

Charlemagne: My lords barons, say whom shall we send up to Saragossa, to [parley with] King Marsiliun?

Duke Neimes: I'll go there for your love; give me therefore the wand, also the glove.

The Song of Roland, a French *chanson de geste*, ca. 1050, verse xvii.

In a pre-literate society a written contract is not much use. Instead, agreements were often enacted in a formal ceremony in order to fix a memory of the relationship in the community's oral tradition. In these ceremonies, a 'gage' was exchanged—a glove for military or diplomatic service, a clod of earth for land tenancy, a ring for marriage. The gage served as a token of the close relationship that was being created, and it symbolized the mutual exchange of privileges and responsibilities that would persist thereafter. The verb "to engage" has its roots in those ceremonies. It means, literally, the act of exchanging gages, the act of entering into a binding, meaningful, and active relationship. At UNC Charlotte, we have chosen to build our QEP around the concept of "engagement" in order to emphasize that the relationship between the student and the university is a partnership which requires the active participation of both parties. Specifically, we believe that for students to benefit to the fullest extent from the opportunities that a college education provides they need to be active partners in the academic experiences that a university makes available to them. To this end, the fundamental goal of UNC Charlotte's Engagement QEP is to develop a program for new freshmen that enable and encourage students to be fully engaged in college learning. To be effective, we believe this academic engagement program has to be instantiated in a course or courses students take during their first year of enrollment.

For many students who attend UNC Charlotte this expectation is a seismic shift given that their previous educational experiences have often enabled a more passive approach to learning. It is therefore essential for the University to be very intentional about the way it interacts with its first-year students and particularly with the new freshman class that enrolls each fall semester. Even before these new students arrive on campus we need to be strategic about the way in which we shape

their understanding of what will be expected of them and what they can expect of us. Once these new students are enrolled, the curriculum they experience has to make manifest both aspirational ‘ways of being’ and practical ‘things to do’ that will enable our new freshmen to be agents of their own personal and educational transformation. UNC Charlotte’s QEP is our plan for achieving these goals.

Central to the QEP are three core student learning outcomes:

- Commitment to success
- Inquiry
- Self and cultural awareness.

These three outcomes are intended to help students set personal and professional goals, develop and evaluate their own capacity for learning, and understand themselves and their role in local and global communities. Pursuing a curriculum that is designed with these outcomes in mind will enable students to become intentional about the choices they make in their path towards academic, professional, and personal development.

UNC Charlotte’s choice of a QEP topic is intentionally broad and intentionally ambitious. In order to effect a fundamental and meaningful improvement in the quality of our undergraduate educational experience, we must aim high. However, in order to establish the parameters that will make this project feasible some qualifications are in order. As should be clear, UNC Charlotte’s QEP understands engagement primarily in terms of academics. There are other ways in which students are engaged while at university—school spirit, campus culture, service—and each is important in its own way, but our focus is on the intellectual and educational realm. For this reason, we expect that students will encounter the QEP primarily in a formal curriculum setting—which is to say in courses that they take during their first semester or year at UNC Charlotte. Those courses are likely to include some co-curricular activities that will push students out of the classroom per se, but nonetheless UNC Charlotte’s QEP is grounded in a classroom experience. In addition, the focus of UNC Charlotte’s QEP is on new freshmen, and the QEP curricula we develop will be courses that these new freshmen will take in the fall and perhaps spring semester. To limit ourselves to the experiences of new freshmen does not imply that engagement is not important for new transfer students, but it recognizes the particular needs of students making the transition from high school to college and the practicalities of what we can reasonably accomplish. Nor does limiting our QEP to new freshmen imply that engagement is not important for students continuing as sophomores, juniors, and seniors. However, the literature on the first-year experience suggests that it is vital reach students early in their college careers in order to establish a foundation upon which to build.

When fully implemented by 2016, UNC Charlotte’s Engagement QEP will provide all new freshmen with the opportunity to participate in a formal engagement curriculum during his or her first year of enrollment. This engagement curriculum

is likely to take different forms in the University's different academic colleges, but in all instances the course will directly address the three core QEP outcomes: commitment to success, inquiry, and self and cultural awareness.

2. QEP PLANNING PROCESS

3. OUTCOMES

UNC Charlotte has defined the outcomes for the QEP – the difference it will make – in two complementary respects. The student learning outcomes operate at the level of the individual student and define the capacities we expect students to demonstrate. The program outcomes, in contrast, operate at the level of the institution or student body and allow us to measure the QEP's impact on student success.

A. Student Learning Outcomes

At the level of the individual student, we expect the QEP to make a difference by providing curricular structures and experiences that will enable more of our students to be more engaged in their college education. We want students to be more active partners in learning and more intentional in their choices, and we expect the QEP to help us achieve these goals. However, stated in this fashion, such goals are not easy to measure. How does one determine the extent of a student's engagement, the 'activeness' of his partnership, the intentionality of her choices? Faced with this problem, the QEP development process has sought to translate these goals into more tangible student learning outcomes that we can measure by means of direct assessment of a student's work.

Given that UNC Charlotte's QEP is in the most general sense an effort to recommit ourselves to delivering on the essential elements of a college education, it made sense for us to start the process of defining student learning outcomes with the "Essential Learning Outcomes" developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) project and the associated VALUE rubrics emerged out of a structured analysis of the value of a college education and offered an outcomes-oriented approach to curriculum development that has already gone extensive validation. Accordingly, the participants at the QEP Summit that took place in September 2011 considered a long list of possible outcomes drawn from the VALUE rubrics. The charge given to participants was to select those outcomes that best fit our collective understanding of what we wanted our students to be able to do as a result of the QEP experience. In essence, the team was asked to map the somewhat intangible concept of the 'engaged student' onto specific and measurable student learning outcomes worked out in the VALUE rubrics. The discussion produced a short list of five student learning outcomes that was later refined down to the three student learning outcomes described below.

As AAC&U intended, we have used the LEAP outcomes and VALUE rubrics as a starting point, adapting them for the particular needs of our institution and the QEP concept. Most importantly, we have recalibrated the outcomes from the four-year focus of the LEAP effort to better reflect the development we can expect of new freshmen during their first year. These changes, however, do not diminish the benefits our QEP derives by basing its student learning outcomes (and assessment) on these AAC&U efforts.

1. COMMITMENT to SUCCESS: Students will identify comprehensive, realistic, and meaningful goals for their collegiate experience, develop intentional strategies for achieving those goals, and revise their goals in light of experience. In particular, students will be able to:

- Set specific and realistic goals
- Identify strategies for achieving those goals
- Identify support networks for achieving those goals
- Take responsibility for achieving success

Connection to engagement:

Students who are active partners in the learning experience have the ability to identify who they want to become and the skills, knowledge, and motivation needed to get there. Commitment to success is obviously important on a small scale (for example as it relates to academic performance in a single course) but for the purpose of the QEP the focus is on a commitment to success as evident on a more holistic scale of the student's collegiate experience and beyond.

2. INQUIRY: Students understand inquiry as an open-ended pursuit of knowledge, driven by curiosity, which builds a foundation for future learning. In particular, students will be able to:

- Understand inquiry (learning) as an open ended, questioning, process
- Embrace curiosity
- Make connections between ideas, questions, and fields of knowledge
- Understand analysis and synthesis as central to the inquiry process

Connection to engagement:

Students who are active partners in the educational experience are intrinsically curious. They understand that knowledge is made rather than simply received. They also are on their way to mastering the process of inquiry by means of which knowledge is constructed.

3. SELF & CULTURAL AWARENESS: Students will demonstrate an understanding of themselves, and of others, as individuals whose world view and capacities are shaped by culture and experience as well as an understanding of the need to

navigate difference in order to take advantage of opportunities and resolve conflicts. In particular, students will be able to:

- Articulate an awareness of their own attitudes and capacities
- Demonstrate an openness to other points of view
- Recognize their responsibility as a member of a community (communities)
- Navigate the differences between self and others successfully

Connection to engagement:

Students who are active partners in the educational experience are aware. This awareness has two aspects. On one hand they are able to see themselves from “outside” in the sense of understanding their own pre-dispositions, capacities, and cultural understandings and expectations. On the other hand they are able to appreciate others from the “inside” in the sense of understanding the pre-dispositions, capacities, and cultural understandings and expectations of others. Being self and culturally aware allows a student to navigate difference and thus take advantage of the opportunities that the collegiate experience can provide.

B. Program Outcomes

While we expect the QEP to have an impact on what individual students are able to do, we also expect the QEP to make a difference on an institutional level. These program outcomes fall into two major categories:

- measures of student success derived from institutional data
- measures of student behaviors and perceptions derived from activity reports and surveys

If our QEP is successful and students are more academically engaged, we would expect them to also be more academically successful and that success should be manifest in measures of student performance derived from institutional data. This family of program outcomes include the measures of student success such as one-year retention, 4- and 6-year graduation, degree efficiency, and attempted hours per degree that are captured in performance metrics recently established for all universities in the UNC system by the Office of the President. Other program outcomes in this family, including data on academic probation, academic suspension, and earned to attempted hours are collected annually as part of UNC Charlotte's efforts to support at-risk students.

The other set of program outcomes for the QEP involve measures of student behavior and perceptions. In terms of behavior, we can count the number of students who take advantage of support services such as peer mentoring, tutoring, academic workshops and the like. Similarly, we can measure student participation in the so-called 'high impact' educational practices such as study abroad, internships, and faculty research; indeed, one of the reasons why the engagement topic is attractive to faculty is that a comprehensive effort to define expectations around engagement in the first year of a student's college career is likely to encourage continued engagement in subsequent years. In addition to student behaviors, we can also gauge student perceptions about their education through survey instruments. Probably most important in this respect is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) since many of the questions included in this instrument have bearing on the QEP goals. UNC Charlotte had the opportunity to participate in the beta-test of the new NSSE instrument in Spring 2012 which we can use as baseline data. Our next scheduled NSSE administration will be Spring 2014, and the responses from freshmen will give us the first look at the impact of the QEP on the measures that NSSE addresses.

Finally, it is important to note that while we are identifying both student learning outcomes and program outcomes for the campus as a whole, individual colleges may also establish specific outcomes they expect to see in their students as a result of the QEP.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

5. ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

In practical terms, goal of UNC Charlotte's QEP is to provide every new freshman with the opportunity to benefit, during his or her first year, from a curricular experience that intentionally engages them as active partners in the education that this university provides. To accomplish this goal, the university will implement a QEP curriculum (or more accurately QEP curricula) that is designed to deliver on the three core student learning outcomes: commitment to success, inquiry, and self and cultural awareness. Our expectation is that students experience in this curriculum will enable them develop a solid foundation for engaged learning as they pursue a path towards academic, professional, and personal development. Implementing the QEP is a multi-faceted project with aspects involving curriculum, supporting activities and units, assessment, and faculty development.

A. Curriculum

In order to implement its QEP, the University needs to put in place QEP Engagement Curricula with sufficient variety, scale, and scope to serve the needs of our entering freshman class each year. We describe these engagement curricula in the plural because, as noted above, our intention from the outset has been to allow the academic colleges an appropriate degree of flexibility in designing an engagement curriculum that best meets the needs of its students. As a result, when fully implemented, UNC Charlotte's Engagement QEP will have new freshmen participating in seven different curricula depending on the college in which the student is enrolled. Six of these engagement curricula will serve students in the professional colleges: Arts + Architecture, Business, Computing and Informatics, Education, Engineering, and Health and Human Services. A seventh engagement curriculum will serve students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and also the undecided students who are housed in University College.

It is important to stress that while the QEP Development Teams have been allowed the latitude to shape an engagement curriculum for students in their college, they have done so within an overarching framework: this is UNC Charlotte's QEP, not the a collection of separate QEPs in the various colleges. Thus one of the key early steps during the topic development stage of the QEP planning process was a discussion about the essential components of an engagement curriculum. That discussion resulted in agreement that the QEP engagement criteria developed in each college must:

- Be centered around a curricular experience involving, but not limited to, formal instruction for academic credit
- Include some extension of activities into the spring semester even if formal academic credit is only offered in the fall

- Include opportunities for small group interaction (ideally 25 students or fewer)
- Include intentional connections to overarching QEP messages and expectations with a particular focus on connecting “Week of Welcome” activities to what is happening in the classroom
- Directly address the core QEP Student Learning Outcomes—commitment to success, inquiry, and self and cultural awareness—by including content coverage, activities, and assignments that develop students’ capacities vis-à-vis those outcomes
- Generate examples of student work – most commonly responses to reflection prompts – that will allow us to directly assess student mastery of the QEP student learning outcomes.
- Create formal connections between the curriculum students experience and the advising process
- Include co-curricular experiences designed to help students become aware of the value of the multiple of opportunities available to them for academic, professional, and community involvement

Desirable but not required elements of an engagement curriculum include:

- Completion of an ‘inquiry project,’ the assignment for which is designed to complement inquiry assignments in students’ first-year writing course(s)
- Opportunities for both low and high stakes writing and speaking – including reflective responses – that complement experiences and assignments students are getting in first-year writing course(s)
- Intentional coordination with other courses in which students are enrolled, whether such courses are pre-requisites for students’ academic programs or pairings or other course combinations created for particular groups of students
- Formal participation in early-alert efforts designed to give students early-warning on whether their level of effort is sufficient for college success
- Close partnerships with support units such as J. Murrey Atkins Library, University Writing Programs, the University Center for Academic Excellence, and the University Career Center that facilitate effective and efficient pathways to connect university resources to student needs

Within this common framework , the QEP Development Teams in each of the colleges have developed engagement curricula for new freshmen. A short summary of what will be implemented in each college follows:

College	QEP Implementation
Arts + Architecture	The College of Arts + Architecture is planning to adapt existing foundations courses (or create new ones) to ensure that students receive a solid foundation in these creative disciplines. These courses include the Architecture first year studio, the Art “Concept Studio”, Modern Dance for Majors, Introduction to Music Studies, and

	<p>the Theatre Experience. Faculty teaching these courses will incorporate activities to develop students' practical and intellectual skills, many of which will involve immersion in the art, design, and performance opportunities on campus and in the community.</p>
Business	<p>The Belk College of Business is developing a new, one-credit, course that will be required of all freshmen as part of the pre-business progression requirements needed to declare a major in the college. This course will introduce students to both the academic programs offered by the college and to the professional opportunities and expectations that come with a career in business. Students will have opportunities to interact with faculty from the various departments and with professionals working in companies located in Charlotte. The College expects this freshman engagement experience to serve as a foundation for continued engagement throughout a student's time at the university.</p>
Computing and Informatics	<p>The College of Computing and Informatics is a campus pioneer in pushing for the importance of student engagement at UNC Charlotte. The faculty and dean had already taken steps to create a new freshman course designed to introduce students to the profession, and submitted the engagement topic for consideration by the university during the topic selection phase. The college's introduction to the profession course is a one-credit course in which be required of all new students. This course is specifically designed to get students to understand that non-technical skills, abilities, and aptitudes are crucial complements to the discipline-specific skills they develop while completing their major. The CCI freshman seminar course is designed to make students aware of the benefits of joining student organizations, to allow them to interact with professionals, and to take advantage of opportunities on campus. The college is explicitly planning to extend this freshman engagement foundation for students in their sophomore year and beyond.</p>
Education	<p>The College of Education plans to redesign two core courses to serve as their QEP engagement curriculum—one is an introduction to educational principles and theory and the second is an exploration of learning with a particular focus on special needs education. Both courses are 3 credits and both are required for all majors in the College. Traditionally taught in large-lecture format, the redesigned curriculum for these courses will include an additional one-credit learning lab which will provide students with an opportunity to explore issues in more depth, to undertake inquiry, and also to begin to develop professional relationships in the educational field.</p>
Engineering	<p>Almost two decades ago, the Lee College of Engineering recognized the need for a freshman-seminar course in the discipline that would foster student success, and in response faculty developed a pair of</p>

	<p>two-credit courses: a general introduction to engineering that students take in the fall semester and a more specialized introduction to particular engineering majors that they take in the spring. Both of these courses are required for all majors in the College. These two courses already have most of the components expected of a QEP engagement curriculum since there was already a focus on commitment to success and inquiry. Some new elements are being added to these courses to meet all of the QEP expectations.</p>
<p>Health and Human Services</p>	<p>The College of Health and Human Services is a campus leader in hybrid education, and its faculty are planning to leverage that expertise by developing a new first-year experience course built around on-line modules. This will be a 1-credit course in which all new students are expected to enroll, but the class will not be a degree requirement. Instructors of the QEP seminars for the college's new freshmen will build the syllabus for their seminar by selecting from a menu of web-based modules. Each week students will review materials and work through on-line assignments to research, discuss, and reflect on the material, and they will then meet in class for an opportunity to deepen their understanding.</p>
<p>Liberal Arts and Sciences & University College (undeclared)</p>	<p>For students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and also undecided students in University College, a professionally oriented QEP curriculum is not appropriate. Therefore the emphasis of this engagement curriculum is to provide a setting in which these students can explore and deepen their understanding of the value of the various ways of knowing. CLAS and UCOL students form by far and away the largest group of new freshmen, and therefore we are planning to offer three engagement curriculum options. In all cases the courses will carry three academic credits, and while not required, participation will be strongly encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first option will leverage the robust first-year initiatives that already serve these students including both learning communities and a freshman seminar program. These curricula already have the staffing that allows for small group interactions. Most already have elements of the QEP learning outcomes in place so the changes needed to implement this option are minimal. • The second option will be to adapt existing general education courses by integrating the QEP outcomes into the course material. In most cases these courses are taught in relatively large sections (100 plus) so implementing the engagement curriculum elements will require the addition of breakout sections to allow small group interactions. • The third option will develop entirely new courses that examine 'big questions' from a multi-disciplinary perspective. As in the case of the second option these will include

	breakout sections for discussion and exploration.
Expectations and Messages	<p>Although not an engagement curriculum per se, our QEP also commits UNC Charlotte to develop a more comprehensive and intentional effort to inform students of what is expected of them as a college student and to develop a campus culture around student engagement. The communication effort will begin once students accept our offer of admissions; it will continue during the summer orientation program; and it will culminate in the Week of Welcome program when students arrive on campus. This communication effort will provide both aspirational messages and practical actions, and it will be designed as a complement to the QEP curricula described above. In addition, UNC Charlotte may choose to implement new events designed to help promote student awareness of and success at achieving the QEP goals. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convocation for new students – an academic event in the first week of the semester to introduce students to the university • Re-SOAR – a review of key information from the summer orientation program. • Campus service day – a visible opportunity for students to get involved in service • Expansion/adaptation of the current Common Reading Experience
QEP Auxiliary	<p>The primary focus of UNC Charlotte’s QEP will be to implement the engagement curricula described above and the overarching program of messaging to set students’ expectations. However, we believe that there is an important auxiliary element to the QEP that will allow us to maximize the transformative potential of the QEP core. Specifically, it is possible to identify with some precision the courses that account for the vast majority of freshman enrollment. By working with the faculty who teach these courses in order to infuse those courses with some of the underlying QEP approaches, students will be encountering a more coherent educational experience. Most obviously, many of the courses in question can easily be adapted to more formally complement the QEP’s outcomes of “inquiry” and “self and cultural awareness.”</p>

B. Supporting Activities and Units

While the core of UNC Charlotte’s QEP will be the Engagement Curricula which students take during their first year, the faculty teaching these courses are not doing so in a vacuum. Most importantly, it is likely that the engagement curricula that colleges develop will make specific, and in some cases new, demands upon support units such as the University Center for Academic Excellence (tutoring, academic skills workshops etc.), University Writing Programs, the University Career Center,

and the J. Murrey Atkins Library. In each case, these support units will need to develop a plan to implement the services they are called upon to provide.

C. Assessment

The QEP assessment plan outlined in section #9 below describes the process by which we will assess whether students are meeting our expectations vis-à-vis the QEP outcomes and how the faculty will modify the curriculum in light of assessment results. Implementing this assessment plan will require the creation of a process or system to collect samples of student work to be used for assessment scoring that will support both the archiving and sampling associated with that function. We also need to develop the process for norming the scorers responses to the student work to ensure inter-rater reliability and the validity of the results. Finally, we need to establish the processes by which faculty review the assessment results and discuss, plan, and implement any changes to the curriculum that those results indicate.

D. Faculty Development

Regardless of whether the engagement curriculum options available to students are based on existing courses or are entirely new, the process of ensuring that these courses allow us to accomplish the goals of our QEP requires a significant faculty development effort. In particular, we need to develop a program that provides faculty from across the campus an opportunity to:

- interact with one another on issues concerning the QEP curriculum
- reflect on their own experiences and those of others
- review assessment results
- discuss and incorporate best practices into their own teaching
- coordinate with colleagues teaching within the same engagement curriculum
- coordinate with support units that contribute to their engagement curriculum

We expect that the QEP faculty development program will be a joint effort of the QEP leadership and staff in the University's Center for Teaching and Learning.

6. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

UNC Charlotte expects to implement the QEP over a three-year period. The formal implementation will begin in Fall 2013, but pilot projects were initiated in Fall 2012 to test and refine key approaches and processes. This phased implementation is necessary both because of the size of the student body being served (~3200 new freshmen each fall semester) and the complexity and sophistication of the curriculum changes being implemented. In general, those colleges that only need to make slight revisions to already existing curricula will be able to fully implement the QEP sooner; those colleges that need to develop entirely new curricula will start with pilot programs and ramp up to full implementation later. The QEP will be fully

implemented by Fall 2015. In each case ‘implementation’ includes the full range of activities necessary to provide our QEP experience to those students including supporting faculty who are developing the new curriculum, teaching the courses, and of course all assessment activities. The proposed schedule for the **first** implementation of the various elements of the QEP is as follows:

Year	Engagement Curricula	Other Actions
2012-13	<p>Pilot Curricula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Education: EDUC 2100 and SPED 2100 offered with QEP assignments College of Engineering: existing sections of ENGR 1201 will be offered with some QEP assignments College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: selected sections of LBST 2101, LBST 2215, and SOCY 1101 will be offered with QEP elements and small-group break-out sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty and student information sessions – Fall 2013 Faculty Development Program - May 2013 (and annually thereafter)
2013-14	<p>Full implementation (all new students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Business College of Computing and Informatics College of Engineering <p>Partial implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Education College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/ University College (Freshman seminars and selected Learning Communities) <p>Pilot Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Health and Human Services College of Arts + Architecture College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/ University College (QEP sections) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP “Expectations and Messages” campaign for new students Outcomes assessment process
2014-15	<p>Full implementation (all new students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Education <p>Partial implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Health and Human Services College of Arts + Architecture College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/ University College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP “Expectations and Messages” events (eg. Convocation etc.)
2015-16	<p>Full implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Health and Human Services College of Arts + Architecture 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/ University College 	
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7. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

8. RESOURCES

9. ASSESSMENT PLAN

UNC Charlotte will assess its QEP using two complementary approaches. First, our student learning outcomes assessment will allow us to gauge the impact that the QEP is having on individual students. Student learning outcomes assessment will be accomplished primarily by the direct assessment of samples of student work, and it will tell us whether students are achieving the QEP learning outcomes. Second, our program outcomes assessment will allow us to gauge the impact that the QEP is having on the student body as a whole. Program outcomes assessment will be accomplished primarily by tracking a set of performance indicators that we have identified.

A. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

While the primary goal in designing the student learning outcomes plan for the QEP is to measure the extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes we have identified, we have sought to do so in a manner that embeds assessment in the curriculum of the courses in which students are enrolled and also in a manner that provides, in and of itself, an opportunity for students to further develop their skills vis-à-vis the outcome in question. In addition, we have sought to design a plan whose implementation not only ensures that we close the assessment loop, but also that we do so in a manner that provides opportunities for conversation and collaboration between faculty as they reflect on the QEP curriculum and work to refine its effectiveness.

i. Direct Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Each of the three core QEP outcomes – commitment to success, inquiry, and self and cultural awareness – will be assessed directly by scoring samples of student work against a rubric. The nature of the three student learning outcomes we have identified for our QEP means they are best assessed by getting students to reflect on what they have learned.

The process for conducting the direct assessment of student learning outcomes is as follows:

- In each QEP curriculum, students will complete assignments that include a reflection prompt pertaining to each of the three QEP student learning outcomes. Although the assignments in each QEP curriculum will vary as

appropriate for the specific educational needs of students in that college, faculty will ask students to reflect on what they have learned during the course of completing the assignment by means of a common reflection prompt, one for each of the three student learning outcomes.

- For example, many QEP curricula are likely to assign an inquiry project in order to ensure that students develop skills identified in the inquiry outcome. The topic of enquiry for students in Education, Engineering, or Art and Architecture will be quite different, but regardless of their college, students will submit a response to common prompt that asks them to reflect on what they have learned about the process of inquiry, about their own curiosity, and about the connections and questions that completing the project has engendered.
- Student learning outcomes will be assessed separately in each QEP curriculum. The schedule for assessment will ensure that by the time we prepare the 5th Year report in Spring 2018 each curriculum will have, at a minimum, two years worth of assessment data for each learning outcome. In any given year, in preparation for this scoring, a random sample of student responses to the common reflection prompt will be extracted from the archived responses for the outcome under examination. The sample size will be sufficient to provide a 90% confidence level with a confidence interval of +/- 5%.
- A team of scorers will be trained in the use of the QEP rubrics on a subset of the responses in order to ensure inter-rater reliability. Once that is complete, each item of student work in the sample will be scored by two readers, with a third reading taking place if the scorers disagree by more than one point.
- The cumulative scores for the sample will be tallied and then discussed by the faculty teaching that QEP curriculum.
- In addition, the annual faculty development program will be an opportunity for faculty teaching in different QEP curricula to discuss students' progress towards mastering the outcomes at the university level and to share strategies to improve the curriculum and make it more coherent.

For more details see the “QEP Outcomes, Rubrics, and Dimensions” document in Appendix 3. This document provides additional detail on the specific dimensions on which each outcome that will be assessed, an illustrative example of the kind of assignment that could generate a student response suitable for assessment of that outcome, the proposed rubric to be used for assessment scoring, and hypothetical examples of the kinds of student responses that would warrant the high and low scores in the rubric.

ii. Indirect Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to the direct assessment of students' mastery of the student learning outcomes, the university also plans to assess the impact that the QEP is having on individual students by indirect means. These include:

- Selected questions drawn from the bi-annual administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement at UNC Charlotte. The NSSE instrument is fixed, but there are a number of questions that map directly to our QEP outcomes.

B. Program Outcomes Assessment

The primary goal in designing the program outcomes assessment is to identify performance indicators that can tell us if students' experience in the QEP curriculum is having the desired impact on the student body. While some of these indicators may relate to students' experiences at UNC Charlotte during their first year, these indicators, *unlike the student learning outcomes assessment*, do include measures that capture student behaviors in subsequent years.

1. Direct Assessment of Program Outcomes

- UNC System performance metrics on one-year retention and 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for first time full time freshmen. These measures have been defined by the UNC General Administration and are reported annually by UNC Charlotte using data generated by the Office of Institutional Research.
- Academic performance metrics derived from Institutional Research data. Possible measures include:
 - Attempted to earned hour ratios for first time full time freshmen—by year of enrollment
 - Change of major data, particularly as it impacts 4-year and 6-year graduation rates
 - Student GPA and academic standing data
 - Course level data on Ds, Fs, and Ws, and course repeats
 - Early warning system data, specifically in so far as it indicates students' response to early alert and mid-term grade notices.
- Engagement metrics derived from student support offices and co-curricular programs. Possible measures include:
 - Student use ofUCAE, UCC, Library support services
 - Student attendance at cultural, academic, and community events

2. Indirect Assessment of Program Outcomes

- NSSE data on student attitudes about high-impact educational practices
- UNC System sophomore and senior survey data on student's perceptions about their UNC Charlotte experience

C. Other Assessment Measures

In addition to the campus-wide assessment of student learning outcomes and program outcomes, individual colleges may establish learning and program outcomes for students in their QEP curriculum. For example, the College of Computing and Informatics is expecting that their QEP's focus on developing students' appreciation for (and their use of) the wide variety of support resources and enrichment opportunities that are available on campus. Therefore, the college may choose to establish outcomes concerning the attitudes students express about resources and opportunities and/or their use of such resources and opportunities.

