think OUTSIDE the BOOKS

A Quality Enhancement Plan Proposal

Think Outside the Books: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity

Submitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges

For the On-Site Visit on March 11 - 13, 2014

The W

Mississippi University for Women

A Tradition of Excellence for Women and Men

www.muw.edu/curiosity

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Think Outside the Books: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity

1. Executive Summary:

In a world that quickly changes, students need to know how to ask good questions and find or form answers for themselves. The Mississippi University for Women Quality Enhancement Plan, entitled *Think Outside the Books: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity,* aims to support MUW's Mission to provide high-quality undergraduate education by creating a culture of intellectual engagement that will help students to understand how they learn, promote active learning, and support students as they pursue their intellectual interests, both in and out of the classroom. By encouraging student engagement and active learning, we will encourage the development of self-motivated learners—students who produce knowledge rather than passively consume it. Students will take ownership of their own learning by mastering necessary skills, processes, and tools needed to develop and articulate relevant questions, determine how to approach problems, conduct appropriate research, and discover and report the findings.

QEP Student Learning Outcomes:

An intellectually curious MUW student will be able to:

1. Develop and relevant and valid research questions.
2. Effectively pursue answers and solutions to their own questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry.
3. Produce and author knowledge by exploring open-ended questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry.

Projected Benefits to Student Learning

- Further development of the "personalized learning environment" for which MUW is known. The QEP will encourage increased faculty/student and peer contact outside the classroom and encourage more interaction within the classroom.
- Increased opportunity to engage in undergraduate research.
- Increased opportunity to engage in internships.
- Development of problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills.
- Participation in discussions that focus on self-reflection and the personal nature of learning.

Projected Benefits for Faculty and Staff

- Increased support for our focus on teaching, specifically learning about new pedagogies and promoting techniques that work at MUW.
- Availability of grant funds to support innovative teaching and taking students out of the classroom.
- Recognition for innovative teaching.
- Increased opportunity for faculty mentorship and peer teaching observations.
- Increased academic engagement on the part of students.
- Opportunities for professional development and networking with colleagues.
- Improved campus environment that better supports the intellectual pursuits of our community.

2. MUW QEP At-a-Glance:

QEP Indicators	MUW QEP	Sections and page numbers
1.A. Institutional process	We describe the institutional process by which we solicited and evaluated proposals and selected a proposal in the "Call for Proposals." The "Refining the Topic" section includes discussion of how we solicited broad-based campus feedback and refined the meaning of the QEP. Planning for staff and resources is discussed in the "QEP Planning Process" section.	4.a. pp. 9-22 4.b . pp. 22-24
1.B. Key issues identified from assessment	We discuss the key issues that emerged from assessment in the "Refining the Topic" section.	4.a. pp. 14-22
2.A. Focus on learning outcomes and mission	Our student learning outcomes are described in the "Student Learning Goals and Major Initiatives" section, but in order to understand their connection to our mission, you will need to read the "Who We Are" section.	3.a. pp. 4-9 4.c. pp. 24-25
2.B. Focus on the environment supporting student learning and mission	We identified important ways to foster a transformation in student learning in and out of the classroom. Several of our major initial initiatives describe the ways we intend to cultivate curiosity by promoting inquiry through active learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning (APIL).	4.d. pp. 25-36
3.A. Capability to initiate the plan	Our budget and implementation schedule explain our ability and plan to initiate the QEP.	5. pp. 36-44 7. pp. 60-61
3.B. Capability to implement and complete the plan	Our budget, implementation schedule, assessment overview, and the "Use of Results" section demonstrate our ability to implement and complete the plan	5. pp. 36-44 6.a., 6.c.. pp. 44-59 7. pp. 60-61
4.A. Broad-based involvement in development	The QEP Team was composed of faculty and staff from across the campus and the disciplines. In selecting the QEP, we solicited broad-based faculty input which is described in the "QEP Topic Selection" and "QEP Planning Process."	4.a.-4.b. pp. 9-24
5.A. Identified goals for the QEP	Our goal of cultivating intellectual curiosity by utilizing APIL pedagogies is described in the "Student Learning Goals and Major Initiatives" section.	4.c. pp. 24-25
5.B. Plan to assess	Our assessment plan includes nationally-normed tests in addition to locally-developed measures of student learning. It is described in section on "Assessment of the QEP."	6.a.-c. p. 44-59

3. Who We Are: A Historic University with a Radical Mission

3. a. Introduction to MUW

Mississippi University for Women (MUW), a Carnegie Master's S public university, has a long tradition of excellence in the liberal arts and professional education. We offer men and women a wide variety of high quality undergraduate and graduate programs within our four colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education and Human Sciences, the College of Nursing and Speech Language Pathology, and the College of Business and Professional Studies. Our campus community includes approximately 2,650 students (fall 2012), diverse faculty and staff, and a "long blue line" of alumni who are an active presence at campus events and in the wider community. Our mission is to prepare students for professional excellence and to participation as citizens in the world around them, and because of our unique history we have a special mission to promote academic and leadership development for women. Utilizing small classes, we encourage students to be successful in their careers, but also to be lifelong learners who prioritize personal growth. Among MUW's highest priorities is maintaining and celebrating the "personalized learning environment" that we offer students. The student (FTE) to faculty ratio at MUW is 14 to 1, which means that MUW faculty know students personally and by name.[1] As an institution we are committed to one-on-one interaction between faculty and students and to ensuring that our students have opportunities to work with faculty both on campus and online.

Situated on a little over 110 acres, MUW is a historic campus located within the historic district of Columbus, Mississippi.[2] Along avenues lined with mature live oaks, deodar cedars, gingkoes, and camellias sit 60 campus buildings, 23 of which are on the National Register of Historic Places.[3] With a population of a little over 23,400, Columbus is a mid-sized town and, with nearly 300 employees, MUW is a major employer for the city and county.[4] While our community includes students from across the United States and around the world, the overwhelming majority of our students come from Mississippi. We are committed especially to

[1] 2012-13 MUW Fact Book, 5.
[2] 2012-13 MUW Fact Book, 6.
[3] 2012-13 MUW Fact Book, 6.
[4] MUW has 285 full-time employees and 99 part-time employees. 2012-13 MUW Fact Book, 5.

addressing the educational and public service needs of northeast Mississippi and adjoining counties in western Alabama.[5]

MUW was founded in 1884 as the Mississippi Industrial Institute & College for the Education of White Girls in Arts and Sciences (I. I. & C.) and claims to be the first publicly-chartered college for women in the United States.[6] The liberal arts and vocational template crafted by the I. I. & C. became a model for public, women's education that led states across the South to follow suit, including Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, Texas, Florida and Oklahoma.[7] From the beginning, founders of the college gave the school a special mission to educate the under-served, especially poor women. Faculty and administrators were called upon to offer instruction to the poor girls of the state so that they might provide for themselves and help lift their families out of poverty.[8] Legislators expected the school to impart practical skills and knowledge that would help women compete in the industrializing economy of the New South, but faculty at the school also intended to challenge female students intellectually. The difficult battles fought by women like Sallie Eola Reneau, Annie Coleman Peyton, and Olivia Valentine Hastings to create the I. I. & C. were matched by the efforts of early faculty and administrators like Pauline Van de Graaf Orr, Emma Ody Pohl, Sallie McLaurin, John Clayton Fant, and Henry Whitfield to maintain the college and its commitment to rigorous academic standards and cutting-edge vocational training. Faculty at I. I. & C. strove to make the institution a "real college" that prioritized scholastic excellence.[9] "It wasn't easy," said Pauline Orr, head of the I. I. & C. English and Literature Department. "There were those who said girls didn't belong in college. And there were those who thought we should go easy on the girls."[10] The radical legacy of MUW is that it challenged both assumptions. Beginning with offering a way out of poverty for the daughters of yeoman farmers and Jewish merchants, MUW's

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[5] 2012-13 MUW Fact Book, 29-30.

[6] There are competing claims for the status of "first" public college for women. Historian Amy McCandless argues that the confusion relating to the competing claims rests in unclear definitions with regard to the terms "college" and "public." Amy McCandless, Keynote Address for the 125th Anniversary Celebration, MUW campus, March 12, 2009; Amy McCandless, *The Past in the Present Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Bridget Smith Pieschel, "The History of Mississippi University for Women," *Mississippi History Now,* online publication, available at http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/379/the-history-of-mississippi-university-for-women.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Bridget Smith Pieschel and Stephen Robert Pieschel, *Loyal Daughters: One Hundred Years at Mississippi University for Women, 1884-1984,* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 1984), 12-13.

[9] Sarah Wilkerson-Freeman, "Pauline Van de Graaf Orr: Feminist Education in Mississippi," in *Mississippi Women: Their Lives, Their Histories,* ed. Martha Swain, et al (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 76.

[10] Wilkerson-Freeman, 76.

tradition of upending common perceptions of students' abilities continues today in our mission to provide a liberal arts education and superior professional training to all people, including a large number of first-generation students, non-traditional students, and minority students.

Integrated since 1966 and coeducational since 1982, now MUW's academic programs are structured within four colleges that offer students a wide array of degree programs, including some unique to the region, such as our undergraduate degrees in culinary arts, the concentration in public history within the history major, the bachelor of technology degree, and graduate degrees in nursing. The vast majority of MUW's degree programs are at the baccalaureate level (80 percent of degrees granted are bachelor's), but we also offer graduate degree programs in Nursing, Speech- Language Pathology, Education, Global Commerce, and Physical Theatre (13 percent of degrees granted are Master's).[11] We have experienced significant growth in the credit-hours delivered online in recent years, doubling from 15,388 during AY2009 to 30,920 in AY 2011. MUW's commitment to a liberal arts education begins in the general education curriculum, which is organized around the following student learning outcomes: critical thinking and effective communication; cultural literacy; quantitative and technology skills; understanding of self, society, and the natural world; and life-long learning.[12] We aim to encourage in our students the skills, knowledge, and values they need to become independent, productive members of society in a continually- changing world.

3. b. Our faculty

MUW faculty are teacher-scholars who believe our research, creative endeavors, and scholarship should inform our teaching. The ternary balance of teaching, service, and research characterize an engaged academic life, but at MUW we believe that teaching is at the center of all we do. Faculty strive to ensure that all things related to service and research emanate to and through our historic and ongoing focus on teaching. The majority of the 215 faculty at MUW are full-time (62 percent) and a majority of full-time faculty are tenured or tenure track (66 percent). With a 12-semester hour teaching load per semester, full-time MUW faculty spend considerable time interacting with students inside and outside the classroom. We employ a mix of traditional bricks and mortar day classes (46 percent of classes) with more non-traditional class times and methods to accommodate our diverse student body. In 2012, 41 percent of our classes were

[11] The DNP program graduated its first four graduates in December 2013 and the remainder of the degrees granted (seven percent) are Associate's. 2013-3 Fact Book, 43.

[12] Appendix 1 is the general education curriculum which include the student learning outcomes, available online at http://catalog.muw.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=904&returnto=211.

online and 13 percent were night and weekend.[13] The typical cap on lower-level courses is 30 students and upper-level classes usually have between 15 and 20 students, which means that we engage with our students in conversation and discussion daily.

In addition to teaching, MUW faculty advise students for academic and career success. We believe that good advising requires more than academic scheduling. Once students declare a major, they are paired with a faculty member in the department, who meets with them throughout the semester to discuss career opportunities, help cultivate professional skills and knowledge, and mentor them for personal and professional success. The MUW community is committed to shared governance and the cultivation of personal relationships among staff, faculty, students, and administrators. We rely on faculty serving on the 28 academic councils and committees to create and maintain university policies and procedures.

At MUW we know our students but we face challenges as we look to the future, especially in negotiating between MUW's traditional liberal arts, highly-personalized mission and the institution's changing body of students. Of key concern is making sure that commuter students, non-traditional aged students, and transfer students still benefit from the broad-based, academically-challenging model of education that we are known for historically. MUW faculty embraced the QEP as an opportunity to address issues of concern for us regarding student learning. As Pamela Menka recommends, we see the QEP as a "vehicle for sustainable innovation" on campus.[14] The relationship between faculty and students is at the heart of our teaching mission, and we believe it holds the key to student learning and success. Throughout the QEP process we relied on feedback from the campus community to direct our efforts and will continue to mine the depth of knowledge and experience of our personnel faculty possess regarding MUW students as we implement, assess, and revise the QEP.

3.c. Our students

Diversity best characterizes the MUW student body. Seventy-nine percent of students are fulltime, 83 percent are female, 37 percent are African American, and 40 percent are non-traditional (25 years of age or older). In 2011-12 half of our students (51 percent) were Pell Grant recipients, and 69 percent of our graduates had student loan debt, which was provided largely

[13] 2012-3 Fact Book, 38.
[14] Pamela Menka, "Strategic and Successful QEP," presentation for the Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation, July 2011, Fort Worth, Texas.

through federal loan programs (only three percent was nonfederal loan debt).[15] Compared to other colleges and universities in the state, MUW students are more likely to be in debt than peers, but because of our affordability ($221 per undergraduate semester hour for in-state enrollment) our students average less debt than is typical across the state.[16] MUW's Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (PIE) Council is leading the effort to create an institutional definition and means of measurement for "first generation" students, but responses to the Commencement Survey indicate that we graduate an impressive number of them; a five-year average of 43.9 percent of graduating seniors taking the survey indicated that the highest level of education their parents had achieved was a high school diploma or GED. Taken together these figures suggest that our students come from disadvantaged backgrounds with limited financial resources and that our historic mission to educate the under-served continues into the 21st century.

We are largely a commuter campus (79 percent) and entering numbers indicate that most of our students transfer to MUW from other institutions. In fall 2012, 7 percent were first time, full-time freshmen, while 21 percent were new transfer students. There were 193 students in the fall 2012 freshman cohort with an average ACT of 21.51. In measures of college readiness (in unduplicated numbers), of the 104 MUW students enrolled in intermediate courses, 41 percent were enrolled in intermediate math during their first year, 25 percent enrolled in intermediate English in their first year, and 33 percent enrolled in both.[17] Our persistence and progression rates include 74 percent of fulltime students completing 24 credit hours within one academic year, while 56 percent of part-time students complete 12 credit hours within one year. We retain 74 percent of the freshman population as they transition to the sophomore year (a three-year average) and graduate on average 44 percent of the freshmen in six years. For transfer students, we average a return rate of 72 percent in the first year after they transfer, with approximately 63 percent (a three-year average) completing the degree within four years after entering MUW.

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[15] Institute for College Access & Success, "The Project on Student Debt: Keeping College Within Reach," State by State data, available online at http://projectonstudentdebt.org/state_by_state-data.php.

[16] The average student load debt in the state is $27,322, and at MUW the average is $22,398. The average proportion graduate proportion with debt is 57 percent for the state and 69 percent at MUW. Ibid.

[17] These figures are based on 2007-2008 numbers provided in the 2010-11 Institutional Profile compiled by the Institutions of Higher Learning for MUW.

At MUW, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for diverse student services, including enrollment management and student affairs. The administrative structure includes the offices of admission, career services, community service, diversity education and programming, financial aid, residence life, recreational sports, fitness and wellness programming, student development, student discipline, and student involvement. The Office of Student Life oversees programming related to leadership, diversity, and career training, organizes new student orientations, and tracks community service activities on campus. MUW has 71 active student groups on campus, including a Student Government Association which works closely with student affairs. The Center for Academic Excellence reports directly to the Office of the Provost and offers peer tutoring on a variety of disciplinary topics and courses and coordinates disability and testing services for the university.

Conclusion: MUW's QEP

In choosing a topic for its QEP, MUW undertook a review of its environment and educational effectiveness in light of its history, mission, strategic goals, and current conditions. We broadly surveyed the student body and faculty for input regarding the most critical need facing the university and how to best improve student learning. As outlined in the next section, the university began a wide-ranging review of the processes by which our students learn and how to better encourage their learning. Because our faculty know our students best, we created a QEP process that included direct and frequent feedback from the faculty. The result of that process became our QEP, *Think Outside the Books: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity.*

4. QEP Focus on Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity

4. a. QEP Topic Selection

The search for a QEP topic began at MUW in the fall of 2011 at "Assessment Day," MUW's annual faculty and staff development program on institutional effectiveness that marks the beginning of the academic year, with a campus introduction to the QEP and the selection of the QEP Team. Martin Hatton, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and SACSCOC liaison, explained the purpose and requirements of the QEP and introduced Thomas Richardson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Professor of English, as the chair of the QEP Team. The Office of the Provost formed the QEP Team to lead the process of QEP topic

selection and development. Because the QEP process is tied closely with institutional effectiveness and the university mission, the Team was consciously interdisciplinary and represented a broad cross-section of the university community, including members of the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (PIE) Council, representatives from each college, student affairs, student government, the President's Cabinet, and alumni, as well as the SACSCOC liaison (Hatton). The Team met on September 2, 2011, to plan the QEP process. The QEP Team members and University affiliation of each are presented in Appendix A.

Call for Proposals. On September 9, 2011, the QEP Team issued a call for preliminary proposals to faculty, staff, and students that explained the QEP requirements. The call solicited one to two page proposals that would include a summary of the potential topic, address the significance of the topic, explain how the topic would affect student learning on campus, and list possible student learning outcomes. The QEP Team wanted to encourage broad participation and offered a $2500 award to the author(s) of the selected topic. The original Call for Proposals can be reviewed in Appendix B. The response was excellent; the Team received 21 preliminary proposals that touched on issues ranging from improving digital literacy to advocating for a campaign to support spontaneous creative expression on campus.

Based on preliminary review by the QEP Team, seven proposals were selected to proceed to the next stage. The QEP committee found common themes and goals among several proposals, including proposals for a focus on primary sources in the classroom, metacognition, and cultivating curiosity. Because "Cultivating Curiosity" touched on many of the ideas detailed in the other proposals, the committee encouraged the authors to work together in creating a single proposal for the next phase of selection. The chair of the QEP Team contacted the selected authors and asked that they provide eight to ten page proposals that addressed best practices regarding the topic and its connection to MUW, along with a five-year timeline, potential assessment mechanisms, and a budget. The eight finalists included:

- *Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn*
- *Guiding Our "Digital Natives:" Creating Digital and Informational Literacy at MUW*
- *Ethics: Creating and Maintaining a Culture of Integrity at MUW*
- *Move to Improve*
- *Reaffirming an Environment of Social, Political, Egalitarian Community Today (RESPECT)*
- *Student Collaborative Behavior*

- *Writing is Everywhere*

The titles and brief descriptions of the seven expanded proposals selected for further consideration can be reviewed in Appendix C.

Assessment of the seven proposals was largely qualitative. In January 2012 the QEP Team released the seven proposals to the campus and planned the collection process for campus feedback. Faculty members asked that we prioritize accessibility and transparency in the process, and in response the Team distributed the proposals via several channels of communication and solicited feedback in a variety of ways. The QEP proposals were emailed to all department chairs for distribution to faculty, the proposals were made available to the entire campus community using Blackboard, and the proposals were made available on the Web site of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. The campus community commented on the proposals using the online discussion boards that connected to the proposals via Blackboard, through email correspondence to the QEP Team and chair, and in oral and written communication to Team members. The Team created a rubric to help campus members organize their thoughts regarding the proposals. On a 1-5 Likert scale, faculty were asked to assess the plan based on how well the proposal related to student learning, whether the proposal had the potential to transform student learning, whether the proposal included the necessary breadth for the QEP, and whether the proposal was feasible. The student rubric asked students to consider the topic's effect on student learning "in the classroom," on the "campus environment," on "intellectual growth," on "student organizations," and on "diversity" – in other words, whether the topic would touch a diverse range of MUW students. Throughout the spring semester the campus had an opportunity to review the seven final proposals and comment on their suitability. The chair of the QEP Team sent the campus community regular reminders to participate in the review process, and rubrics and feedback came in from faculty, campus councils, academic departments, staff, individual students, and the Student Government Association. All electronic and hardcopy feedback was distributed to Team members at the May 2012 meeting for their review.

All of the proposals had some support on campus; the issues for the Team were evaluating the degree of campus support, assessing the quality of the topic and its connection to our campus, and determining which engaged best practices related to improving student learning. *Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn* and *Ethics: Creating and Maintaining a Culture of*

Integrity at MUW received the most support, but often commenters suggested two or three top choices, or none, and included suggestions on a number of the proposals. As a Team we analyzed the feedback and considered connections that existed among the responses. Feedback from faculty, staff, and students like the following caught our attention:

- This proposal [*Collaborative Student Behavior*] will enhance the classroom as it forces students to think critically instead of just memorizing the required course material...The QEP will require students to use their critical thinking skills to find solutions for problems. This would allow students to actually feel that their voice makes a different. This will inspire them to want to solve more challenges and it may stimulate intellectual growth.
- Cultivating Curiosity—Like this idea because we need to harbor an environment of learning and wanting to learn. I believe if this QEP could be achieved it would change [...] our university significantly.
- All of the proposals have merit. I do think that some can be implemented through other aspects of our campus community, and such implementation should be considered.
- I think that the "Cultivating Curiosity" is probably my favorite, and for several reasons. It represents collaboration from a broad base of faculty across disciplines. It seems to be strong research based and has potential to be extremely meaningful in changing our academic culture.
- I hate this, but I like too many of the [...] proposals (generally)! I like them best in combination with others, but [all] these should be developed further [and distributed to the appropriate committees and councils for action].
- I think that this [*Writing Is Everywhere*] is one of the more critical areas that the university should address (academically). I like the idea of additional courses focusing on writing above composition 1 and 2. Of particular interest to me and potential value to our students was the idea that students should be given assignments to write real-world written products that have value outside of the academic environment. All instructors should strive to incorporate writing that is discipline based but is also designed for a wider audience beyond the university.
- Bottom line, if we instill in our students that LEARNING is as important as, if not more than, getting a degree, we will see a decrease in plagiarism. From talking to my Freshman students in Speech class, I have heard from many of them they are here to "get a degree." That's it. Learn enough to get through a class, get a degree and get a job. If this class "has nothing to do with what I want to do after school," then I'll just do what I have to and nothing more. If we are going to instil a sense of ethical responsibility in our students, we are going to have to show them "why" it's so important. That will be our toughest task.

Some feedback identified specific avenues for mediation, such as the use of UN 101 Introduction to College Life, but also cautioned us against adding to the required degree hours for students.

- Looking at several of the proposals collectively, the obvious solution is a complete and total revamping of UN 101. This would be aimed at having the course take on current

and contemporary issues facing incoming students and to make the course more academic in nature. Indeed, the "academically adrift" [*Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn*] proposal touched on the need to do this and the benefits.

- UN 101 does seem a good tie-in point for this plan, but I wonder how much more we can stretch this course while keeping it at its current status as a one-credit hour course.
- One concern than I have about several of these is that they rely on UN 101 for initial contacts. We have such a large transfer population, and I believe that any strategy to reach the transfers should be direct and intentional, i.e. we may need a course similar to UN 101 to capture this group. While suggestions for things done throughout courses has merit, something that does not leave this to chance is more easily measurable and assures that students do not get left out.
- I think this proposal [*Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn*] is great, the only problem with it is the idea of a 3 credit freshmen class. I am a junior elementary education major who has worked very hard to graduate on time. If I would have had to take a 3 credit freshmen class as opposed to UN101 it would have been very hard to graduate on time, as I would have had to wait to take other classes. I do not think a 3 credit freshmen class is a good idea.
- I am a faculty member and advise students. So many of my advisees share how tight their schedules are—they work, they attend classes, they drive to campus, and have other obligations. Many of lives that are so full, they have little flexible time. Also, the requirements for an education degree, especially elementary, leaves little time to take additional hours—they must meet their major, general studies, and 2 concentrations, along with many course requiring field experience hours.

On one area there was consensus. The MUW QEP needed to connect to the diverse student body, which meant that it must consider that most MUW students are transfer students, non-traditional students, commuter students, and online learners. Whether mentioned as a question, like, "How would online students be a part of this process?" or in support of specific facets of a proposal, all agreed that the QEP must address a broad cross section of MUW students, which meant that it could not be exclusively focused on the first-time, full-time freshmen. As one student wrote, "I believe the QEP is really all about diversity. It calls on students, faculty, and staff to come together in a joint mission on campus betterment ... these problems are relevant to everyone on campus, everyone will want a say." Transfers and online students received particularly frequent mention: " We have way more transfers. The transfers are completing in spite of us not because of us." As a Team, we agreed that in planning the implementation of the QEP we would address these concerns and craft a plan that would reach transfer and online students.

Based on campus feedback and research related to problems and solutions in higher education today, the QEP Team selected the proposal *Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn* as

the foundation for the QEP topic, which became after revision *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity,* and finally *Think Outside the Books: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity.*

Refining the Topic. Part of the process of refining the QEP topic included research into best practices in the field of cultivating intellectual curiosity and encouraging active learning. We identified additional key resources to help in crafting and revising the QEP, including longitudinal studies at liberal arts undergraduate institutions, such as the University of Washington Study of Undergraduate Learning (UW SOUL) and the Wabash National Study (WNS), and connected to important scholars in the field, especially Clifton Conrad and Laura Dunek *Cultivating Inquiry-Driven Learners* (2013), George Kuh, et al., *Student Success in College* (2005) and *Involving Colleges* (1991), Derek Bok *Higher Education in America* (2013) and *Our Underachieving Colleges* (2006), and Philippa Levy and Robert Petrulis's work on inquiry-based learning.[18] For information on how the studies, practices, and recommendations affected our work, please see the "Review of Best Practices" (Section 4.d.).

The QEP Team continued research into similar QEPs and the QEP plans of comparable institutions. We identified several helpful models that served to guide the development of our QEP and obtained copies of their full, five-year plans, including:

- Brevard College, North Carolina, *Pedagogies for Engaged and Actively-learning Students*
- Florida College, *STOA: Success through Tutoring, Orientation, and Advising*
- Mercer University, Georgia, *The Engaged University: Learning Together*
- Clarendon College, Texas, *Enhancement of Student Engagement in the Learning Process through Active and Collaborative Learning*
- University of Houston-Downtown, *Student Engagement through Active Learning Strategies.*

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[18] Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006); Derek Bok, *Higher Education in America* (Princeton.: Princeton University Press, 2013); Catharine Hoffman Beyer, Edward Taylor, and Gerald M. Gillmore, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience: The University of Washington's Growth in Faculty Teaching Study* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013); Catharine Hoffman Beyer, Gerald M. Gillmore, and Andrew T. Fisher. *Inside the Undergraduate Experience: The University of Washington's Study of Undergraduate Learning* (San Francisco: Anker Publishing, 2007); Charles Blaich and Kathleen Wise, "From Gathering to Using Assessment Results: Lessons from the Wabash National Study," published by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, January 2011, available online at http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/Wabash_001.pdf; George D. Kuh, et.al., *Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991); George D. Kuh, et al., *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005); Philippa Levy and Robert Petrulis,"How Do First-Year University Students Experience Inquiry and Research, and What Are the Implications for the Practice of Inquiry-Based Learning?," *Studies in Higher Education* vol. 37, no. 1 (February 2012): 85-101.

Members of the QEP Team attended the SACSCOC Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation in the summers of 2011, 2012, and 2013, and shared with the MUW QEP Team literature they collected at the meetings. Throughout 2011 and 2012, the QEP chair reported on the progress of the QEP to campus committees and councils, including PIE Council, Academic Council, Administrative Council, the President's Cabinet, and Faculty Senate. In fall of 2012, the QEP Team welcomed to campus MUW's reaffirmation consultants Robert L. Armacost, Office of the Dean, College of Medicine, University of Central Florida (UCF) and chair of the UCF QEP planning committee, and Julia J. Pet-Armacost, Associate Dean for Planning and Knowledge Management, College of Medicine, UCF, and member of the UCF SACS reaffirmation Leadership Team. The Armacosts were special guests at the annual "Assessment Day" in August and presented an overview of how the QEP fits into the larger SACSCOC accreditation process. They also met with the MUW QEP Team and provided helpful criticism of the proposal, encouraging us to better define our student learning objectives, better connect to institutional data, and find ways to ensure that decision makers used assessment data to revise the plan whenever appropriate. In this way we sought to confirm that we knew what accreditors expected of our QEP and made sure to learn from those who had been through the process and could help light the way.

The proposal was the collaborative effort of six faculty members, representing four different academic departments, who were motivated by Richard Arum and Josipa Roska's recent study, *Academically Adrift*, and saw the study as representative of the student learning issues on campus. Arum and Roska suggest that a significant proportion of students show little improvement in academic skills during their first two years of college. In particular, gains lag among African-American students and students majoring in business and education, groups that are heavily represented among MUW's student body. Georg Kuh suggests that first-generation students, students of color, low-income students, transfer students, and off-campus students are "generally less engaged" than others.[19] Arum and Roska link these problems both to undergraduate curricula that provide insufficient practice in reading, writing, and complex reasoning, the pervasiveness of "credentialism," or the idea that colleges and universities exist to provide a degree rather than to improve individual knowledge or skills.

[19] George Kuh, et al., *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle: Research, Propositions, and Recommendations,* ASHE Higher Education Report, (Wiley Periodicals, San Francisco, CA, 2007) 61-66.

The issues addressed by Arum and Roska are reflected in the MUW student body. Credentialism appeared clearly in the faculty feedback on the QEP proposals. Arum and Roska conclude that "too few students having challenging academic experiences," but "when students are asked to read and write in their courses, when academic coursework is challenging, and when higher-order thinking is included in the coursework" then students' CLA scores improve.[20] Specifically, they note that the combination of reading at least forty pages a week *and* writing twenty pages per semester is correlated with significantly greater gains of the Collegiate Learning Assessment [CLA], which measures reading, writing, and critical thinking.[21] Another significant finding was the paucity of intellectual engagement with faculty that goes beyond discussion of grades or assignments. Although faculty-student contact in itself did not seem to be correlated with gains on the CLA, Arum and Roska note that the quality of student-faculty interaction is likely to be more important than the quantity.[22] According to the NSSE 2011, 42 percent of first-year students reported that they had never discussed ideas with their professors outside of class; only 7 percent said that they had done so "very often."[23]

MUW's 2009 NSSE results are in line with these national findings; the percentage of MUW freshmen who discussed ideas with their professors outside of class "very often" is also 7 percent at MUW, whereas another 11 percent said they had done this "often," while 36 percent said they had "never" done so, a number that is lower than the national average but still suggests that a significant minority of MUW students have minimal intellectual engagement with faculty outside of class. The percentage of first-year students who have "often" (29 percent) or "very often" (9 percent) put together ideas or concepts from different courses during assignments or discussions lags behind peer institutions. Similarly, the percentage of freshmen who have "often" (22 percent) or "very often" (7 percent) come to class without completing readings or assignments is higher than at peer institutions, as is the percentage (33 percent) who reported that they read no books outside of those assigned for class. Strikingly, results from MUW seniors show the opposite pattern; by their senior year, MUW students were more likely than those at peer institutions to have read a book on their own, less likely to have come to class without completing readings or assignments, and about as likely to have put together ideas or

[20] Arum and Roska, *Academically Adrift*, 93.
[21] Ibid., 94-95.
[22] Ibid., 96.
[23] Ibid., 38.

concepts from different courses.[24] These NSSE results may suggest that MUW has already had some success at cultivating student engagement and fostering voluntary intellectual activity. However, the high percentage of transfer students and the lower retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen means that freshmen and seniors are, in some respects, two different populations. Therefore, we cannot be certain that MUW instills these behaviors, only that students who are *successful* at MUW tend to have acquired them.

To ensure that the QEP process was evidence-based, the QEP Team undertook additional focus group meetings with faculty in all the colleges and students during fall 2012. We also made plans to administer NSSE and CLA+ testing to students to develop baselines, so that in the future the QEP director could establish benchmarks for student learning and engagement at MUW. The QEP Team created guidelines for the feedback sessions for student groups and faculty groups to ensure that facilitators used open-ended questions, but also included probes so that the feedback would be detailed. Feedback was collected in real time by a member (or members) of the QEP Team who agreed to take in-depth notes.

Faculty voiced support for the QEP topic and identified what worked (and what had not worked) to encourage intellectual curiosity and active learning in their classrooms. In discussing the topic, faculty repeatedly noted the need to challenge the rampant credentialism among the student body. The humanities faculty and students argued that applying learning to "real world" issues and being explicit about the relevance of critical thinking and writing skills would work:

> Sometimes, especially with freshmen or first semester transfer, they seem totally surprised to find out that they'll be expected to engage in learning. I want to know how to overcome their frustration and anger that I'm asking them to engage in the class.
>
> I see that in course evaluations. I see students angry that they have to talk and discuss, when they only expected to hear a lecture. They seem to think discussion is a cop out. They want to hear from the expert, not listen to one another.
>
> Maybe that is where the meta-cognition part of the Venn diagram comes in [part of the initial QEP proposal]. We need to take class time to learn about learning.
>
> I teach Core classes [general education classes]; I only teach classes that students are *required* to take. The vast majority are not majors and are there just there to tick off a box. What can I do to make them interested? They only need to get through the course. This connects to

[24] National Survey of Student Engagement, "Mississippi University for Women: Frequency Distributions," 2009.

plagiarism. They don't care to learn; they only care to get through the course and they see you as an obstacle to getting through the course.

Is this about credentialism? [Others in the room, "Yes."] I worry about what will happen in the next 30 years. All that will be left will be colleges that walk students through a degree and Harvard types. All you hear in the media is that humanities are bad and other crazy, terrible things--degrees have become mercenary. I don't know how we're going to solve that.

I don't think that showing them how well-rounded we are will get it. I think we're going to have to make learning relevant to what we're doing and connect it to their degree. I have to explain how my survey course will help them in their career. I have to explain how lit class will be relevant to their profession.

We all ought to be able to justify our existences. We all need to be able to specifically tell them about how doing this work helps them, beyond making them well-rounded. That there is a skill involved that they can use later—otherwise, they'll get on the job and won't have anything but a degree to help them do the job.

Changing UN 101 to focus more heavily on learning styles, study skills, and other academic content, rather than student-life topics. Having a freshman-level class where students are required to discuss ideas will take them out of the mindset of "I am just here to listen."

Faculty and students across campus agreed on solutions to apathy and credentialism among the student body—active learning that took students out of the classroom—and identified the barriers that discouraged the widespread adoption of such practices.

Students crave a connection with us. Talk about students in the classroom. How do we get them thinking outside the box? Broad thinking?

Take them there. Money for field trips and I'm not saying everybody has to go. We used to take trips to Viking and when they get the opportunity to see things, for some of them it is a wow! This is what is going on. Take them out of the classroom.

I agree. We talk about teaching and scholarship; we don't commit any funds for student research. If you want to show them applied research, money has to be set aside to go. Or have a committee overseeing.

I differentiate between two types of motivated students: those who like to learn vs. those who like high grades. I try to point out that their course grade doesn't matter for the MCAT or being a doctor or for their long-term career; it is the learning that matters, not the grade.

There is a problem of motivation to turn in work, on time, or at all. I have some students who are totally on top of it in class and have great skills, but who do not turn in homework, quizzes, tests, etc. and therefore their grades don't reflect their learning.

> Part of the problem may be that they have been taught that there is right and wrong – there is no gray area. This is a problem caused in part by NCLB schooling – they can't question, they can't risk being wrong, so they can't speak up unless absolutely positive that they are correct.
>
> We need an open dialogue about MUW moving away from punitive approach to learning to positive reinforcement approach. We need to stop insisting on things like "miss XX many classes and you automatically fail" when evaluating students. It should about their work, not about being in a seat. It is time to drop that punitive stuff, the over reporting, and redundant memos, and to create a reward system instead.
>
> We set up barriers for our students – we ask them to fit our mold of classroom habit with little variation. Lab is not active learning in the QEP sense, and PowerPoint lectures won't do it either. I'm doing a mix now. I do some lecture to get the vocabulary and introductory material in, but then I push my students off into the deep end to try it on their own. It helps when this sudden jump into hands-on work is not attached a big points value – you have to mix high challenge and low grade risk.

Faculty in the College of Nursing and Speech Language Pathology agreed. The question "What have you seen that worked to create intellectually curious students?" sparked this exchange:

> It isn't in our classes but in the clinic setting we see this. When you get the intellectual curiosity is in post-conference after they actually practice what they've learned. In simulations, it is a safe environment and so they know nothing will happen if they mess up. At the end, even if they didn't do well, they learned something. It is rehearsal without penalty and you see the light bulb go on.
>
> Relate something to real life. Whether through case studies or taking them to the lab, it needs to be something that they can see its use. And this could be used throughout other disciplines. Relate it, learning, to real life.
>
> I take students to NP (Nurse Practitioner) Day at the capitol over the summer and we urge them to go and most of them go because we offer them incentives to go. When I have taken them to NP day, then they are more interested in policy--when they see what goes on at the capitol. That makes them more interested in policy, whereas before they were not.
>
> We have them teach their fellow students about a process and we hear anecdotally that they like it. Putting them in that position stimulates that curiosity because they are on the hot seat; so since they're going to have to teach it, they have to learn it.
>
> We found that true in nursing theory, too. When they have to teach it to another, they learn it better and are more enthusiastic than if one of us pontificates.

Faculty in math and science argued that:

> Engaged students use "what if's" in their questions and comments. This is an early sign that this student will go explore material on his or her own, even if I answer how the what-if would play out in a given scenario in class...The reverse is also true: if I as an instructor pose a "what if" scenario, the students who try to answer that question are the motivated learners.

Learning outside the classroom was a frequent issue discussed by students and faculty. Faculty in math and science wanted to see the QEP encourage more interaction between students and faculty, saying, "We need more opportunities to interact with our students socially, outside of the classroom. If they don't have support at home to be engaged and self-motivated, then they need it from elsewhere. We're a logical place to start." Students agreed, asking for "More personal contact and informal interaction with instructors." Faculty noted that

> The structure of our campus is problematic. There is no centralized place where students gather, no culture of campus community. Look at the student union. The new Grab n Go food areas. There are no real places to hang out and engage with other people. At good universities there is a heartbeat place where activity is organically centered—we don't have that.

The feedback also pointed to major concerns with the QEP, namely that there would not be enough faculty support to ensure a transformation in student learning. Faculty suggested that while the teaching mission of the university was clear to faculty, there were not enough institutional resources focused on supporting teaching and learning. Comments like this from business faculty were common in all faculty feedback sessions: "We teach four and five and more classes that take up all this time, and 40 advisees. Other places don't spend time with each advisee and you get TAs. The faculty don't have time to do research— or write up what they're doing in the classroom. I don't have time." Faculty in nursing embraced the QEP as a chance to really focus on teaching and learning: "I hear what others said and agree. We've never had a lot of opportunities at this university to learn more about teaching and learning. And the tech support is vital. If we're expected to do this then we need that support." If the QEP aimed to transform student learning, it would have to support new pedagogies and faculty directed that the university do so in the form of a "Center for Teaching and Learning." The humanities, business, and math and science faculty especially hit on this, saying:

> The university needs to help faculty by creating a Center Teaching and Learning (CTL). That is where we could learn from each other and encourage interdisciplinary work. This would help us collaborate so that we might know what other faculty are researching. It could be a place to locate the CRI [Common Reading Initiative] and other things. Right now Marty [Hatton] has to do everything under this umbrella.

> Faculty need to have their souls fed, too; frustrated students can be very difficult to handle.
>
> Give faculty support at the university level with CTL.
>
> This would be a place to talk about pedagogy. With a CTL, we could send some faculty to teaching conferences and when they came back to campus there would be a place to disperse that knowledge and ideas across campus.
>
> We need a physical location and a place to have workshops and encourage discussion.

In feedback sessions, students told us they wanted "more hands on learning," more "short learning/volunteering trips within the U.S.," more "motivational classes" that require "studying and researching a topic they [students] think is interesting," and that "out of the class, hands-on learning should be a required component of all majors." They reported not liking passive learning and wanted more active learning opportunities; however, as faculty feedback suggests, that did not mean that MUW students were prepared to succeed in active learning exercises. Brevard College noticed this same phenomenon, finding that while students wanted active learning,

> BC students have [not] mastered the skills required for *active* learning. Indeed, conditioned by their high school experience *not* to see the classroom as a stimulating place, some seem to have acquired bad habits of coming to classes unprepared to participate fully and enthusiastically in their own education—or, worse, of not coming to class at all … This presents an unusual situation - students who have predilections toward active learning, but who have insufficient grasp of the skills and behaviors required to achieve success in an active classroom."[25]

We find ourselves in the same situation; students and faculty report they want more opportunities to "do" learning, but data suggest our students are ill-prepared to handle the challenge. In nationally-normed surveys of students (including the National Survey of Student Engagement and Need for Cognition Scale) and feedback sessions with faculty, the results indicate that MUW students are not significantly different than peers in their ability to engage in higher-order thinking, reflective and integrative thinking, or quantitative reasoning.[26]

Like Brevard College, MUW has a faculty that knows its students and is willing to engage them individually, but faculty reported needing help in order to create intellectually

[25] Brevard College, Quality Enhancement Plan, 13-14.
[26] For more on 2013 NCS and NSSE test results, see the "Assessment of the QEP" (Section 6).

curious, self-motivated learners of the 21st century. While academic engagement includes many facets (including academic challenge/rigor and student-faculty interaction), the MUW QEP will focus on creating a curious and engaged student by promoting active learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning (APIL).[27] The basis of the MUW QEP is the knowledge that active learning pedagogies promote intellectual curiosity and self-directed learning, but we do not have the support in areas like faculty development, technology, or resources to help our students succeed in active learning activities. If we want to improve student learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning makes clear that we must focus on teaching.[28] The authors of the UW SOUL study summarize their results, saying: "Faculty play the most important role in advancing student learning." Students, they argue, "are responsible for their academic choices and behaviors," but even then "faculty have profound influence even on this awareness."[29] We want to promote intellectual curiosity and in order to do that we want students to understand that, as one University of Washington student said, "Education is something you do, not something you get."[30] By encouraging APIL learning, we will support the development of self-motivated learners-students who produce knowledge as opposed to those who passively consume it. Students will take ownership of their learning by mastering necessary skills, processes, and tools needed to develop and articulate relevant questions. This will be accomplished by determining how to approach problems, by engaging in exploration, and by discovering and reporting the findings, whether individually or as a group.

4. b. QEP Planning Process

MUW's QEP process began in August 2011, as outlined above, and was largely shaped by the QEP Team, which consisted of representatives of a broad-spectrum of the campus community. After the Team selected *Cultivating Curiosity* as the QEP topic, the authors who were not already on the Team joined the QEP Team to help plan the QEP and write the documents. On Assessment Day in August 2012, the Armacosts presented to the campus community an overview of the reaffirmation process, and Hatton and Richardson also updated the campus on MUW's plans and timetable for the reaffirmation and QEP processes.

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[27] George D. Kuh, et al, *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter,* Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2005).
[28] Maryellen Weimer, "Focus on Learning, Transform Teaching." *Change*, 2003: 48-54; Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience,* 340-355.
[29] Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience,* 340.
[30] Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Experience,* 1.

Richardson emphasized to the campus that the selection of the general topic for the QEP was the important first step in preparing a successful QEP, but that much remained to be accomplished before the final plan was developed, including reviewing and assessing MUW's student learning data; collecting focused input from faculty, staff, and students representing all academic programs; narrowing the focus of the proposal based on clear evidence of the learning needs of MUW's students; determining the target population for the QEP; developing student learning outcomes and a plan to achieve those outcomes; developing an assessment plan for the QEP; appointing a director; preparing an adequate but manageable budget; and preparing a five-year implementation plan. Richardson emailed the campus a link to the QEP proposal so that everyone could review the proposal and contribute to the continued development of the QEP topic.

During the fall semester and early spring of the 2012-13 academic year, the members of the QEP Team led focus groups with departments and colleges and with student groups in order to get broad input from the campus for developing the specifics of the QEP and to receive suggestions for implementation. The QEP Team met on January 11, 2013, to discuss the feedback and to plan the work moving forward. Based on the feedback we received in fall 2012, institutional data, and our research into the scholarship of teaching and learning, the Team divided into two subcommittees: one committee to work on the details of the QEP (specific focus, student learning outcomes, assessment, etc.) and the other to propose a plan for a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Both committees completed their work in March, and the QEP Team sent forward the proposals to the Provost, President, and members of the President's Cabinet for review, revision, approval, and budget planning.[31]

Although the CTL is not an element of the MUW QEP, it was identified in the thorough review process that the QEP initiated as an important faculty support service for the implementation of the QEP. The CTL will act as a "neutral zone," which Peggy Maki argues, promotes reflection regarding "good news as well as not-so good news about student learning;" this in turn fosters "open inquiry about assessment results, institutional and programmatic self-reflection about those results, and development of innovations in teaching, curricular, and instructional design."[32] The CTL will be one of the means by which the faculty access, develop,

[31] The full report of both committees is available upon request.
[32] Peggy Maki, "Moving From Paperwork to Pedagogy Channeling Intellectual Curiosity into a Commitment to Assessment," *AAHE Bulletin* 54, (2002): 3-5.

support, disseminate, and assess pedagogy that promotes active learning, which is why the QEP Team took on the task of helping initiate a CTL. The QEP Team's commitment to the CTL is now complete since the university is conducting a search for a director in spring 2014 who will oversee the CTL's part of QEP implementation.

The QEP Team also prepared a job description for the QEP Director (Appendix D), which was sent to the Provost for approval by the Provost and the President. The position was advertised on campus. The QEP Team expressed a preference for a director from within the MUW faculty who understood the plan for the QEP, as well as the diverse character and needs of the MUW students. At the conclusion of the application period, Mark Bean, Professor and Chair of the Department of Health and Kinesiology, was selected as the QEP Director. Bean was the ideal candidate: he is one of the authors of the proposal, is an experienced teacher, has a research interest in the topic, and has administrative and budget management experience.

The MUW administration created a budget for the QEP for the 2013-14 academic year to support the preliminary work of the director and the QEP Team, especially to provide testing of students in order to gather base-line data for assessment purposes, to provide for faculty development, to pilot implementation strategies, and to complete the QEP document. The complete QEP budget is presented in Section 7 of this document. Additionally, space has been provided in MUW's Fant Library for a CTL. The library is presently undergoing renovation and expansion with completion set for 2015, and space has been planned for the Center in the renovations, including a seminar room, computer lab, and state-of-the-art classroom. (Temporary space will be provided until the library renovations are complete.) The QEP Team's work continued throughout the summer and fall of 2013, discussing, researching and writing for the QEP plan.

4. c. Student Learning Goals and Major Initiatives

The goal of MUW's QEP is to utilize active learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning (APIL) pedagogies to nurture student intellectual curiosity and enhance the climate of student engagement. We believe that the objectives described below have the potential to transform student learning by broadening its relevance to real world issues and taking learning out of the classroom. For the purpose of the MUW QEP, we define intellectually curious persons as ones who inquire about the world around them and have the ability to find or form answers to their own questions.

Student Learning Outcomes:

An intellectually curious MUW student will be able to:

1. Develop and ask relevant and valid research questions.
2. Effectively pursue answers and solutions to their own questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry.
3. Produce and author knowledge by exploring open-ended questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry.[33]

The MUW QEP is meant to be flexible, which means the initiatives are subject to change as the QEP progresses. The QEP is experimental and relies on assessment results to continue, make improvements to, or end some of its initiatives. We have identified initial strategic initiatives and tasks to support the student learning outcomes.

Major Initial Initiatives:

1. MUW will gather data related to APIL pedagogies and student engagement-behaviors and analyze this data to both assess progress and recommend what changes are needed to current tactics and strategies.
2. Faculty will identify, implement, and evaluate strategies for improving student learning outcomes.
3. MUW will modify UN 101 Introduction to College Life to stimulate intellectual growth, ground students in APIL approaches, and instill a sense of excitement about learning and discovery.
4. MUW will develop, manage, and improve an infrastructure to support faculty participation in development activities related to APIL pedagogies.
5. MUW will create a campus environment that promotes APIL learning outside the classroom.

4. d. Review of Best Practices

In honing this project, we reviewed literature related to intellectual curiosity, active learning, problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, student engagement, and institutional barriers to student success.

Intellectual Curiosity. In the 1950s Daniel Berlyne and others searching for the sources of curiosity suggested that curiosity is aroused when living organisms encounter stimuli that are ambiguous, novel, or complex. In these situations the animal or human will experience unpleasantness and will attempt to acquire new information to reduce the unpleasant state.

[33] Based on the work of Levy and Petrulis. Phillippa Levy and Robert Petrulis, "How Do First-Year University Students Experience Inquiry and Research, and What Are the Implications for the Practice of Inquiry-Based Learning?," *Studies in Higher Education* vol. 37, no. 1 (February 2012): 85-101.

This paradigm was classified as the "curiosity-drive theory."[34] Subsequent studies demonstrated that exploratory behavior was reduced after new or unusual elements were examined, suggesting that curiosity-driven arousal could be satisfied.[35] Although the curiosity-drive theory has been well substantiated, other evidence suggests that animals also tend to exhibit exploratory behavior when no curiosity-arousing stimuli are present.[36] This research concluded that curiosity can be aroused most by external stimuli with four primary characteristics: complexity, novelty, uncertainty, and conflict.

Berlyne and his associates in the 1960s began to search for the external conditions that fostered the development of curiosity. Berlyne argued that individuals respond to an optimal level of curiosity-related arousal.[37] This optimal-arousal model suggests that when animals are over-stimulated, as when fear is present, they will withdraw. On the other hand, when there is very little stimulus, as in boring situations, they will seek curiosity-arousing stimuli. The ideal environment to enhance curiosity is one that is balanced, creating the desire for further exploration. Day (1982), a colleague of Berlyne's, expounded on Berlyne's work and created a graphic representation demonstrating a curvilinear response of efficiency in relation to arousal.[38] Day's "Zone of Curiosity" is presented below:

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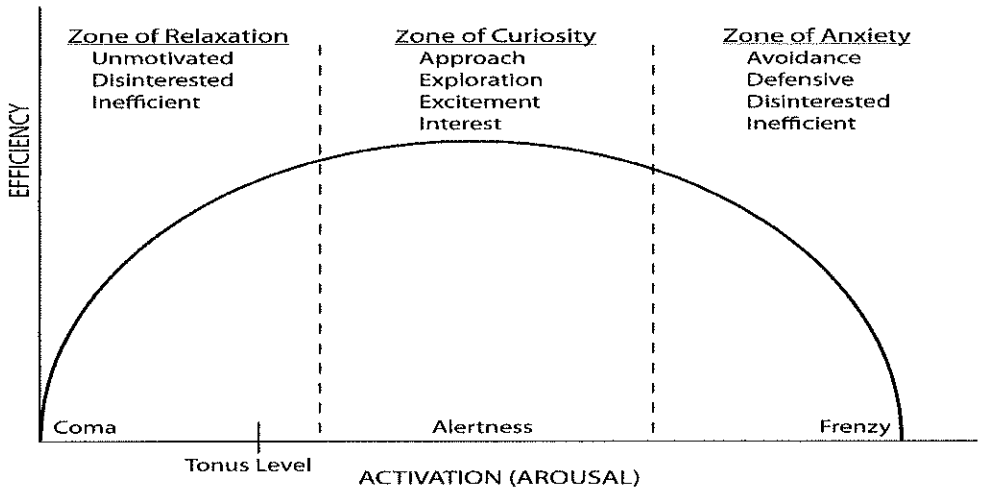
[34] Berlyne, D. (1950). Novelty and curiosity as determinants of exploratory behavior. *British Journal of Psychology, 41*, 68-80.

[35] Dember, Dember, W. (1956). Response to rat environment change. *Journal of Comparative Physiological Psychology, 49*, 93-95; Harlow, H. (1953). Mice, monkeys, men, and motives. *Psychological Review*, 23-32.

[36] Butler, R. (1957). The effect of visual incentives on visual exploration motivation in monkeys. *Journal of Physiological Psychology, 48*, 247-249; Fowler, H. (1965). *Curiosity and exploratory behavior*. New York: Macmillan; Hebb, D. (1955). Drives and the C.N.S. (conceptual nervous system). *Psychological Review, 60*, 549-571.

[37] Berlyne, D. (1967). Arousal and reinforcement. In D. Levine (Ed.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation 1967*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

[38] Day, H. (1982). Curiosity and the interested explorer. *Performance and Instruction, 21*, 19-22.



Importantly, Berlyne recognized early on that individuals are motivated by two different levels of mental processing when developing curiosity, one being less effortful, the other requiring higher-ordered thinking. In 1954 he differentiated between these two types of curiosity and defined them as "perpetual" and "epistemic." Berlyne defined perpetual curiosity as "a drive that is aroused by novel stimuli and reduced by continued exposure to these stimuli"; it is usually applied to animal behavior.[39] Perpetual curiosity is typically aroused through senses, such as hearing, vision, or touch, is driven more by reactions to stimuli, is more automatic, and requires less cognitive effort. Epistemic curiosity is defined as the desire to acquire knowledge and is usually applied to humans. This type of curiosity is demonstrated by actively participating in behaviors that require intellectual engagement, acquisition of information, and the pursuit of knowledge. Epistemic curiosity is similar conceptually to intellectual curiosity in that they share trait constructs that "describe tendencies to seek out, engage in, enjoy, and pursue opportunities for effortful cognitive activity."[40] Epistemic curiosity thus requires more cognitive effort and is intentional, and the implications are that it is affected through higher-ordered learning.

More recent research has focused on the concept that curiosity can be a natural characteristic within an individual or can be the result of occasional outside stimulation. In the first situation the learner may have innate qualities that allow him or her to experience curiosity

[39] Berlyne, D. (1954). A theory of human curiosity. *British Journal of Psychology, 45*, 180-191, 180.

[40] von Stumm, S., Hell, B., & Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2011). *The hungry mind: Intellectual curiosity is the third pillar of academic performance.* Retrieved December 1, 2012, from Sage: http://ppssagepub.com/content/6/6/547.

as a result of a wide range of experiences and under conditions which occur more frequently and for longer periods of time. This is classified as having high "trait" or natural curiosity. On the other hand, "state" curiosity tends to vary over time depending on experiences and conditions. Those with high trait curiosity tend to explore further, more deeply, and more often. These individuals tend to exhibit high interest in lifelong learning simply for the enjoyment of a learning experience. Although high trait curiosity can be characteristic of a successful learning, it can be stifled due to fear or anxiety. State curiosity is usually dependent on external stimulation that can range from everyday experiences, like wondering why the dog is barking so aggressively, to pondering the vastness of the universe. State curiosity can be aroused with the appropriate amount of stimulation that can include complexity, novelty, uncertainty, conflict, etc.[41]

Altogether the work by Berlyne, Day, and others seems to suggest that individuals can overcome more automatic, basic needs for curiosity, but in order to do so most effectively we need both (a) an optimal environment and (b) learning both to recognize our capacity to do so and to become more effortful in cognitively-controlled, higher-ordered epistemic forms of curiosity development.

Intellectual curiosity has been classified as one of three pillars of academic performance, along with IQ and conscientiousness (i.e., hard work, organization, etc.).[42] Enhancing factors that stimulate curiosity and reducing factors associated with psychological stress (e.g., high anxiety unfamiliarity, uncertainty) in the academic setting will greatly improve intellectual stimulation and create an environment that will allow intellectual curiosity to thrive. Factors that encourage curiosity in an academic setting include a strong need for competence or improved understanding of something. In this form, there is a sense of knowledge deprivation that the individual believes must be addressed: that is, an information gap between what is actually known and what one needs or wants to know.[43] A different view of curiosity was presented by Silvia, who suggests that heightened curiosity may not be attributed to a lack of knowledge but occurs from enjoyment associated with simply experiencing something novel.[44]

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[41] Kashdan, T.B. & Roberts, J.E. (2004). Trait and State Curiosity in the Genesis of Intimacy: Differentiation from Related Constructs. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 23* (6), 792-816.

[42] Von Stumm, Hell, and Chamorro-Premuzic (2011).

[43] Litman, J. A., & Jimerson, T. L. (2004). The measurement of curiosity as a feeling of deprivation. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 82*, 147-157.

[44] Silvia, P. (2005). What is interesting? Exploring the appraisal structure of interest. *Emotion, 5*, 89-102.

This occurs when there is a "take it or leave it" attitude for new information. Additionally, Kashdan & Yuen (2007) observed that intellectual curiosity is enhanced in a supportive learning environment.[45] This includes a challenging curriculum, support from teaching faculty, and a general sense of happiness among students. Researchers in the area have indicated that curiosity can also be suppressed. Environments or situations that generate high levels of uncertainty, unfamiliarity, or anxiety contribute to the suppression of curiosity.[46] This observation is consistent with evidence that curiosity in college students is diminished in unsupportive or threatening environments.[47]

The literature on curiosity, therefore, supports the idea that curiosity can be cultivated. Although personality matters, experiences matter too, and so does the presence or absence of a supportive learning environment. MUW's QEP goals include providing students with new intellectual experiences (novelty), an appropriate level of intellectual challenge (complexity), and opportunities to explore open-ended problems and controversies within the student's field of study (uncertainty and conflict). Furthermore, we seek to create a learning environment that lessens fear and anxiety by giving students the tools that they need to succeed in the form of tutorials and academic support.

APIL Pedagogies. Enhancing intellectual curiosity in college students cannot easily occur without considering related constructs such as interest and engagement.[48] Curiosity, interest, and engagement are inter-related with one affecting the others. In some instances curiosity serves as the trigger for interest and engagement. In others, interest or engagement provides the impetus that leads to curiosity. It is our belief that by promoting inquiry we will support curiosity by encouraging students to ask questions and pursue answers, which means they will pursue their own interests and create knowledge for themselves. Promoting inquiry, we believe, is the key to cultivating curiosity. An intellectually curious person, is, as Clifton Conrad and Laura Dunek define, a learner driven by inquiry; one who "has the capability to explore and cultivate promising ideas—ideas that will enable him or her to successfully

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[45] Kashdan, T. B., & Yuen, M. (2007). Whether highly curious students thrive academically depends on perceptions about school learning environments: A study of Hong Kong adolescents. *Motivation & Emotion, 31*, 260-270.

[46] Berlyne (1954); Loewenstein, G. (1994). The psychology of curiosity: A review and reinterpretation. *Psychological Bulletin,* 75-98.

[47] Peters, R. A. (1978). Effects of anxiety, curiosity and perceived instructor threat on student behavior in the college classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 70*, 388-395.

[48] Arnone, M. P., Small, R., & Chauncy, S. &. (2011). Curiosity, Interest and engagement in technology-pervasive learnng environments: a new research agenda. *Education Tech Research Dev, 59*, 181-198.

navigate constant change and capitalize on career opportunities, enjoy his or her personal life, and thoughtfully engage in public life."[49]

All forms of education utilize inquiry, but creating a precise meaning of active learning, problem based learning, and inquiry based learning is a phenomenon of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In the middle twentieth century, American education reformer John Dewey pioneered the idea that people learn best by doing, thus beginning an "active learning" movement in the United States and elsewhere.[50] Active learning takes many forms. Since the 1970s school teachers have utilized problem-based and inquiry-based learning, but Rachel Spronken-Smith and Rebecca Walker argue that their application in higher education has been "patchy."[51] Even ten years ago problem-based learning and inquiry-based learning were little more than buzzwords in higher education. As Wendy Katkin explained in 2003, "there is no consensus as to either what the term 'inquiry-based learning' means or how or to what extent it is being applied in instructional settings."[52]

Despite increased interest in inquiry-based learning (IL) and problem-based learning (PBL), there continues to be confusion as to how to distinguish between them and whether they each constitute discreet categories. Cindy E. Hmelo-Silver, Ravit Golan Duncan, and Clark A. Chinn argue that their genesis is the major difference. They find the roots of PBL in medical education and hypothetical-deductive reasoning, while the origins of IL are in scientific inquiry and the scientific process.[53] Their summary of the two indicates the degree to which they are complementary:

> In PBL, students learn content, strategies, and self-directed learning skills through collaboratively solving problems, reflecting on their experiences, and engaging in self-directed inquiry. In IL, students learn content as well as discipline-specific reasoning skills and practices (often in scientific disciplines) by collaboratively engaging in investigations. Both PBL and IL are organized around relevant, authentic problems or questions. Both place heavy emphasis on collaborative learning and activity. In both,

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[49] Conrad and Dunek, 60.
[50] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).
[51] Spronken-Smith and Walker, Can Inquiry-based Learning Strengthen the Links between Teaching and Disciplinary Research," *Studies in Higher Education,* vol. 35, no. 6 (September 2010): 724.
[52] Katkin, The Boyer Commission Report and its Impact on Undergraduate Research," *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, Special Issue: Valuating and Supporting Undergraduate Research,* vol. 2003, issue 93 (Spring 2003): 31.
[53] Cindy E. Hmelo-Silver, Ravit Golan Duncan, and Clark A. Chinn, "Scaffolding and Achievement in Problem-Based and Inquiry Learning: A Response to Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark (2006)," *Educational Psychologist* vol. 42, no. 2 (2007): 100.

> students are cognitively engaged in sense making, developing evidence-based explanations, and communicating their ideas.[54]

Emphasis seems to be the most important distinguishing factor for practitioners. Inquiry based learning places emphasis on "posing questions, gathering and analyzing data, and constructing evidence-based arguments, while "PBL often uses text-based resources for both the problem data and self-directed learning."[55] Scholars continue to be confused about how to create distinct definitions, however. Spronken-Smith and Walker point out that "'enquiry-based learning,' 'guided-inquiry,' problem-based learning,' 'undergraduate research,' and 'research-based teaching'" are often used interchangeably.[56]

Joseph J. Gonzalez warns us not to get bogged down in establishing a hard line between related (though distinct) active learning pedagogies, like undergraduate research, cooperative learning, team-based learning, or inquiry-based learning, since the definitions "confuse even the closest observers on any given day."[57] Instead, he encourages extensive reading on all of them and staying focused on the principal goal: "teaching students to act like scholars."[58] Spronken-Smith and Walker agree, arguing that we should focus on the "core ingredients" which unites these pedagogies, including the following characteristics:

- learning which is stimulated by inquiry, i.e. driven by questions or problems;
- learning which is based on a process of constructing knowledge and new understanding;
- an 'active' approach to learning, involving learning by doing;
- a student-centered approach to teaching in which the role of the teacher is to act as a facilitator; and
- a move to self-directed learning with students taking increasing responsibility for their learning.[59]

Philippa Levy and Robert Petrulis find that while IL includes a "range of pedagogical approaches" that date back to Dewey and Jerome Bruner, the commonality is that they "place

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Spronken-Smith and Walker, 725-6.
[57] "My Journey with Inquiry-based Learning," *Journal of Excellence in College Teaching*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2013): 35.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Spronken-Smith and Walker, 726.

student inquiry at centre-stage, and ... all learning tasks, assessments, resources and guidance are designed to support the inquiry process."[60]

In crafting the MUW QEP student learning outcomes, we utilized the four different, but equally valuable, forms of inquiry identified by Levy and Petrulis: identifying, pursuing, producing, and authoring knowledge.[61] While they are all forms of active learning and inquiry-based learning, the significant difference is that identifying and producing knowledge are instructor-directed, meaning that instructor focuses the student and sets them on the questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry, while pursuing and authoring are student-directed, meaning that the students select the questions, problems, scenarios or lines of inquiry. Another significant difference is that in the producing and authoring modes, students engage in "open" questioning. As Levy and Petrulis explain, the direction "may be entirely new to the discipline or simply new to the student," but regardless it should be "authentically 'open' in the sense that definitive answers have not yet been, or cannot be found and therefore offer possibilities for moving beyond active learning towards knowledge building."[62] This might be effectively accomplished through undergraduate research, but the four modes of inquiry allow for incredible diversity so that academic disciplines have the flexibility to find the best application within their curriculum.

There are a variety of ways to employ APIL pedagogies which will suit different disciplines, including health fields, and diverse kinds of MUW students, including first generation students and online students.[63] In order to be as inclusive as possible, the MUW QEP creates APIL specialists in each college who can help faculty develop strategies that work in

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[60] Phillippa Levy and Robert Petrulis, "How Do First-Year University Students Experience Inquiry and Research, and What Are the Implications for the Practice of Inquiry-Based Learning?," *Studies in Higher Education* vol. 37, no. 1 (February 2012): 85-101.

[61] Levy and Petrulis, "How Do First-Year University Students Experience Inquiry and Research, and What Are the Implications for the Practice of Inquiry-based Learning," *Studies in Higher Education,* vol. 37, no. 1 (February 2012): 85-101.

[62] Levy and Petrulies, 97.

[63] Kuh, *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle,* 95; Isabel Chagas, et al., "Problem-Based Learning in an Online Course of Health Education." *European Journal of Open, Distance And E-Learning* no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 10 pages; Steven Whitcombe, "Developing Skills of Problem-based Learning: What about Specialist Knowledge," *International Journal of Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning* 5, no. 2 (May 2013): 41-56; David Santandreu Calonge and Danilla Grando. "Reality-based Learning: Outbreak, an Engaging Introductory Course in Public Health and Epidemiology." *Health Education Journal* 72, no. 5 (September 2013): 584-600; Christine Alavi, ed., *Problem-based Learning in a Health Sciences Curriculum* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Cindy E. Hmelo-Silver, "Creating a Learning Space in Problem-based Learning," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning,* vol. 7, no. 1 (2013): 24-39; Heisawn Jeong and Cindy Hmelo-Silver, "Productive Use of Learning Resources in an Online Problem-based Learning Environment," *Computers in Human Behavior,* vol. 26, no. 1 (2010): 84-99.

their field.[64] MUW faculty may want to consider structured approaches to APIL pedagogies that encourage students to build skills related to inquiry, like critical thinking and writing skills, over the course of several classes. In some areas, this may require co-curricular courses, but scholars make clear that skills or practices and content should go hand-in-hand. The goal of IL and PBL is not to promote skills over content or vice versa; rather, we must advocate that skills and content together are "central learning goals" and should be understood as mutually reinforcing.[65]

MUW students are diverse and come to us with widely varying knowledge bases, aptitude levels, and skill sets, which makes APIL pedagogies a good choice for us. Studies suggest that a rising tide of APIL pedagogies have the potential to lift all boats. Kuh, et al, find evidence that while both "higher ability" and "lower ability" students showed improved learning as a result of active learning pedagogies, the figures suggested that such interventions "may have the greatest payoff for those students who are most at risk for leaving college prematurely."[66] A possible effect of the MUW QEP may be increased student retention and progression rates for struggling students.

We are aware that many of the activities associated with APIL strategies are also associated with "deep learning," or the kind of learning which leads to, as Babara J. Millis explains, "understanding and remembering of relationships, causes, effects and implications for new or different situations."[67] Kuh, et al, argue that effective active and collaborative learning practices that support "deep learning" include:

- Asking questions in class or contributing to class discussions or both,
- Making class presentations,
- Working with other students on class projects inside or outside of class,
- Tutoring other students,
- Participating in a community-based project as part of a course,

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[64] We developed the position of APIL specialists in response to faculty feedback and scholarship regarding best practices. In a faculty feedback session, MUW business faculty reported that they turned to colleagues in the halls of their building when they had questions about technology or pedagogy. The UW SOUL pointed to a similar trend, noting that workshops and books played only a "minor role" in faculty decisions to change teaching. What mattered more were observations of other faculty and conversations with faculty peers. Hoffman Beyer, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience* 128, 124-128.

[65] Cindy E. Hmelo-Silver, et al, "Scaffolding and Achievment," 105.

[66] Kuh, *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle, 95.*

[67] "Promoting Deep Learning," no. 47, IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) Center, Manhattan, Kansas, 1, available online at http://www.theideacenter.org/research-and-papers/idea-papers/idea-paper-no-47.

- Discussing ideas from readings or classes with others students, family members, or others outside of class.[68]

To promote deep learning, Millis explains that activities must be sequenced so that knowledge and skills build, active learning pedagogies should be utilized, and "students must DO something with the work prepared outside of class."[69] It is MUW's mission to help students become lifelong learners, to prepare them for careers, and to encourage their personal intellectual growth.[70] APIL pedagogies have the potential to affect student engagement and encourage the kind of life-long learning that we seek to inspire as an institution. Kuh, et al, explain the connection by saying:

> the more students study a subject, the more they know about it, and the more students practice and get feedback from faculty and staff members on writing and collaborative problem solving, the deeper they come to understand what they are learning and the more adept they become at managing complexity, tolerating ambiguity, and working with people from different backgrounds or with different views.... Said another way, engagement helps to develop habits of mind and heart that enlarge their capacity for continuous learning and personal development.[71]

No less important than these pedagogical elements, however, is transforming the campus culture. It is essential to take intellectual activity out of the classroom and make it a visible part of campus life. Much work needs to be done to support intellectual curiosity outside the classroom. Levy and Petrulis argue that in order for students to successfully identify, pursue, produce, and author knowledge, they must have a strong foundation in information literacy, peer collaboration, and instructor formative feedback, among other things.[72] Studies suggest that certain peer interactions and student/faculty interactions out of the classroom positively affect learning and student engagement. These activities include: tutoring other students, participating in intramural sports, working on group projects for class, and discussing racial or ethnic issues.[73]

As part of the MUW QEP, we will transform UN 101 Introduction to College Life along the lines of the Boyer Commission recommendations, which calls for institutions to develop a first year experience that provides "new stimulation for intellectual growth and a firm

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[68] Kuh, *Student Success in College*, 193.
[69] Millis, 1.
[70] MUW, Guiding Principles, available online at http://web3.muw.edu/about-muw.
[71] Robert M. Gonyea and George D. Kuh, *Using NSSE in Institutional Research,* New Directions for Institutional Research, Wiley Periodicals, 2009, 5.
[72] Levy and Petrulis, 96.
[73] Kuh, et al, *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle,* 58.

grounding in inquiry-based learning and communication of information and ideas."[74] Wendy Katkin summarizes the Boyer report saying that the point of the first year experience is to instill "excitement at the sense of discovery that permeates the environment, and provide a foundation that would enable them to move forward."[75] We believe that first-year seminars offer a particularly promising opportunity for the university to shape students' perceptions of their own education and to cultivate habits of active learning. Research has shown that seminars and other small classes in a student's first year are crucial for creating a climate of student engagement, especially among underprepared students.[76] Small classes with high-quality student-teacher interaction inside the classroom increase the likelihood that such interactions will continue outside the classroom, which in turn correlates with greater student retention, academic achievement, and critical thinking skills.[77] They have also been shown to enhance student thinking at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and increase the likelihood that students will adopt independent study strategies that focus on comprehension rather than memorization.[78] Such findings suggest that these seminars have a transformative impact well beyond the student's first semester. Finally, evidence suggests that excellent first year programs provide for ongoing assessment of the course and use the course as a way to introduce students to assessment activities that promote a better academic experience for others.[79]

However, it is also important to reach transfer students who would not enroll in a freshman seminar. The MUW QEP calls for an expanded emphasis, across the curriculum, on teaching students how to follow lines of inquiry and answer their own questions, which means they will need to know how to locate, read, and assess discipline-specific scholarly and primary sources. Christopher M. Gillen argues that teaching students how to analyze research articles critically is key to engaging students in the sciences, although it is often challenging because the interpretative and persuasive aspects of scholarship contrast with the factual nature of

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[74] The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, "Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for American's Research Universities,"19, available online at http://www.niu.edu/engagedlearning/research/pdfs/Boyer_Report.pdf.
[75] Katkin, 29.
[76] Joe Cuseo, "The Empirical Case Against Large Class Size: Adverse Effects on the Teaching, Learning, and Retention of First-Year Students." University of Alabama at Birmingham, 10, available online at http://www.uab.edu/images/oupimg/pdfs/class-size-first-year.pdf.
[77] Ibid., 5.
[78] Ibid., 6-7.
[79] Gonyea and Kuh, *Using NSSE in Institutional Research.*

textbooks.[80] The strategies that students need to read scholarly articles effectively include distinguishing among factual claims, interpretation, and criticism, as well as developing interpretations of their own.[81] Rather than just having students learn a collection of settled-upon facts, we will teach our students how we came to settle on those facts and give them the tools to draw new conclusions from similar sources. If successful, this will transform students from passive receivers of others' wisdom to active interpreters of their own discoveries. It will develop in them the ability to think critically about what we think we know and why we know it and problem-solve for new solutions. These abilities are key to extending learning outside of the classroom. If students know how to navigate scholarly and primary sources, they will have the tools to investigate whatever grabs their attention, whether that is health claims in the media or historical interpretations in political speeches.

Conclusion. Through a broad-based review of student learning that drew heavily on student and faculty feedback, the QEP Team identified a topic that was integral to advancing MUW's mission in the 21st century—cultivating intellectual curiosity. Scholarship related to curiosity and inquiry provided important definitions and models. We designed student learning objectives that will encourage students to "explore and cultivate promising ideas that will enable him or her to navigate the rapid change in the world."[82] We will foster intellectual curiosity by supporting them in identifying, pursuing, producing, and authoring knowledge. By promoting active learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning pedagogies, the MUW QEP will nurture student intellectual curiosity and enhance student engagement on campus.

5. Implementation of the QEP

5. a. Overview of Implementation

It is the responsibility of the QEP Director to coordinate implementation of the MUW QEP. We have developed initial initiatives to accomplish the student learning objectives and QEP goal with the understanding that the QEP must be flexible and changeable in order to

[80] Christopher M Gillen, "Criticism and Interpretation: Teaching the Persuasive Aspects of Research Articles," *CBE: Life Sciences Education* 5 (2006): 34.
[81] Ibid., 35.
[82] Conrad and Dunek, 77.

accommodate new data, feedback, and understandings of our students and our goal of fostering intellectual curiosity.

Major Initiatives:

1. MUW will gather data related to APIL pedagogies and student engagement-behaviors and analyze this data to both assess progress and recommend what changes are needed to current tactics and strategies.
2. Faculty will identify, implement, and evaluate strategies for improving student learning outcomes.
3. MUW will modify UN 101 Introduction to College Life to stimulate intellectual growth, ground students in APIL approaches, and instill a sense of excitement about learning and discovery.
4. MUW will develop, manage, and improve an infrastructure to support faculty participation in development activities related to APIL pedagogies.
5. MUW will conduct a campus audit to assess the degree to which our campus promotes APIL learning outside the classroom and act on those findings.

Detailed view of initiatives and tasks:

1. MUW will gather data related to APIL pedagogies and student engagement-behaviors and analyze this data to both assess progress and recommend what changes are needed to current tactics and strategies.

1.1. Administer NSSE.
1.2. Administer CLA+.
1.3. Administer NCS.
1.4. Conduct Student Focus Groups (SFG).
1.5. Collect data related to dissemination and use of APIL pedagogies (CTL).
1.6. Establish baseline data, develop target scores.
1.7. Gather and analyze data and recommend changes.
1.8. Track/analyze data and report conclusions.
1.9. Recommend changes to current tactics/strategies.
1.10. Implement recommended changes.
1.11. Adjust data gathering instruments.
1.12. Adjust tactics/strategies.
1.13. Report progress end of the semester presentation to campus.

2. Faculty will identify, implement, and evaluate strategies for improving student learning outcomes.

2.1. Increase support and training for faculty to incorporate APIL in undergraduate courses.
  2.1.1. Provide college-level faculty support persons (APIL specialists) for exploring, developing, and sharing techniques that work at MUW using APIL pedagogies.
  2.1.2. Provide in-service training to faculty about APIL techniques that work at MUW through the CTL.

2.1.3. Invite speakers and specialists (from within and outside the campus community) to provide campus-wide programming related to APIL through the CTL.
2.1.4. Provide direct observation of classroom APIL strategies when requested by faculty through the CTL.
2.1.5. Provide one-on-one consultations with faculty and departments who request individual meetings to discuss APIL strategies through the CTL.
2.1.6. Provide grant opportunities to help faculty develop APIL learning strategies.
2.1.7. Provide specific support for faculty teaching online/blended classes to engage in APIL pedagogies through the CTL.

2.2. Support student ability to succeed at APIL pedagogies.
2.2.1. Provide competitive funding to assist faculty in implementing these pedagogies in the classroom and to take learning out of the classroom.
2.2.2. Provide increased peer tutoring for students through the Writing Center, Math Lab, and Center for Academic Excellence.

3. MUW will modify UN 101 Introduction to College Life to stimulate intellectual growth, ground students in APIL approaches, and instill a sense of excitement about learning and discovery.

3.1. Broad faculty input into the Common Reading Initiative.
3.2. Consider ways to provide more academic focus, less student life issues focus.
3.3. Include APIL strategies and pedagogy in curriculum.
3.4. Include metacognition in the curriculum, especially some attention to how each student learns and exploration of self-motivation to learn.
3.5. Develop a plan for ongoing assessment of UN 101.
3.6. Consider a new model for the freshman seminar, such as a topic-specific model with a common syllabus, like the programs at Luther College[83] and Worcester Polytechnic University[84], or Virginia Tech's model of letting the departments establish the format of UN 101 with shared overall goals, or others that QEP director and UN 101 faculty find useful.

4. MUW will develop, manage, and improve infrastructure to support faculty participation in development activities related to APIL pedagogies.

4.1. Establish technology, tech support, and infrastructure to support APIL strategies, with particular attention to better classroom technology and Blackboard training and support.
4.2. Build online tutorials available via the Library Web site that address the following:
- Basic technical skills (how to use Blackboard, how to use online communication systems, etc.)
- How to take notes properly and avoid plagiarism. This tutorial should also explain the consequences of academic dishonesty at MUW.
- How to access scholarly resources utilizing technology.
- Others topics to be developed as students and faculty bring awareness of their needs.

[83] For more on this, please see: https://www.luther.edu/paideia/enduring-questions/
[84] Conrad and Dunek, 86-88.

5. MUW will create a campus environment that promotes APIL learning outside the classroom.

5.1. Students will engage in discussion of academic and intellectual issues inside and outside of the classroom.
5.2. Create campus audit team to include broad representation of campus community.
5.3. Follow the guidelines for how to conduct a campus audit as explained in George D. Kuh, et al, *Involving Colleges.*
5.4. Act on the results of the campus audit by creating new initiatives.

Why focus on departments? The MUW QEP will be phased into departments and colleges over the course of two years. Because institutional data suggest that most MUW students transfer in at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels, it is critical that we not focus the QEP on freshman courses alone.[85] While it is likely that faculty will infuse APIL learning strategies into the General Education curriculum, that alone will not carry the weight of the QEP. Hoffman Beyer, et al, make clear in the UW SOUL study that it is the disciplines that matter, arguing that "if we improve learning in the disciplines, we will have improved general education."[86] The MUW QEP will focus on getting departments to create plans to build APIL learning into their curricula, and in that way we will reach all students, including transfers, online students, and non-traditional students because we will have affected curricula necessary for their major. Because each departmental program is unique, including the degree to which faculty offer online and blended courses, each department's plan of implementing APIL pedagogies may be different.

To accomplish the MUW QEP, departments will:

- Create a plan for implementation of APIL learning in the major curricula.
- Create a plan of assessment for QEP student learning outcomes.
- Develop reusable curriculum materials that incorporate generic and discipline-specific APIL strategies to improve learning.
- Consider use of gateway and/or capstone courses and/or internships in programs where none exist.
- Redesign the curricula of gateway, capstone, and internship courses to better accommodate APIL strategies.
- Develop an ongoing reporting process that explains their efforts to promote APIL pedagogies and assessment of student learning outcomes to the QEP director.

[85] The 2012-2013 MUW Fact Book shows that 21 percent of degree-seeking students were new transfer students, while only 7 percent were first-time, degree-seeking freshman students. MUW Fact Book, 5.
[86] Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Experience*, 362.

In order to promote and disseminate APIL pedagogies, the university will support faculty development. This will be primarily the work of the CTL, working with the faculty APIL specialists and QEP director, and with the help of the MUW Instructional Designer. In carrying out the faculty development initiatives, the CTL and QEP directors will refer to the best practices, initiatives, and structure laid out in the CTL Planning Document.[87]

In addition to faculty development programming offered through the CTL, the college APIL specialists and resources will help departments transform their curriculum to reflect APIL pedagogies and achieve the QEP student learning outcomes. The APIL specialists will be able to assist faculty in developing and publicizing tailored APIL techniques that work for MUW students within a specific discipline. The APIL specialists will be appointed by the dean with input from the CTL director, QEP director, and department chairs. The university will focus APIL specialists and related resources in a rotating fashion on one college at a time, so that the QEP director and CTL director can provide intensive help to each college serially. Each of MUW's four colleges will receive resources to support the APIL specialists (including course release, adjunct salary, travel money, and library resources) for one semester. At the end of the two year cycle, the schedule will repeat, so that each college will have two semesters to support development and dissemination of APIL pedagogies directly related to their disciplines. The schedule for rotation is listed in the next section, "Implementation Schedule."

The APIL specialist will:

- Develop expertise in contemporary APIL strategies and disseminate corresponding information and methods to college and CTL.
- Develop APIL strategies that work to in online and blended coursework for college disciplines.
- Liaison with UN 101 instructors, CTL director, and QEP director on APIL strategies.
- Research the opportunities and requirements for publishing scholarship that might arise from QEP-sponsored activities.
- Research the scholarship on teaching and learning related to APIL for college disciplines.
- Work with CTL and Library faculty and staff to develop an APIL and student engagement resource library.

What about taking the QEP outside the classroom? In order to promote APIL strategies out of the classroom, MUW will need to transform its campus atmosphere. Faculty

[87] Available to the QEP evaluation team upon request.

and student feedback data identified areas where immediate attention is needed in order to support intellectual curiosity and APIL strategies outside the classroom, including increased peer tutoring and the construction of online library tutorials. Beyond those initial initiatives, we believe we need a fuller picture. In order to better understand our strengths and weaknesses regarding academic engagement across the campus environment, MUW will conduct a campus audit to assess the degree to which we are an "involved college," or a university that supports students in pursuing knowledge and inquiry outside the classroom.[88] George Kuh, et al, provide a step-by-step guide for the process in *Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom.*

5. b. Implementation Schedule

Color Key for Initiatives

1. MUW will gather data related to APIL pedagogies and student engagement-behaviors and analyze this data to both assess progress and recommend what changes are needed to current tactics and strategies.	
2. Faculty will identify, implement, and evaluate strategies for improving student learning outcomes.	
3. MUW will modify UN 101 Introduction to College Life to stimulate intellectual growth, ground students in APIL approaches, and instill a sense of excitement about learning and discovery.	
4. MUW will develop, manage, and improve an infrastructure to support faculty participation in development activities related to APIL pedagogies.	
5. MUW will conduct a campus audit to assess the degree to which our campus promotes APIL learning outside the classroom and act on those findings.	

Tasks	Individual(s)/Office(s) Responsible
Year 1 (AY 2014-2015)	
Analyze data from NSSE, CLA+, NCS, and focus groups to identify major areas of improvement and set targets for QEP	QEP director and Team
Develop and update Web site for QEP and conducts summative campus presentations	QEP director and university webmaster
Use Assessment Day programming to introduce pedagogical initiatives to faculty	QEP director
College 1 APIL specialists selected and working (Fall 2014)	QEP director, Dean of College 1, CTL director
College 2 APIL specialist selected and working (Spring 2015)	QEP director, Dean of College 2, CTL director
Departments in Colleges 1 and 2 plan for implementation and assessment of APIL pedagogies in the curricula	Dept. faculty, QEP director, CTL director, instructional technologist
Identify faculty members who are successfully using APIL pedagogies and invite them to host workshops	CTL director
Undertake campus-wide audit of APIL pedagogies	QEP director and CTL director

[88] George D. Kuh, et al, *Involving Colleges: Successful Approaches to Fostering Student Learning and Development Outside the Classroom,* San Francisco, Cal, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991.

Begin faculty development programming	CTL director
Form UN 101 transformation committee; select model for UN 101 modification and plan for implementation and assessment	UN 101 faculty, QEP director, CTL director
Develop online tutorials for support services	Library staff, university webmaster, instructional designer
Form campus audit team and conduct campus audit	QEP director and Team
Year 2 (AY 2015-2016)	
SFGs for Colleges 1 (Fall 2015) and 2 (Spring 2016)	QEP director
Develop and update Web site for QEP and conducts summative campus presentations	QEP director and university webmaster
Analyze data from NSSE, CLA+, NCS, and focus groups to identify major areas of improvement	QEP director and committee
Communicate assessment results with depts., colleges, and university	QEP director and Team
Continue faculty development programming	CTL director
Departments in Colleges 1 and 2 launch new curricula and assessment of APIL pedagogies	Dept. faculty, QEP director, CTL director, instructional technologist
College 3 APIL specialists selected and working (Fall 2015)	QEP director, Dean of College 3, CTL director
College 4 APIL specialist selected and working (Spring 2016)	QEP director, Dean of College 4, CTL director
Institute grant program to assist faculty in developing activities or outside-the-classroom learning experiences that support the QEP	CTL director
Departments in Colleges 3 and 4 plan for implementation and assessment of APIL pedagogies in the curricula	Dept. faculty, QEP director, CTL director, instructional technologist
Launch (and assess) revamped UN 101	UN 101 faculty
Expand tutoring services to better meet student needs	Student Success Center
Continue building online tutorials for needed topics	Library staff, university webmaster, instructional designer
Create new initiatives based on campus audit	QEP director and team
Year 3 (AY 2016-2017)	
Develop and update Web site for QEP and conducts summative campus presentations	QEP director and university webmaster
Analyze data from NSSE, CLA+, NCS, and focus groups to identify major areas of improvement	QEP director and committee
SFGs for Colleges 3 (Fall 2016) and 4 (Spring 2017)	QEP director
Begin developing APIL resource library (including best practices and APIL initiatives)	APIL specialists, library staff, CTL
Continue faculty development programming	CTL director
Departments in Colleges 3 and 4 launch new curricula and assessment of APIL pedagogies	Dept. faculty, QEP director, CTL director, instructional technologist
College 1 APIL specialists selected and working (Fall 2016)	QEP director, Dean of College 1, CTL director
College 2 APIL specialist selected and working (Spring 2017)	QEP director, Dean of College 2, CTL director

Institute grant program to assist faculty in taking learning out of the classroom	CTL director
Review assessments of UN 101 and revise accordingly	UN 101 faculty
Develop new initiatives (if needed) regarding campus support and infrastructure based on the campus audit and feedback data	QEP Director and Team
Continue building online tutorials for needed topics	Library staff, university webmaster, instructional designer
Implement new initiatives based on campus audit and assess results	QEP director and team
Year 4 (AY 2017-2018)	
SFGs for Colleges 1 (Fall 2017) and 2 (Spring 2018)	QEP director
Develop and update Web site for QEP and conducts summative campus presentations	QEP director and university webmaster
Analyze data from NSSE, CLA+, NCS, and focus groups to identify major areas of improvement	QEP director and team
College 3 APIL specialists selected and working (Fall 2017)	QEP director, Dean of College 3, CTL director
College 4 APIL specialist selected and working (Spring 2018)	QEP director, Dean of College 4, CTL director
Continue faculty development programming	CTL director
Begin offering faculty grants	CTL director and QEP director
Provide specific programming for faculty teaching online and blended courses to implement APIL pedagogies	APIL specialists and CTL
Collect curricular materials from faculty who are successfully using APIL pedagogies	CTL and APIL specialists
Review assessments of UN 101 and revise accordingly	UN 101 faculty
Implement new initiatives regarding campus support and infrastructure based on the campus audit and feedback data	QEP director and team
Continue building online tutorials for needed topics	Library staff, university webmaster, instructional designer
Implement new initiatives based on campus audit and assess results	QEP director and team
Year 5 (AY 2018-2019)	
SFGs for Colleges 3 (Fall 2018) and 4 (Spring 2019)	QEP director
Develop and update Web site for QEP and conducts summative campus presentations	QEP director and university webmaster
Analyze data from NSSE, CLA+, NCS, and focus groups to identify major areas of improvement	QEP director and committee
Assess the overall effectiveness of the QEP in a summative review	QEP director and team
Continue faculty development programming	CTL director
College APIL specialists selected and working (as needed)	QEP director, Dean of Colleges, CTL director
Establish library of APIL curricular materials from faculty; continue to offer training	CTL and APIL specialists
Continue assessment work to evaluate the success of UN 101 and revise accordingly	UN 101 faculty
Assess and evaluate initiatives regarding campus support and infrastructure	QEP director and team
Evaluate the effectiveness of the campus transformation initiatives and revise accordingly	QEP director and team

5. c. Responsibilities of the QEP Director/QEP Team

The QEP director is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the QEP. The QEP director will hold a summative, semester-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP initiatives, tasks, and assessments in order that faculty can learn and further implement new pedagogies. The QEP director will create an annual report that documents progress on implementation and assessment of the QEP, including an explanation of the work of the APIL specialists and CTL faculty development programming, and will outline areas of concern and new directions for the QEP. Once the five year plan begins, the director's annual report will document the ways and the process by which the MUW QEP has been implemented, assessed, reviewed, revised, and redirected.

The QEP Team will serve to assist the QEP director in implementing (and assessing) the QEP and can be called on to help provide faculty feedback. Because of the QEP Team includes members from across the campus community and disciplines, the members will be helpful especially in conducting the campus audit related to learning outside the classroom. The director will consult the QEP Team as needed.

6. Assessment of the QEP

6. a. Overview of Assessment

It is the responsibility of the QEP Director to coordinate assessment of the MUW QEP. The QEP Director will oversee all assessment processes, manage the quantitative data input and storage, as well as assimilate information from qualitative sources such as student focus groups. The most important function of the QEP Director, however, will be to communicate the results and implications of all QEP-related assessment measures across campus. The table that follows summarizes the assessment measures for the MUW QEP:

Table 1: Specific Student Learning Assessment Measures

SLOs	Measurable Outcomes		Assessment*
SLO 1: Develop and ask relevant and valid research questions	Evaluating Information • Separate factual information from inferences. • Interpret numerical relationships in graphs. • Understand the limitations of correlational data. • Evaluate evidence and identify inappropriate conclusions.	Learning and Problem Solving • Separate relevant from irrelevant information. • Integrate information to solve problems. Desire to Learn – enjoyment of effortful thinking	CLA + NCS SFG DPT
SLO 2: Effectively pursue answers and solutions to their own questions, problems, scenarios, or lines of inquiry.	Evaluating Information • Separate factual information from inferences. • Interpret numerical relationships in graphs. • Understand the limitations of correlational data. • Evaluate evidence and identify inappropriate conclusions. Creative Thinking • Identify alternative interpretations for data or observations. • Identify new information that might support or contradict a hypothesis. • Explain how new information can change a problem.	Learning and Problem Solving • Separate relevant from irrelevant information. • Integrate information to solve problems. • Learn and apply new information. • Use mathematical skills to solve real-world problems.	CLA + NSSE SFG DPT
SLO 3: Produce and author knowledge by exploring open-ended questions, problems scenarios, or lines of inquiry.	Evaluating Information • Separate factual information from inferences. • Interpret numerical relationships in graphs. • Understand the limitations of correlational data. • Evaluate evidence and identify inappropriate conclusions. Creative Thinking • Identify alternative interpretations for data or observations. • Identify new information that might support or contradict a hypothesis. • Explain how new information can change a problem.	Learning and Problem Solving • Separate relevant from irrelevant information. • Integrate information to solve problems. • Learn and apply new information. • Use mathematical skills to solve real-world problems. Communication • Communicate ideas effectively. Desire to Learn – enjoyment of effortful thinking	CLA+ NSSE NCS SFG DPT

* Key to Assessment Methods

NCS	Need for Cognition Scale responses
CLA+	Collegiate Learning Assessment + responses
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement responses
SFG	Student focus group data, including: • Using NCS as a starting point for focus groups
DPT	Departmental reports, including: • Faculty summaries detailing APIL implementation in classrooms and student learning related to SLOs in annual reports • Departmental documents related to SLO in curriculum • Student surveys and other student perception data • Faculty surveys related to dissemination of APIL pedagogies

6. b. Narrative of Assessment

MUW will use locally-developed and national assessment measures to track student learning, initiatives, and the use of APIL pedagogies on campus. The research design of the MUW QEP reflects the design of the Wabash National Study (WNS) and University of Washington Study of Undergraduate Learning (UW SOUL).[89] Our plan of assessment involves qualitative and quantitative measures, and direct and indirect assessment. Because we want to be able to pinpoint whether APIL strategies are working to encourage student curiosity and engagement, we are committed to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with students and faculty. We will use multiple assessment measures to monitor the success of student learning outcomes and QEP initiatives.

Locally-developed Measures: SFG, CTL, DPT, and UN 101

Student Focus Groups (SFG).

The UW SOUL study makes clear that in order to understand the uneven nature of learning at the individual level, we must be willing to assess the thoughts of our individual students. This will require ongoing dialogue with our students. The QEP director will assemble Student Focus Groups (SFG) to assess the degree to which faculty within a college have adopted APIL strategies, the degree to which programs are making use of APIL pedagogies in major curricula, and the degree to which students see APIL learning as promoting the student learning outcomes of the QEP and their intellectual curiosity and engagement. The QEP director will create a plan for specific implementation of the SFG and will report the results to the college and to the university at the end of semester symposium.

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[89] Initiated in 2006, the WNS included 49 two-year and four-year institutions involving 17,000 students. The study is housed at the Center for Inquiry at Wabash College where specifics of the study are provided (Wabash, 2013). The WNS is a longitudinal investigation of how a liberal arts education affects student learning outcomes and other student engagement indicators believed to be positively associated with attending a liberal arts institution. The first sampling of the WNS included 19 institutions in four different states. The universities and colleges selected for the first sampling were chosen based upon a variety of variables including institutional type, governing structure, location, size, and student residence characteristics. The original sampling, however, purposely over-selected liberal arts institutions because of the primary objective of the study. Because of the strong liberal arts component of the MUW mission, the WNS will provide excellent comparative information for Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity.

UW SOUL was a four-year study, initiated in 1999, to track student learning in six areas: writing, critical thinking/problem solving, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, understanding and appreciating diversity, and personal growth. The purpose of the study was to figure what students learn and where; what helped their learning and what hindered it; how to better assess that learning; and how to promote personal development as an institution. Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Experience,* 1-27.

SFGs will make use of the Need for Cognition Scale (NCS) to prompt discussion.[90] The SFG will trail the APIL specialists' appointment by one year so that faculty have time to initiate and implement new pedagogies before the assessment of dissemination and impact begins.

APIL Specialists Schedule and Student Focus Groups:

Timeline	APIL specialists	SFG to measure APIL pedagogies and student learning
Fall 2014	College 1	**
Spring 2015	College 2	**
Fall 2015	College 3	College 1
Spring 2016	College 4	College 2
Fall 2016	College 1	College 3
Spring 2017	College 2	College 4
Fall 2017	College 3	College 1
Spring 2018	College 4	College 2
Fall 2018	As needed	College 3
Fall 2019	As needed	College 4

CTL: The CTL director will gather and evaluate data related to faculty participation in development programming, use of APIL learning strategies in the classroom, and other measures of APIL learning dissemination across campus. This data will be shared with the QEP director who is responsible for assessing the degree to which APIL strategies are taking root at MUW and provide analysis of that dissemination in the semester-end symposium to campus and annual report.

Departments (DPT): We want to allow the departments to assess the student learning outcomes in their disciplines, because they know best what to evaluate. But there is a need for a central partner in assessment "if [the central partner] makes room for student definitions of learning and if it recognizes differences across students and disciplinary practice."[91] At MUW, the "central partner" will be the QEP director, who will be responsible for monitoring all assessment processes and communicating results across campus. We encourage the departments to consider a variety of assessment measures, including use of gateway, capstone, and internship courses to capture data related to student learning and innovative assessment

[90] Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Experience,*342-343, 356-357.
[91] Hoffman Beyer, et al, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience,* 363.

approaches like performance tasks or performance-based assessment.[92] The QEP director will work with faculty in the departments to create plans for assessment and reporting of student learning for the academic programs.[93]

UN 101: The committee to transform UN 101 will create a plan for ongoing assessment of the course. This may include use of course evaluations, student GPAs, and pre- and post-tests that allow for "value added" measures of student learning. The QEP director will work with the UN 101 committee to create the assessment measures and analyze the data. The QEP director and UN 101 faculty will use the data gathered to inform further revision of the curriculum and planning for the course.

National Measures. While the locally-developed measures will focus on student learning on an individual level and in the curriculum and help us identify the specific APIL practices that encourage inquiry and intellectual curiosity, the national measures will allow us to see the big picture across campus. The QEP director will establish benchmarks for the three nationally normed tests—Need for Cognition Scale (NCS), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+)—based on the baseline data.

We have identified important related skills that are necessary to achieve the student learning outcomes, which nationally-normed tests measure. These include critical thinking, problem solving, scientific and quantitative reasoning, writing, and the ability to critique and make arguments, which are measured by CLA+. NSSE records students' perceptions of their engagement in activities, such as whether they have worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas from various sources and whether they have analyzed sources, synthesized the arguments of others, made judgments regarding the validity of sources and theories, and applied theories. Finally, the NCS gets at the most elusive quality of the QEP, whether students desire to learn more. Curiosity implies a willingness to engage in effortful thinking, and the NCS will allow us to measure the degree to which our students "readily engage in thinking

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[92] Performance tasks are used on the CLA+ and recommended by Arum and Roska. Gerald Kruse and David Drews, "Using Performance Tasks to Improve Quantitative Reasoning in an Introductory Mathematics Course," *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning* vol. 7, no. 2 (July 2013): 1-16; Greet Mia Jos Fastré, Marcel R. Van der Klink, and Jeroen J. G. Van Merriënboer, "The Effects of Performance-based Assessment Criteria on Student Performance and Self-assessment Skills." *Advances in Health Sciences Education* 15, no. 4 (October 2010): 517-532.

[93] Great resources like *Assess this!*, an online blog that developed out of the University of Houston-Downtown Office of Institutional Effectiveness, are available to help the director and the departments tailor assessment plans, available online at http://assessory.blogspot.com/, last accessed January 10, 2014.

about topics as they are presented, enjoy the thinking process, and are motivated to apply their thinking skills with little prompting."[94]

Beginning in the fall of 2014, primary and secondary assessment measures will be administered to approximately 100 first-time, full-time freshmen. The measures will include the NCS and the CLA+. The 18-item version of the NCS will be administered as part of UN 101 Freshman Seminar along with the CLA+. The first-time, full-time freshmen cohort will be identified by the MUW Office of Institutional Research. The cohort will be stratified by college and approximately 110 students will be identified to participate in the test (note: a 10 percent over-sampling will occur to ensure 100 students actually participate in the assessment). The testing will occur during UN 101 on two separate days. Students selected for testing will report to the MUW computer lab, McDevitt Hall, to participate. UN 101 instructors will be notified regarding student participation from their sections of UN 101. This process has been approved by the MUW Institution Review Board (IRB) and was used during pilot testing in the fall of 2013 (Appendix E). The CLA+ will also be administered during this testing period. The CLA+ takes a maximum of 90 minutes to complete and will provide information about progress toward the reaching the QEP student learning objectives.

The next assessment period will occur in the late spring of 2014. This assessment phase will include second semester freshmen and seniors. Seniors will be defined as having completed at least 93 credit-hours of coursework among those who have established residency at MUW. Seniors and freshmen (100 of each) will be randomly selected to participate in the CLA+ and NCS testing. The spring 2014 assessment period will include the NCS, the CLA+ as with the fall testing and will also include the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The CLA+ and NCS testing will be administered in McDevitt Hall under controlled testing situations. Multiple sessions will be offered to accommodate the schedules of students selected to be tested. Selections for the spring CLA+ and NCS testing will occur early in the spring semester. Deans, department chairs, and advisors will be notified regarding the students selected from their colleges and departments. These individuals will assist in contacting and confirming testing sessions for the students selected. The assistance of this group of administrators and faculty should increase the participation of students randomly selected for the testing. The NSSE will be administered electronically to all eligible students in this cohort.

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[94] Anne Bost, "Assessment Notes," The Center for Inquiry, Wabash College, available online at http://www.liberalarts.wabash.edu/ncs/.

Need for Cognition Scale (NCS):

The 18-item NCS has been used in numerous studies to assess the relationship between academic performance and need for cognition (Sadowski & Gulgoz, 1992, 1996; Tolentino, Curry, & Leak, 1990). It has also been used to examine the relationship between satisfaction with the college experience and the need for cognition (Coutinho & Woolery, 2004). The 18-item NCS scale can be reviewed in Appendix F of this document. Respondents are asked to rate each statement on a 5-point scale from 1 = "Extremely Uncharacteristic to 5 = "Extremely Characteristic" with 3 = "Uncertain." On the short NCS, items three, four, five, seven, eight, nine, twelve, and sixteen are reversed scored. Studies using this version of the NCS have scored the questionnaires in different ways. For instance, the first sampling of the WNS used an average of the points awarded on each item with an overall average of all items determining the total score for each instrument. Using this method of scoring a range of 1.0 - 5.0 exists. Others have used a total of the points awarded for each item and a total of all items determining the overall score for each student. Scores range from 18 to 90 with this method; we will use this scoring method.

The NCS was piloted with MUW freshmen and MUW honors students during the fall 2013 semester. The MUW Honors program includes freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have maintained high academic performance and who complete a more academically-rigorous program. We selected these two groups to test the sensitivity of the NCS to our campus because we believe they are different with regard to their enjoyment of effortful thinking and we wanted to test if the instrument would reflect that difference. MUW freshmen completed the NCS within the first six weeks of the fall 2013 term. MUW honors students completed the NCS on October 10, 2013 during a scheduled honors forum. It was our assumption that MUW honors students would score higher than MUW freshman and the results would indicate a significant difference between the two. The comparative results of the two NCS administrations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Fall 2013 NCS Scores

	MUW Freshmen			MUW Honors Students			
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Effect Size
NCS Scores	94	60.8	11.8	35	69.2*	11.3	.72

Table 2 presents NCS scores for MUW Freshmen as compared to MUW Honors Students. Only fully completed surveys were included. * $p<.001$.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE):

Established in 2000, the NSSE is widely used by colleges and universities annually to assess college student engagement inside and outside of the classroom (NSSE, 2012). This instrument includes approximately 100 items that are designed to assess student perceptions of contributions their institutions make to their knowledge, skills and personal development and that are grouped into the following ten engagement indicator categories:

- Higher-Order Learning
- Reflective & Integrated Learning
- Learning Strategies
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Collaborative Learning
- Discussions with Diverse Others
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Effective Teaching Practices
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment.

Although the NSSE provides information on a wide array of college student experiences, we will emphasize those items associated with Higher-Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning, and Quantitative Reasoning because of their assumed relationship with the learning objectives of *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity*.

In spring 2013, MUW administered the NSSE to freshmen and seniors. The results indicate that MUW students score similarly with the results of our institutional peers across

many measures but below desired levels for the institution. MUW freshmen scored significantly higher ($p < .01$) on Higher-Order Learning than Pell peers, Carnegie Class peers, and all institutions in the 2013 NSSE cohort and lower than all three peer groups in Reflective and Integrated Learning and Quantitative Reasoning, but the differences proved not to be statistically significant. MUW seniors scored slightly higher on Higher-Order Learning than the three comparison and lower than the comparison groups on both Reflective and Integrated Learning and Quantitative Reasoning with a significantly lower ($p < .05$) score than its Carnegie class peers on Reflective and Integrated Learning. The three tables below provide more detail regarding MUW's NSSE results.

Table 3 presents 2013 MUW freshmen NSSE results on the key engagement indicators compared to freshmen at other institutions in the same Carnegie class, institutions with the same Pell eligible student profile and the entire 2013 NSSE results.

Table 3
MUW NSSE Scores
Freshmen Spring 2013

	MUW	40 – 60 % Pell		Carnegie Class		NSSE 2013	
Engagement Indicator	Mean	Mean	Effect Size	Mean	Effect Size	Mean	Effect Size
Higher Order Learning	44.6	39.0**	.41	39.4**	.38	39.1**	.40
Reflective/ Integrated Learning	34.6	35.3	-.05	36.1	-.11	35.7	-.08
Quantitative Reasoning	25.1	27.5	-.15	27.5	-.15	27.3	-.13

Table 3: Scores are indicated as mean scores and effect size compared to similar institutions by percent Pell eligible students, Carnegie class, and all 2013 NSSE scores.
**$p < .01$.

Table 4 presents 2013 MUW senior NSSE results on the key engagement indicators compared to seniors at other institutions in the same Carnegie class, institutions with the same Pell eligible student profile and the entire 2013 NSSE results.

Table 4
MUW NSSE Scores
Seniors Spring 2013

	MUW	40 - 60 % Pell		Carnegie Class		NSSE 2013	
Engagement Indicator	Mean	Mean	Effect Size	Mean	Effect Size	Mean	Effect Size
Higher Order Learning	43.3	41.7	.12	42.2	.09	41.3	.14
Reflective/ Integrated Learning	37.3	38.9	-.12	39.6*	-.18	38.9	-.12
Quantitative Reasoning	27.4	29.3	-.11	41.3	-.12	29.7	-.13

Table 4: Scores are indicated as mean scores and effect size compared to similar institutions by percent Pell eligible students, Carnegie class, and all 2013 NSSE scores. *p<.05.

Table 5 presents a comparison between MUW freshmen and MUW seniors on key engagement indicators for *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity*. Again, the results indicate that MUW seniors score lower than MUW freshmen on Higher-Order Learning but higher on Reflective and Integrated Learning and Quantitative reasoning. The effect size, however, is small with all three indicators.

Table 5

2013 MUW Freshmen - Senior

NSSE Score Comparison

	MUW Freshmen			MUW Seniors			
Engagement Indicator	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Effect Size
Higher Order Learning	52	44.6	13.6	190	43.3	15.0	-.09
Reflective/ Integrated Learning	56	34.6	12.7	196	37.3	13.6	.20
Quantitative Reasoning	55	25.1	13.4	193	27.4	17.7	.15

Table 5: Scores are indicated as N size mean, standard deviation for each group. Effect size is calculated as Mean difference/pooled SD.

Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+):

The original College Learning Assessment was a competency-based instrument that provided an assessment of critical thinking skills in college students (CAE, 2013). The CLA measured each student's ability to analyze and evaluate information, to perform analytic and quantitative reasoning, to solve problems, and to write effectively. The CLA assessment instrument included a 60-minute Performance Task that reflected real-world scenarios that are common to a variety of settings. Respondents were given three or four authentic documents that could include a newspaper article, data graph, research report or table with relevant information. Students were asked to review and analyze the information and then respond to questions that require making a decision or solving a problem. The second part of the CLA included a series of problem sets designed to measure analytic and quantitative reasoning skills. Over 700 colleges and universities have used the CLA since its inception to assess improvements in critical thinking and higher order reasoning skills.

The CLA measured academic effectiveness by quantifying student learning between the freshman and senior years. The CLA measures a random sample of freshmen and seniors in the same year. The weakness of this design is that it assumes similarity in the characteristics of freshmen and seniors at the institution and that random sampling captures a true representation of the groups assessed.

The CLA + was developed to maintain the essential components of the CLA while providing several new advantages. Subscores of scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical reading and evaluation, and the ability to critique an argument are added to the previous subscores of the CLA, which were analysis and problem solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. Perhaps the greatest improvement in the CLA+ is that the results are provided both at the institutional level and the student level. This level of analysis provides students with useful information about their higher-order thinking skills and allows institutions to make student-level comparisons across the data. MUW's CLA+ results are presented in Appendix G.

6. c. Use of Results and Communication Mechanisms

Perhaps the most critical component of successfully assessing and revising our QEP is the communications structure designed to convey the results of key findings across campus. The QEP director will be responsible for assimilating all information relevant to *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity* (which will require ongoing communication with individuals and offices responsible for compiling assessment pieces of the QEP), compiling it into a meaningful format, and distributing it across campus. This will be done in several ways, including reporting the results of assessments at the semester-end symposium and in an annual report, reporting the results of assessments throughout the current communication structure of the university, and via a QEP Web site. The QEP director will work in consultation with the QEP Team and others in the campus community to determine when and how the QEP plan needs to be revised.

We realize the necessity of broad-based involvement from all campus constituencies to ensure the success of *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity*. The MUW QEP organization structure will reflect the university operational design and all campus groups and university divisions will be involved in the project. A complete MUW organizational chart is included in Appendix H of this document. Because *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity* is primarily a student learning initiative, the direct administrative oversight will belong to the Office of the Provost/VPAA.

The QEP Director, with support from the QEP Team, will answer directly to the Provost/VPAA and be responsible for monitoring the QEP and for implementing changes that will improve student learning.[95] The QEP director will remain part of the QEP Team and serve as the liaison between the QEP Team and the Provost/VPAA. The QEP director will be responsible for oversight of the implementation, evaluation, and modification of the MUW QEP assessment plan in consultation with the QEP Team and the Provost/VPAA. The QEP director will be a member of the Expanded President's Cabinet, which includes all of the President's cabinet members and other key academic and non-academic leaders, such as the Faculty Senate president, Staff Council president, SGA president, and academic deans.[96]

The QEP director will use the current campus structure, including significant committees and councils, to convey all pertinent information. The key groups include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Academic Council – Academic Council at MUW serves as an advisory body to the Chief Academic Officer and consists of key academic personnel including the Associate Provost/VPAA, academic deans from each college and the library, leaders from key campus groups including Faculty Senate, SGA, Council of Chairs and the registrar. This group promotes effective communication between the faculty and administration and provides a forum for reporting and discussion. Academic Council is governed by Policy Statement (PS)# 3515.
- Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (PIE) Council – This group is the principle vehicle through which the University's program of continuous improvement is administered. Part of PIE Council's charge is to collect and analyze data and to generate reports that provide assessment information about how well the institution is meeting its goals. PIE council is composed of members from academic and non-academic units across campus including faculty, staff, students, administrators, and the local community. PIE Council is governed by PS# 3538.
- Council of Chairs (COC) – The COC consists of the chairs from each of the seventeen academic departments and institutes at MUW. This council reviews curricular and other

[95] The Provost and VPAA will serve as the administrator of the QEP process. The Provost/VPAA is a member of the President's Cabinet along with the Chief Financial Officer, the Vice President for Student Services, and other key campus administrators.

[96] This President's Cabinet is responsible for the oversight of all institutional strategic and other planning and assessment processes

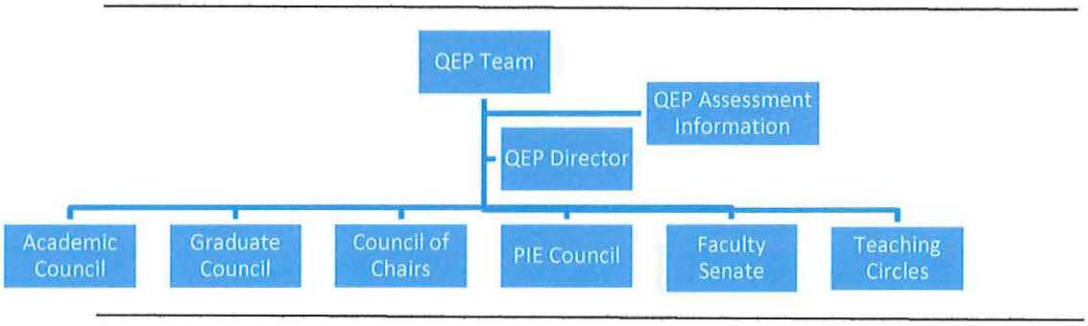
academic issues, facilitates communication, improves operations, supports professional development and all other initiatives that advance the university's mission. The COC is governed by PS# 3544.

- MUW Faculty Senate – The Faculty Senate at MUW serves to advise and make recommendations to the President of the University regarding policies, practices, and procedures in areas involving the faculty and academic program. Senators include representatives from each academic department and institute and Fant Library. Faculty Senate is governed by the MUW Faculty Senate Constitution.
- MUW Teaching Circles – Teaching Circles at MUW are informal groups of faculty members with common interests in improving classroom teaching. Teaching Circles typically consist of five to eight faculty members who meet regularly to share interests and ideas common to the group.

The communications structure for the MUW QEP is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

QEP Communications Network



Information regarding the QEP will be further publicized through a Web site. The Web site will serve manifold purposes: to be a repository for critical sources of information regarding the implementation of the QEP; to provide access to the full QEP document and executive summary; to provide access to the director's annual reports; to serve as the marketing and informational portal for students to explain the purpose of the QEP, including the benefits of pursuing intellectual curiosity, as well as a guide to available resources to foster such pursuits. The Web site will be a single site within the university's Web site. The homepage of the site will provide a general overview of the QEP and the latest updates on initiatives and

programs related to *Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity.* The information within the site will be supplemented with relevant content from other sections of the university's Web site.

7. QEP Budget

Mississippi University for Women has committed substantial and adequate funding for the implementation and assessment of the QEP. Direct funding for the QEP will be approximately $55,000 per year. The primary expenses for the QEP include a portion of the Director's salary, faculty development activities in support of the student learning goals, and testing and other assessment activities. The faculty development line will support on-campus activities and grants for course development, as well as travel to workshops and conferences. The Faculty Senate Fund supports faculty activities that are intended to strengthen classroom teaching. The following chart shows the direct funding commitment for the five-year implementation of the QEP and the funds committed to the planning and development of the QEP prior to implementation in the 2014-15 academic year.

QEP Budget	AY 12-13	AY 13-14	AY 14-15	AY 15-16	AY 16-17	AY 17-18	AY18-19	TOTAL
Salaries		20,000	20,000	20,250	20,500	20,800	21,100	122,650
Benefits		5,300	5,300	5,350	5,350	5,400	5,400	32,000
Contractual	10,800							10,800
CLA+ Testing		10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	60,000
Faculty Development		5,800	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	55,800
Commodities		5,000	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	16,500
Director Travel		2,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	7,500
NSSE		4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	24,000
Faculty Senate Fund			2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
TOTAL	10,800	52,600	54,600	54,900	55,150	55,500	55,800	339,250

In addition to the budget items designated specifically for the QEP, campus offices across the university will contribute to the implementation of the QEP in various ways. For example, the Director of the QEP is the Chair of the Department of Health and Kinesiology. Physical space, equipment, and clerical assistance in the Department will be available to support the work of the Director. The Center for Teaching and Learning will provide support for faculty development activities related to the QEP; the Center will be separately funded. The APIL specialist will have a one-course reduction in teaching load for the term in which the specialist is serving the QEP. When necessary, the cost of a replacement adjunct faculty member to cover the released course will be borne by the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of

University Relations—as it has already done—will provide much of the marketing for the QEP, as well as support the Web site.

MUW's budgeting process allows each unit head to provide a budget request annually that is tied to university priorities. The QEP Director will be able to assess the budget requirements of the QEP each year and to request adjustments as appropriate to insure the success of the plan.

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9. Appendices

Appendix A: QEP Team Members

*Dr. Thomas Richardson (Chair)	Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
*Dr. Mark Bean (QEP Director)	Professor and Chair, Dept. of Health & Kinesiology
Mr. Tim Mbogo	SGA President
Dr. Nora Corrigan	Assistant Professor of English
Dr. Amber Handy	Assistant Professor of History
*Dr. Mary Hatton	Associate VPAA
*Dr. Erin Kempker	Assistant Professor of History
*Mr. Russell King	Instructor of Nursing
Ms. Carla Lowery	Director, Institutional Research
*Ms. Nora Miller	Executive VP, Finance & Administration
*Dr. Martha Jo Mims	Professor Emeritus, Education
*Ms. Sirena Parker	Dean of Students
Ms. Anika Mitchell Perkins	Director, University Relations
Dr. Irene Pintado	Associate Professor, Health Education
Dr. Ross Whitwam	Professor of Biology
Ms. Cathy Young	Reference Librarian

* Original QEP Team member.

Appendix B: Call for Proposals

QEP Proposal Description

The members of the QEP committee welcome all faculty, staff and students to submit their ideas for MUW's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Just fill out the separate document following this announcement and submit the completed form electronically to qep@muw.edu or address a hard-copy submission to Dr. Tom Richardson, W-1634. All submissions are due by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, October 13, 2011. **Submissions are to be no more than one page in length.** Ultimately, authors of the winning project will receive an **award of $2500**, along with seeing university-wide implementation of their QEP plan.

What is the QEP?

The QEP is a SACSCOC core requirement that aims to transform student learning on campus. Ultimately, selected project ideas will require fuller proposals, but in the initial stage the MUW QEP committee seeks a simple summary of your best ideas as to how to improve student learning. All QEP topics should be broad-based in that they engage the full university community and should be focused on student learning, and/or the student environment, and/or the university mission.

In other words, the QEP is an opportunity for every individual, student group, faculty teaching circle, etc., to voice their thoughts and ideas about how to improve learning on campus. The QEP committee takes a very broad view of student learning, and topics can include all manner of issues or ideas that relate to the student experience. From the orthodox to "outside the box," all ideas are welcome. And all members of the campus community are encouraged to submit topics.

Available Resources:

For more information on SACSCOC and the QEP, see:

- http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2010principlesofacreditation.pdf, pp. 7, 19. This resource defines the QEP requirement as part of the accreditation process.
- http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/handbooks/Exhibit%2031.Resource%20Manual.pdf, pp. 21-22. This resource provides a brief description of the requirement, including some questions to answer.

QEP summaries from other institutions are available on the SACSCOC Web site, under "Institutional Resources" at http://www.sacscoc.org/inst_forms_and_info1.asp. Too, a Google search of "Quality Enhancement Plan" will provide links to many university plans. Finally, http://www2.muw.edu/~mhatton/QEP_Overview_12Aug2011.pptx links to a PowerPoint that has general information about the SOCSCOC's QEP requirement, as well as how the process will work at MUW.

QEP Proposal Form

Authors:
Project Summary:
Impact on Student Learning:

Appendix C: Proposals Selected for Further Consideration

Cultivating Curiosity, Learning to Learn – This proposal sought to create a culture of intellectual engagement while giving students the tools they need to learn. The primary goals included helping students develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills as well as intellectual curiosity to pursue interests inside and outside of the classroom. The QEP would improve higher-order learning skills and student engagement as a result of increased intellectual curiosity.

Guiding Our "Digital Natives:" Creating Digital and Informational Literacy at MUW - This QEP would focus on improving digital and informational literacy across the MUW campus through a variety of means. Digital literacy would be assessed upon enrollment at MUW. Multiple forms of technology would be infused across the curriculum and reinforced outside the classroom as well.

Ethics: Creating a Culture of Integrity at MUW - This proposal suggested that MUW adopt a QEP dedicated to student ethics and the promotion of a student-created honor code. Students would learn how to develop a language to discuss ethical issues as well as make ethical decisions in all aspects of their lives.

Move to Improve - This QEP proposal would improve student learning by implementing programs across campus that would positively affecting the overall health of MUW students. Students would create a "health contract" in which they would set goals and track key areas of physical and mental health including, physical activity, diet, and sleep patterns.

Reaffirming an Environment of Social, Political, Egalitarian Community Today (RESPECT) – These authors proposed a QEP that would promote responsible citizenship among MUW students. This endeavor would involve the entire campus and would empower students to understand and positively affect negative social phenomena such bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, etc.

Student Collaborative Behavior – This proposal suggested that MUW assess the extent to which concepts and models of collaboration exist in various academic units, across different curricula, and in student organizations. Faculty members and student organization leaders would select collaborative action concepts and models for review and propose new opportunities for student collaboration.

Writing is Everywhere – This proposal would implement a two tier approach to improving writing skill including a one credit-hour sophomore level writing class. This course would build on the skills learned in EN 101 English Composition and would be designed to transition the student from learning to write to writing to learn. The second tier would include identification of one upper level course in each program that would infuse at least one assignment with a strong writing component.

Appendix D: QEP Director Position Announcement

The Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) will oversee the implementation of the university's QEP, "Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity," which will be fully implemented in the fall semester 2014 following approval by the SACS Commission on Colleges in the spring 2014.

The Director will:

- demonstrated passion for and commitment to the QEP topic
- work with the QEP Team to complete the final SACSCOC report by December 15, 2013
- oversee a pilot project during the 2013-14 academic year
- coordinate curriculum development with QEP/UN 101 instructors
- coordinate faculty workshops in support of QEP goals with the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning
- be responsible for planning, assessment, and reporting for the QEP
- coordinate with University Relations to market the QEP to faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external constituencies.

The Director will report to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for the QEP responsibilities. The Director will be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at MUW from any academic discipline. The Director will have a two-course reduction in instructional load during the academic year, an 11-month contract to provide for planning and assessment during the summer, and an additional stipend. Starting date no later than August 1, 2013.

Interested faculty members should send a letter of application to Dr. Dan Heimmermann, Provost, W-1603, no later than May 31, 2013. The letter should address the goals and responsibilities of the QEP, as well as the faculty member's commitment to the QEP topic in professional life.

Below is a brief synopsis of the QEP. The current draft of the plan can be viewed at www.muw.edu/qep.

The MUW Quality Enhancement Plan is entitled "Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity" and, broadly speaking, it aims to "create a culture of intellectual engagement on campus." The goals of the QEP are to help students to understand how they learn, to promote active learning, and to support students as they pursue their intellectual interests both in and out of the classroom. By encouraging student engagement and active learning, we encourage the development of self-motivated learners—students who produce knowledge as opposed to passively consume it. Students will "take ownership of their own learning" by mastering the necessary skills, processes, and tools needed to articulate and develop research questions, figure out how to approach the problem, do the research, and discover and report the answer, whether individually or as a group. Through the QEP we will prioritize "academic curiosity" and training in the skills necessary to pursue those interests, creating a culture of intellectual engagement in the process.

Appendix E: MUW IRB Approval

September 16, 2013

Dr. Dan Heimmermann
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Mississippi University for Women

The Institutional Review Board Committee Members have reviewed the research proposal from Dr. Mark Bean entitled "Mississippi University for Women Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) - Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity – Ongoing Evaluation." The committee approves the proposal for fall 2013 implementation.

Please feel free to contact me at 662-329-7301 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tammie McCoy

Tammie McCoy, RN, PhD
Institutional Review Board Chairman
Department of Baccalaureate Nursing
W 910
Mississippi University for Women

Appendix F: The Need for Cognition Scale

NEED FOR COGNITION SCALE – NCS

We are interested in knowing how students feel about different situations in which they must think, reason, make decisions, or solve a problem. A number of such situations are listed below Instructions: For each statement listed below, circle the number that indicates the extent to which you currently feel it is characteristic of you. For example, if the statement is not at all like you, circle number 1 under "Extremely Uncharacteristic," or if you really can't decide if the statement is or is not characteristic of you, circle number 3 under "Uncertain."

	Extremely Uncharacteristic	Somewhat Uncharacteristic	Uncertain	Somewhat Characteristic	Extremely Characteristic
1. I would prefer complex to simple problems.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thinking is not my idea of fun.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is likely a chance I will have to think in depth about something.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I only think as hard as I have to.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort.	1	2	3	4	5
17. It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.	1	2	3	4	5

Items 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, & 16 are reversed scored.

Appendix G: 2013 CLA+ Results

COLLEGIATE LEARNING ASSESSMENT PLUS RESULTS

This table reflects the CLA+ institutional level results reported.							
Scores	**Class**	Central Tendency	Rank	Gain	Proficiency	Observed Vs. Expected	Effort
Total CLA+ Score	Freshmen	Mean	Mean %tile Rank		Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
	Seniors	Mean	Mean %tile Rank	Effect Size v. Freshmen	Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
Performance Task	Freshmen	Mean	Mean %tile Rank		Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
	Seniors	Mean	Mean %tile Rank	Effect Size v. Freshmen	Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
Selected-Response Questions	Freshmen	Mean	Mean %tile Rank		Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
	Seniors	Mean	Mean %tile Rank	Effect Size v. Freshmen	Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
Entering Academic Ability	Freshmen	Mean	Mean %tile Rank		Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort
	Seniors	Mean	Mean %tile Rank	Effect Size v. Freshmen	Mastery Level	Value-Added Estimate	Student Effort

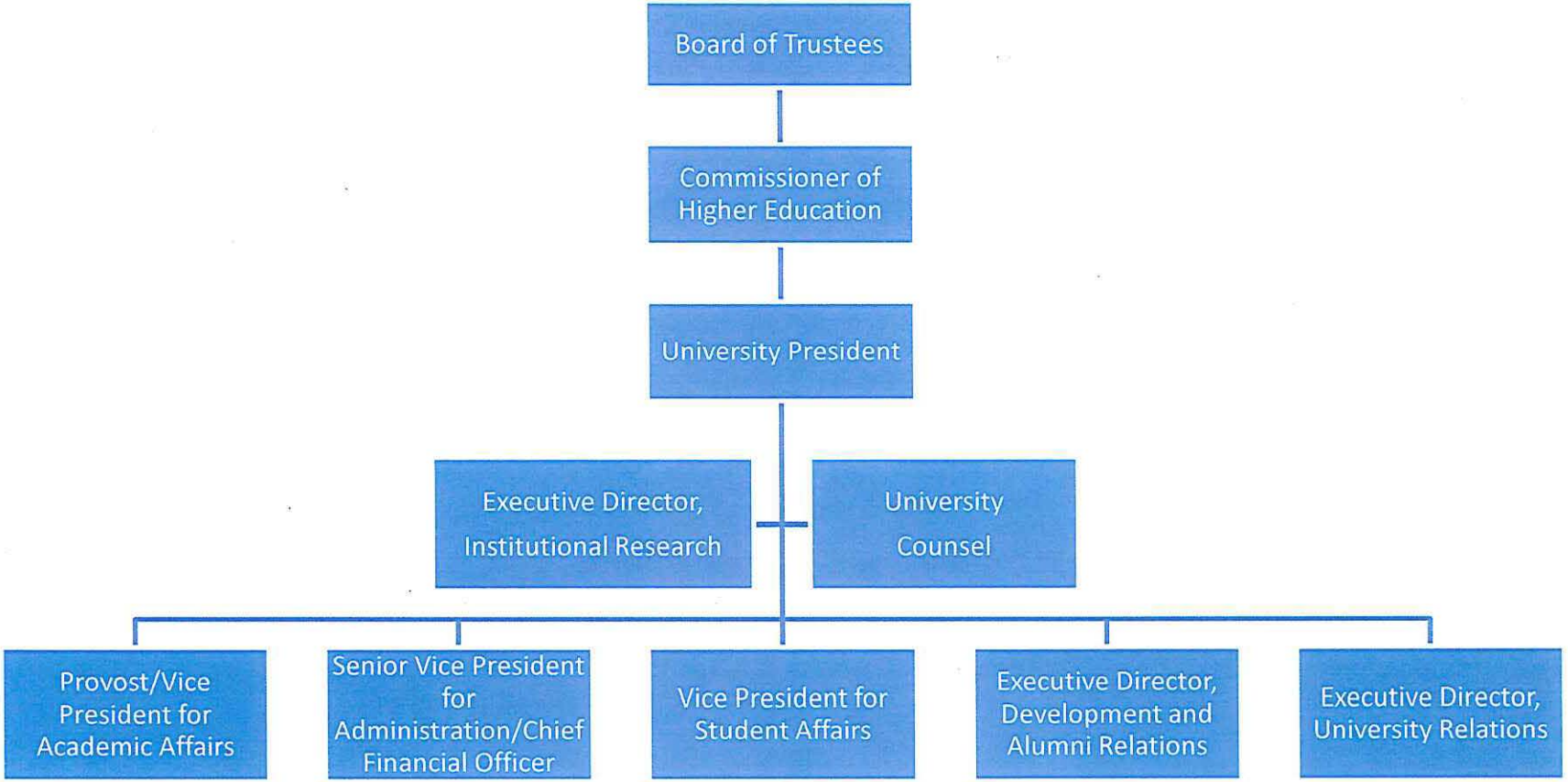
Means are reported as mean scores; mean %tile ranks reflect mean scores compared to other institutions; Effect size calculated as mean of seniors - mean of freshmen/pooled standard deviation; master level reflects % below basic, at basic, at proficient, and at advanced; value-added reflect observed vs. expected scores; student effort is reported as student response to likert scale items (e.g., "no effort at all", "a little effort," etc.

The student-level results of the CLA+ provided to the institution are listed below.

- Total CLA+ score
- Performance Task score
- Selected-Response Questions score
- Total time spent on the Performance Task
- Total time spent on the Selected-Response Questions
- Writing Effectiveness subscore for the Performance Task
- Writing Mechanics subscore for the Performance Task
- Analysis and Problem Solving subscore for the Performance Task Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning subscore for the Selected-Response Questions
- Critical Reading and Evaluation subscore for the Selected-Response Questions
- Critique an Argument subscore for the Selected-Response Questions
- Performance Level, relative to expected, on the Performance Task
- Performance Level, relative to expected, on the Selected-Response Questions
- Performance Level, relative to expected, on the Total CLA+
- Mastery Level on the Total CLA+
- Entering Academic Ability score

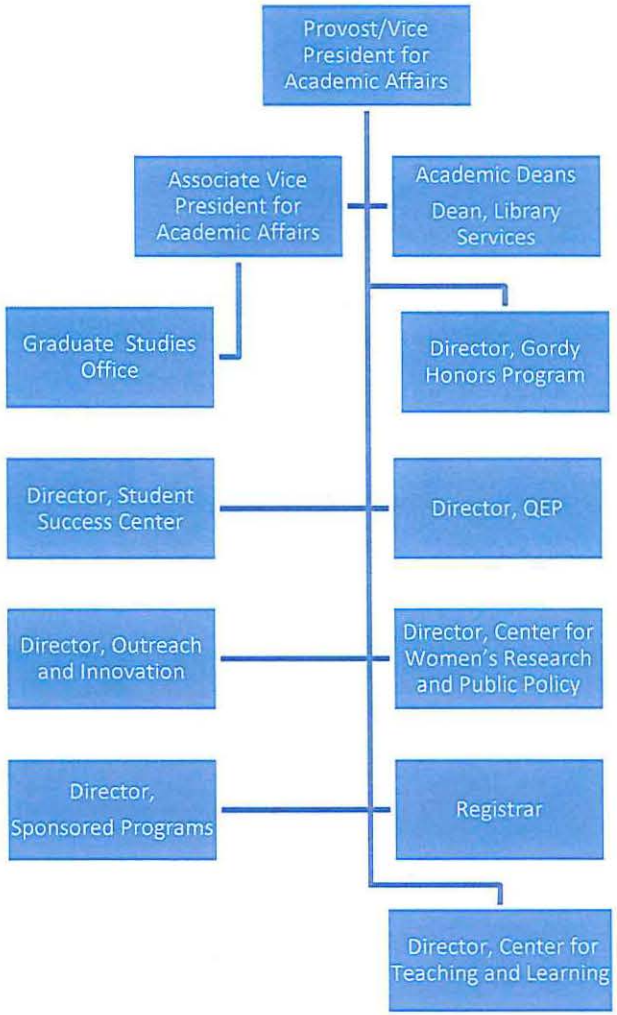
Appendix H: MUW Organizational Chart

University Organizational Chart



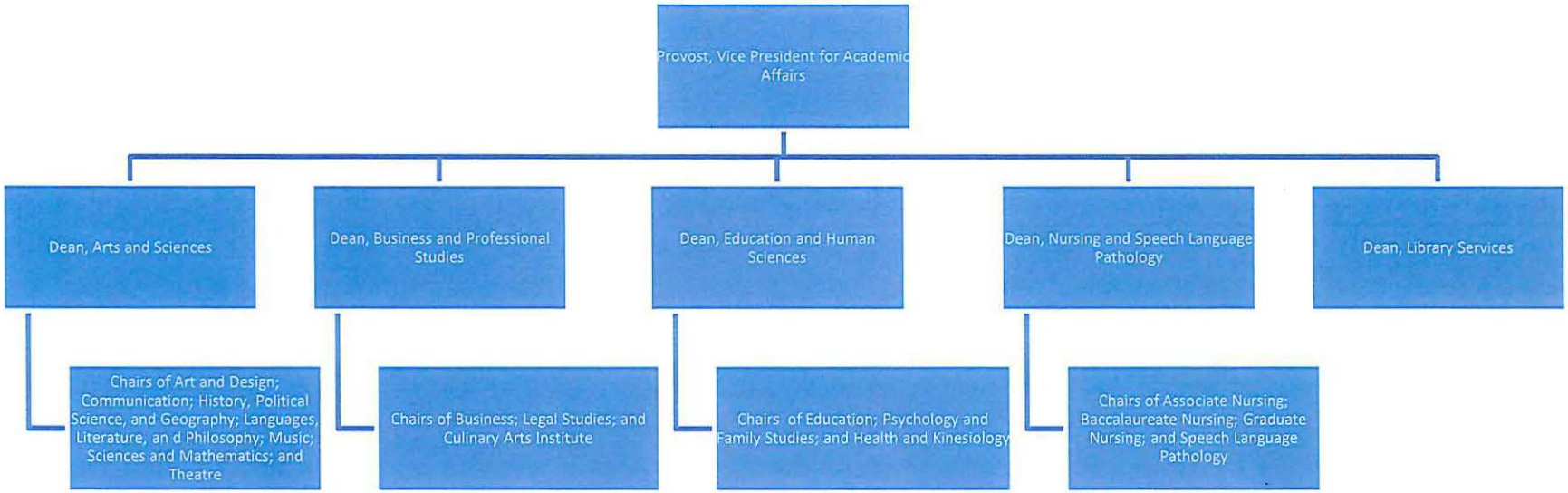
Effective 1/31/14

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs



Effective 1/31/14

Academic Units



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