

EMPOWERING **YOUR JOURNEY**

Mississippi University for Women

Quality Enhancement Plan

SACSCOC Reaffirmation

March 2024

Revised July 2024



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Executive Summary

The goal of Mississippi University for Women's Quality Enhancement Plan is "to support student success by promoting professional development and career readiness through curricular programming and by helping students develop and demonstrate career-readiness competencies appropriate to their field." The QEP Goal will focus on two outcomes: 1) Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of career-readiness competencies appropriate to their academic disciplines and to their career goals; 2) Students will be able to communicate effectively their career-readiness competencies.

The QEP topic was identified through the university's ongoing planning and evaluation process and addresses specific goals that were developed in the university's comprehensive strategic planning process:

- Academic Excellence Goal 2: Prepare students to be life-long learners and contributing members of today's global economy.
- Advancement Excellence Goal 5: Enhance services to shape career-ready graduates.
- Community Connections Goal 3: Forge meaningful and engaged partnerships that provide real-life experiences for students.
- Degree Completion Goal 4: Support students through degree completion and into their careers.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goal 4: Capture, promote and enhance overall curriculum and programming that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding.

A QEP Proposal Team was formed with representatives from across the campus to oversee a broad-based proposal and selection process. The QEP Proposal Team solicited feedback from faculty and staff during the drafting phases of the project proposals and communicated those ideas to authors. The QEP Proposal Team selected the topic and helped form the QEP Committee, which took responsibility for refining the topic and developing an implementation plan for the selected proposal. The QEP Committee completed the QEP document after collecting broad-based feedback from in-person and Zoom listening sessions, surveys of students and academic programs, and a comprehensive review of relevant career-readiness literature. The Committee debated and discussed all aspects of the work in order to establish the best means of achieving and assessing the goals and meeting the needs of the diverse student population that the university serves.

The QEP will be implemented through university-wide cooperative efforts across Academic

Affairs, Student Affairs, and Career Services/Development. The implementation plan includes establishing new initiatives, as well as expanding and strengthening current programs and operations, to achieve the goals. The university has committed adequate personnel, facilities, and financial resources to ensure that the goals of the QEP are achieved and that the successful elements of the QEP are sustainable beyond the QEP's end date. The QEP includes a timeline for implementation of initiatives, and an assessment plan that provides qualitative and quantitative, incremental and final, assessment measures.



Chapter 1: QEP Plan Topic and SACSCOC Reaffirmation

Mississippi University for Women has a Quality Enhancement Plan that (a) has a topic identified through its ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes; (b) has broad-based support of institutional constituencies; (c) focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success; (d) commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP; and (e) includes a plan to assess achievement. (SACSCOC Requirement 7.2, *Quality Enhancement Plan*)

Empowering Your Journey

GOAL: To support student success by promoting professional development and career readiness through curricular programming and by helping students develop and demonstrate career-readiness competencies appropriate to their field.

- 1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of career-readiness competencies appropriate to their academic disciplines and to their career goals.***
- 2. Students will be able to communicate effectively their career-readiness competencies.***



Chapter 2: QEP Topic Selection

In the fall of 2021 Mississippi University for Women (MUW) initiated the selection process for the next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) by appointing a QEP Proposal Team to oversee the topic selection. The members of the QEP Proposal Team were chosen to provide broad representation across the university. The Team was chaired by the Director of the Kossen Center for Teaching and Learning, who is also a member of the Library faculty, and Team members included faculty from each academic college and the School of Education, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of Student Life, and a member of the staff of the Student Success Center. (The membership of the QEP Proposal Team, as well as documentation of the proposal selection process, can be found on the MUW QEP page linked here:

[https://www.muw.edu/qep/selectionprocess/.](https://www.muw.edu/qep/selectionprocess/))

The QEP Proposal Team set up a QEP page on the MUW website to explain what a QEP is and why it is required, to provide links to SACSCOC documents that address the QEP requirement and criteria, to provide guidelines and a timeline for MUW’s QEP selection process, and to provide links to other useful resources. In early November 2021 the QEP Proposal Team issued a campus-wide call for QEP proposals, including information about the process and criteria for selection of the QEP, with a proposal due date of January 31, 2022. The Team conducted educational sessions for the campus on November 10 and 12, 2021; they recorded the sessions and linked the recordings on the university’s QEP web page for easy campus reference. All faculty and staff were offered the opportunity, either as individuals or in groups, to submit proposals for the QEP topic. The call for proposals included incentives of \$1000 each for the three finalists and \$2500 for the proposal that was selected for the QEP.

In early February 2022 the QEP proposals were published on the QEP website for campus review and comments. Following the review period, which ended February 21, the authors of the proposals were provided with the campus feedback and offered the opportunity to revise their proposals. The QEP Proposal Team selected three finalists from the resubmitted proposals based on the proposals’ conformity to the criteria specified in the proposal guidelines. The finalist proposals were again posted on the QEP page for additional campus review and comments. A survey was provided to the campus to address the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals based on the specific requirements in section 7.2 of the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation*. The survey results, as well as feedback from MUW’s Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Council, Administrative Council, and President’s Cabinet, were used by the QEP Proposal Team to select the final topic.

The proposal selected by the QEP Proposal Team—“Core Skills for Success: Preparing Graduates for Life-Long Achievement”—was announced to the campus on April 20, 2022, and the proposal was published on the QEP website. The selected topic focused on student success

and had the following Goal and Student Success Outcomes (SSOs):

Goal: To produce graduates who are prepared to compete in the global economy

SSO 1. Students will demonstrate effective critical thinking, oral and written communication skills appropriate to their discipline.

SSO 2. Students will exhibit interpersonal skills applicable to achieving success in meeting their career and/or educational goals.

SSO 3. Students will demonstrate skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultures (intercultural competence).

SSO 4. An increased percentage of graduates will report that they have either secured employment, are currently employed in their field of study or attending graduate school.

The Goal and Student Success Outcomes were based on the university's *ongoing planning and assessment processes*. According to data collected through MUW's Graduation Surveys, fewer than 50% of the institution's recent graduates had secured employment in their field of study. Over a three-year period, 2019-2021, MUW graduates reported the following:

- Between 16.26% and 18.91% are already employed in their field of study.
- Between 24.86% and 29.57% have secured employment in their field of study.
- Between 17.77% and 22.37% are searching for employment in their field of study.
(*MUW Graduation Surveys 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21*)

Given that the percentage of graduates in nursing and related high-need fields closely matched the percentage of students that had secured employment in their field of study, the implications for the rest of the population of graduates are concerning. Based on this information, it is possible that well over half of graduates reporting were either searching for full-time employment in their field of study or employed on a full-time or part-time basis outside of their chosen field. MUW conducts an alumni survey every three years, but response rates have been low in recent years, so the Graduation Surveys are one of the few measures of employment trends for recent graduates.

The need to support student career preparedness was recognized university wide through the strategic planning process; career preparedness goals were adopted in five of the six areas of focus in the university's Strategic Priorities and Goals 2021-2026; only Financial Sustainability did not include a student career support goal:

- Academic Excellence Goal 2: Prepare students to be life-long learners and contributing members of today's global economy.
- Advancement Excellence Goal 5: Enhance services to shape career-ready graduates.

- Community Connections Goal 3: Forge meaningful and engaged partnerships that provide real-life experiences for students.
- Degree Completion Goal 4: Support students through degree completion and into their careers.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goal 4: Capture, promote and enhance overall curriculum and programming that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding.

(Strategic Priorities and Goals 2021-2026: <https://web1.muw.edu/wpie/strategicgoals>.)

The selected QEP proposal was also based on a review of literature pertaining to higher education and career preparation. For most college students, the decision to attend an institution of higher education is motivated by desired economic outcomes. In the Lumina Foundation report “Deciding to go to College” (2015), the top three reasons that students chose to attend college were connected to potential career opportunities, with 91% saying they wanted to attend an institution of higher education to improve employment opportunities, 90% to make more money, and 89% to get a good job. Additionally, 58% indicated they wanted to attend college in order to switch jobs or change careers.

Research on the skills and experiences employers look for when hiring college graduates suggests that students need to develop the kinds of skills that are usually the focus of a general education curriculum, as well as to participate in quality internships, research projects, and other career-focused experiential learning opportunities. The original QEP proposal cited the “State of American Jobs” report by the Pew Research Center (2016), a survey of the American workforce. In the report 99% stated that good written and spoken communication skills are extremely or very important in their job; 90% stated that interpersonal skills, such as patience, compassion and getting along with people are extremely or very important in their job; 86% stated that critical thinking skills are extremely or very important in their job; and 85% stated that being able to work with people from many different backgrounds is extremely or very important to be successful in the workforce. The incorporation of these skills throughout the university’s curricular and co-curricular programs has the potential to impact positively the academic and economic achievement of our graduates, preparing them for success in the classroom, in the workplace, and in their communities.

Additionally, internships, research projects in a student’s academic discipline, team projects, study abroad/study away, and other experiential, high-impact educational practices improve student learning and success (Kuh, 2008), have positive effects for student employment (Knouse et al. 1999) and academic achievement (Binder et al, 2015), and are generally viewed as excellent opportunities for building career-specific knowledge and preparation. Universities can improve career preparedness by helping students understand and develop the skills that will provide an advantage in both securing and maintaining employment and by providing opportunities for, and support participation in, high-impact learning experiences.



Chapter 3: QEP Development Process

In August 2022 MUW formed a QEP Committee to refine the proposal and finalize the details of the QEP, develop an action plan for implementing and assessing the QEP, and write the final document to be submitted to SACSCOC to meet the QEP requirement as part of the university's reaffirmation process. The author of the successful proposal, Dr. David Brooking, then Director of the Student Success Center, was appointed Chair of the QEP Committee. This Committee, like the initial QEP Proposal Team, consisted of broad representation from the campus (<https://www.muw.edu/qep/committee/>). On August 29, 2022, the Committee conducted the first of a series of meetings to begin the process of refining the proposal and establishing an action plan for implementation. As the university's Strategic Priorities made clear, there is broad agreement across the university that MUW needs to provide better support for career preparation for students. It is also clear from the QEP topic selection process that the QEP *topic* had "broad-based support of institutional constituencies." However, the QEP Committee members recognized that an implementation and assessment plan that would address the curricular and experiential requirements of a variety of liberal arts and professional academic programs, meet the needs of a widely diverse student population, and engage the expertise and efforts of faculty and staff across the campus, would require additional and extensive campus participation.

The QEP Committee shared the proposal across campus and solicited feedback about the goal, outcomes, and implementation. The Committee discussions led to some adjustments to the original goal and outcomes, but the Committee wanted extensive input from the campus about ways to achieve and assess the goals of the QEP. Specifically, the Committee wanted to gather information about what is already being done across the campus that could tie in to the QEP, to hear suggestions about the most effective ways to connect the academic programs with career and professional development goals, and to hear suggestions about funding needs to implement the QEP successfully. The QEP Committee decided to hold a series of "listening sessions" so the campus community could ask questions and provide suggestions. In advance of the listening sessions, the Committee prepared a one-page summary of the QEP objectives as a guide for further campus discussions of the proposal. This document, along with a link to the full proposal on the MUW website, was sent to the campus for review in preparation for the listening sessions. The sessions were held in October 2022; in order to maximize participation, the sessions were available for in-person and Zoom attendance. At the beginning of each session a member of the Committee provided a brief presentation about the SACSCOC QEP requirements and the selected proposal. Discussion followed the presentations, and the sessions were recorded for later reference by the campus and the Committee.

In November, following the campus listening sessions, the QEP Committee met with the Executive Director of Development and Alumni Relations and staff from the Office of Development, Alumni, and Career Services to discuss plans for a new career and professional development program and, importantly, the role of Career Services in implementing the QEP. At the time of that meeting, MUW was without a full-time Director of Career Services.

Members of the Committee also took advantage of the QEP educational opportunities offered by SACSCOC. Ms Carla Lowery, MUW's SACSCOC liaison, attended the Summer Institute in July 2022. In November 2022, Dr. David Brooking, Director of the Student Success Center and chair of the QEP Committee, was appointed Executive Director for Enrollment Management at MUW and gave up his role as committee chair. Dr. Thomas Richardson, Professor of English, became the new chair and served in that capacity throughout the spring 2023 semester until an interim director of the QEP was appointed. Dr. Richardson attended the annual meeting of SACSCOC in Atlanta to attend QEP-focused sessions. On the recommendation of the QEP Committee, the Provost appointed Dr. Erin Kempker, Professor of History and former chair of the Department of History and Political Science, to serve as Interim Director of the QEP. Dr. Kempker, who had experience with developing and implementing the university's previous QEP, attended the SACSCOC Summer Institute in July 2023 in the QEP Implementation, Assessment, and Reporting Track.

The feedback from the listening sessions was critical for refining the QEP objectives and strategies, for addressing questions of the varied academic programs, and for continuing to increase campus buy-in for the QEP. The listening sessions were well attended by faculty and staff, and participants engaged actively on questions from the Committee and to help guide the process in directions they believed most suitable at MUW. The discussions from the listening sessions shaped the final form of the QEP, but the Committee also took other measures throughout the spring semester 2023 to build the action plan: a) they conducted a valuable survey of student participation in "high-impact" experiences, b) they surveyed the academic programs about high-impact requirements within degree programs, c) they broadened the "Core Skills for Success" to include the commonly accepted competencies defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), and d) they took a broader and deeper dive into the research on college career preparedness and how a career preparedness program can achieve the required flexibility to serve the needs and expectations of a broad range of academic programs. They also took into consideration MUW's diverse make-up of the student population and the wide variety of family, economic, and educational backgrounds represented in the Student Profile data for the Fall 2022 semester:

- 77.9% female, 22.1% male;
- 35.1% African-American/black, 59.2% white, 5.7% other;

- 86.5% Mississippi residents, students from all 82 Mississippi counties;
- 26.6% over age 25, with an average age of 24;
- 35.3% enrolled online only.



Feedback from Listening Sessions

The listening sessions showed there was broad agreement about the need to improve career preparation for students, especially in terms of “soft skills.” There was also broad agreement about the value of high-impact experiences for students, both for the educational enhancement of the experience and the significance for career readiness and, therefore, faculty and staff were enthusiastic in support of increasing opportunities for students to participate. It was in the listening sessions that the term “high impact” was recommended in place of “real world” to refer to experiential learning; for many, “high impact” seemed to embrace both academic and career values.

The listening sessions provided helpful conversations about the QEP, offering suggestions about issues to address and also raising important questions for the QEP Committee to consider as the plan was being developed. The major points include:

- The Office of Career Services needs to modernize services and to communicate clearly and widely the services available.
- Career Services needs a point person to support the QEP implementation.
- There is no central location for information about internships and other experiential opportunities. Career Services and academic programs need to work together more closely to identify and communicate opportunities for students in career preparation and to meet student needs.
- The QEP should help students make connections between academic requirements and career preparedness, which at present the university does not do well.
- The QEP should provide means for faculty to exchange ideas about what career preparedness activities are working in their programs and what areas they would like to improve.
- The QEP needs to help students understand and become proficient in the “soft skills” that employers want.
- The QEP needs to help students to know what they know in terms of their career preparedness and to communicate that preparedness to prospective employers.
- The university needs to do a better job of helping students understand the long-term value of the skills and knowledge they gain in their general education courses, such as communication and critical thinking.
- The university should develop a culture of career preparation from the beginning of students’ college experience.
- The university needs to provide scholarship support as needed to enable students to participate in high-impact experiences.
- The university should explore creative ways to fund high-impact experiences, such as including any student costs as course fees rather than as a separate expense.
- The university as part of the QEP needs to provide more consistent tracking of student employment and provide alumni surveys at particular intervals that gather information about the impact of both general education and academic disciplines.
- The QEP implementation plan needs to provide flexibility to meet the particular needs of diverse academic programs.
- Where appropriate academic units should indicate course components that fulfill QEP outcomes.
- Writing across the curriculum should be emphasized for students to develop marketable skills.

- Academic advising should help students of all ages and stages of life to understand career competencies and the value of high-impact experiences.
- One of the challenges is to get older transfer students, whose focus is “what I need to get done to finish my degree,” to participate in these experiences.
- The emphasis on career readiness should not appear to move the university’s focus away from a strong liberal arts general education program or to undervalue liberal arts majors. In a social and political climate that seems to emphasize workforce development, the university needs to be able to help students understand the value of liberal arts programs for career preparedness.



NACE Career Readiness Competencies

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines career readiness as “a foundation from which to demonstrate core competencies that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace.” NACE core competencies are “skills that can be transferred across jobs and include both skills and personal attributes” (NACEweb.org). NACE has established, developed, and validated a set of competencies that employers value when hiring college graduates and that are advantageous to graduates for long-term employment and promotion. The NACE competencies include career and self-development, communication,

critical thinking, equity and inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology. The QEP Committee decided to emphasize the NACE competencies in the QEP since they effectively connect to MUW's general education curriculum, which is required of all MUW students in all academic programs, and the general education competencies are assessed using the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics. These NACE/general education competencies, such as communication and critical thinking, can easily be aligned in assignments within the academic disciplines, and the connection of the general education courses to NACE can also help students better understand the value of the general education curriculum. Student mastery of the NACE Career Readiness Competencies represents best practice in career preparation for college graduates.

For a university with a large percentage of transfer students who take most or all of their general education courses at another institution, having a method for helping students to value the competencies achieved in their general education courses as an integral part of their degree program is especially important. The NACE competencies also focus on what are commonly referred to as "soft skills" or "personal attributes," such as teamwork, professionalism, and the ability to work effectively with diverse colleagues. Helping students to identify the NACE competencies within their curriculum and to articulate their success in mastering these competencies should enhance both their opportunities for employment and advancement in their careers. (NACE Competencies: <https://www.muw.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf>.)

Survey of Students

The QEP Committee surveyed students about their participation in and interest in participating in "high impact" experiences as a student at MUW. There was a large participation in the survey (1304 of 2159 students—60.4%), and the responses were nearly evenly distributed among the options:

1 - In your time at MUW, have you taken part in an experience that allows you to apply or extend the skills and knowledge learned in your courses? (Examples include internships, student research, service learning, and study abroad experiences.)

Yes, I have taken advantage of at least one such opportunity

(1) 483 37.04%

No, but I would like to take advantage of such an opportunity

(2) 415 31.83%

No, and I do not have an interest in taking part in such an opportunity

(3) 406 31.13%.

The students were also asked to explain their answers: students who answered “Yes” were asked to give reasons for choosing to participate and to identify resources that supported participation; students who answered “No, but I would like to,” were asked to give reasons for wanting to participate and to identify resources that would help support their participation; and students who answered “No, I have no interest,” were asked to give reasons for not wanting to participate. The reasons for the students’ choices provided the QEP Committee with helpful information for planning the implementation of the QEP.

Most of the students who had participated in high impact experiences did so because the experiences were required for their degree, such as clinical and research experiences for nursing, teaching internships for education students, and research projects with presentations for students in the Honors College. Others, however, participated because they recognized an opportunity to enhance their educational experience and career prospects, to get “hands on” or “real world” experience in a field, to prepare for graduate school, or because a faculty member encouraged them to participate.

Students who indicated they would like to take advantage of such an opportunity identified two major limiting factors. *One is information.* There were numerous comments about a lack of awareness of the availability of opportunities to engage in experiences that would allow them to apply their skills. Students requested more communication about such opportunities; a central, easily accessible source for information; better guidance on the value of such experiences and how to find them; more assistance in locating and engaging in these experiences; and career counseling. *The second limiting factor is financial.* Students expressed a need for scholarships or other monetary assistance to be able to participate in internships, experiences involving travel or other expenses, or experiences that would take time away from their jobs.

Students who indicated that they did not have an interest in participating in high-impact experiences for the most part did not seem to reject them for lack of interest; rather, they believed they did not have the time and/or the financial resources to participate. In some cases they seemed to believe that these experiences would be in addition to their degree requirements instead of counting towards their degree, or that because they have jobs and time-consuming domestic responsibilities they could not manage anything more than their degree requirements. (Student Survey Results: <https://www.muw.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/QEP-2023-High-Impact-Experiences-Survey.pdf>.)



Career Services

As the listening sessions made clear, the MUW Career Services office has offered inconsistent services and has not always marketed its services effectively to campus. At the time of the development of the QEP proposal, the Career Services Center was without a full-time director. To better serve students in their preparation for careers and to support the university's Quality Enhancement Plan, a full-time director would need to be hired and the Office of Career Services and Professional Development would need to be restructured to better serve student needs and interests. (Note: an experienced and enthusiastic full-time Director was hired in August 2023 and immediately became a vital member of the QEP Committee.)

The Office of Career Services and Professional Development in recent months was moved from Student Services to the Office of Development and Alumni Relations. The Executive Director of Development and Alumni Relations and interim Career Services staff met with the QEP Committee to review the plans to restructure the services and to support the goals of the QEP. In addition to the normal functions that a career services office offers students, such as career exploration, career fairs, resume writing and critiques, job postings, etc., the Office of Career Services and Professional Development could add specific services and programs tied to the

intended outcomes of the QEP, such as:

- Offer workshops that focus on NACE Career Competencies.
- Train faculty on advising students on career development as part of their academic advising of students in the academic programs.
- Train faculty “experts” on career preparation to serve as resources in academic programs.
- Train navigators to advise first- and second-year students on career development strategies.
- Implement a four-year career development plan utilizing NACE guidelines.
- Assist faculty in developing and recording academic assignments that enable students to develop and demonstrate career competencies.
- Offer a series of professional development seminars that will allow students to earn a professional development certificate.
- Serve as a central information resource for internships and other experiential learning opportunities.
- Identify increased internship opportunities.
- Increase financial support for students for internships and other high-impact experiences.
- Provide an internship preparation course for students.
- Educate students and faculty in the NACE best practices for internships.
- Substantially increase communication with students, faculty, and staff about services provided by the Office of Career Services and about professional development opportunities available to complement academic programs.



Literature Review

Over the past decade there has been a wealth of research addressing career readiness of college graduates. This research both underscores the validity of MUW's QEP and gives direction to the QEP's focus and implementation plan. MUW's QEP developed out of the university's ongoing institutional planning, which has recognized the need to address more explicitly career preparedness for MUW's students. In addition to the MUW employment statistics and the Lumina Foundation report cited earlier in this document (pp. 7,8), MUW—a university with a strong liberal arts tradition and focus—is concerned about the broader challenges to higher education, especially the “cultural narrative diminishing the value of higher education” and the political influences that have prioritized workforce development (Mekolichick 2023).

However, despite any negative public perceptions about higher education and employment, there is good news for students and good news for an institution like MUW. In 2018 Hart Research Associates conducted parallel surveys of 501 business executives and 500 hiring managers on behalf of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) for the purpose of gauging the extent to which employers of college graduates “believe that a college education is important and worthwhile” and to understand “the learning outcomes they believe are most important for success in today's economy and how prepared recent college graduates are in these areas” (AAC&U). The results of this study, published in a report entitled “Fulfilling the American Dream: Liberal Education and the Future of Work,” indicate that business executives

and hiring managers express a higher degree of confidence in colleges and universities at a rate nearly 20% higher than does the American public. Furthermore, employers believe in the value of college, that it is “both important and worth the time and money involved.” One cautionary note for colleges is that the study noted that recent graduates generally are well prepared to succeed in entry-level positions but not necessarily to advance or be promoted and that colleges “need to make improvements to ensure that college graduates possess the skills and knowledge needed” for advancement in their careers. Perhaps more than ever, colleges need to help students, parents, and the general public understand the value of college and to help students understand that value in terms of their preparedness for long-term success.

The survey results in “Fulfilling the American Dream” are particularly helpful for MUW’s QEP. The skills and knowledge that are at the heart of MUW’s general education requirements for the most part match the prioritized learning outcomes of the employers surveyed in the report. Business executives and hiring managers place a “[h]igh priority on graduates’ skills and knowledge that cut across majors,” and the “college learning outcomes that both audiences rate as most important include oral communication, critical thinking, ethical judgment, working effectively in teams, working independently, self-motivation, written communication, and real-world application of skills and knowledge.”

The “real-world application of skills and knowledge,” or what MUW is referring to as “high-impact experiences,” is important to employers in the hiring process and research shows it is equally important to student learning. The AAC&U and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) agree that “high impact practices” (HIP) positively affect student learning and can be “life changing” (Kuh, 2008 and NSSE “High Impact Practices”). Kuh provides no single definition of HIPs, but broadly describes them as including these attributes: they require “considerable time and effort” from students; demand that students “interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters ... over extended periods of time”; will likely mean that students “experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves”; include “frequent feedback” for students; and the opportunity to see how “learning works in different settings, on and off campus” (Kuh, 2008). Scholars agree that experiencing two or more HIPs makes a positive impact on all students, but Kuh goes further in noting that “historically underserved students tend to benefit *more*” from such practices. Scholars also recognize, however, that HIPs are often reserved to liberal arts colleges that attract “a select group of students while others, often students traditionally underserved, receive an education more suited to the industrial age” (Brown McNair and Albertine, 2012). It is important that students have access to HIPs because of what they provide students in terms of impactful experiences and employability. Only about 36 percent of business executives and hiring managers think recent graduates are “very well prepared to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings,” but they agree that “participation in applied and project-based learning experiences—particularly

internships or apprenticeships—gives recent college graduates an edge” (AAC&U, 2018). The employers indicated that they are much or somewhat more likely to hire graduates who have participated in the following experiential learning opportunities (and in this priority order):

- Internship/apprenticeship with a company or organization.
- Project in community with people from different backgrounds/cultures.
- Multiple courses requiring significant writing assignments.
- Research project done collaboratively with peers.
- Advanced, comprehensive senior project (thesis, etc).
- Service learning project with a community organization.
- Study abroad program.

Encouraging HIPs—including but not limited to capstone experiences, undergraduate research, internships, e-portfolios, and service learning—as part of career readiness initiatives is evidence-based and will be part of MUW QEP programming.

Jeanne Mekolichick, in a position paper for the Council of Undergraduate Research, “Recognizing Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, & Creative Inquiry as Career Readiness Tool,” emphasizes the importance of undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry (URSCI) as a substantial career readiness experience. She writes that the benefit of URSCI “has been well-established in the literature as a high-impact practice that helps all of our student populations advance. However, to fully realize the transformative impact of URSCI, as faculty, mentors and higher education administrators we are called to extend our definition of student success, learn how the valuable skills, knowledge and dispositions that our students gain and hone through participating in URSCI experiences relate to desirable career competencies, and help our students learn and articulate how their URSCI experiences help them prepare for the next steps.” The position paper connects URSCI to the NACE career readiness competencies, to “illustrate how mentors can infuse the associated sample behaviors within their undergraduate research, scholarship and creative inquiry projects in visible, transparent, and consumable ways” in order to help students understand the relevancy and value of the experience and to “leave with the language and ability to tell their URSCI stories.” Mekolichick also emphasizes the need to help undergraduate research mentors become comfortable with career readiness competencies to equip them “to surface these competencies, create practice opportunities, and help launch our students into thriving careers.”

A study by Newell and Ulrich also underscores the value of undergraduate research as a means of integrating career competencies into the curriculum of specific disciplines. The study, “Competent and employed: STEM alumni perspectives on undergraduate research and NACE career-readiness competencies,” focuses on STEM disciplines, but the results are applicable across disciplines. Newell notes that “STEM alumni ranked critical thinking as the most important

competency for their current employment. Additional findings demonstrate that undergraduate research experiences (UREs) provide a fertile ground for the integration of career related competencies into undergraduate curricula as alumni discussed the development of various academic, personal, professional, and competency gains after participating in UREs.” An important aspect of the study involved integrating NACE competencies throughout the STEM curricula “to increase student awareness of competencies, understanding connections between competencies and classwork, and demonstration of proficiency.”

Newell argues from the results of their study that programs can simultaneously teach discipline skills “and provide meaningful, work-life experience through undergraduate research experiences (UREs). UREs are high-impact practices with well-established impact on student self-perceptions and career decisions.” UREs teach and reinforce the competencies of teamwork and collaboration, communication, critical thinking, leadership, time management, and work ethic and professionalism. They also support the personal development characteristics of independence, confidence, and perseverance.

Additionally, an important result for students hoping to continue education beyond the bachelor’s degree, the undergraduate research experiences in the Newell study positively impacted student acceptance rate into graduate schools.

In a study conducted by Tomasson Goodwin, et al, “Can students be taught to articulate employability skills?,” the researchers studied “whether undergraduate university students can be taught to articulate their employability skills effectively to prospective employers.” According to Tomasson Goodwin, research studies show “new graduates may possess the desired employability skills, but are not aware that they have them. And yet other research points out that if employers are forced to glean employability skills from students’ content knowledge, they will often misperceive a skills gap, when, in fact, the problem is more ‘a failure on the part of universities to talk to students about the skill development inherent in their education’ (Harrison, 2017, p. 6). Still other research extends the scope of this responsibility, arguing that universities need to help students not only to become more aware of their skills, but once aware, to better articulate these skills to others. These researchers postulate that the skills gap is better characterized as an ‘articulation of skills’ gap (Joy et al., 2013.)”

The Tomasson Goodwin research used the STAR (Situation/Task, Actions, Result) response template used by employers to “have students practice articulating their employability skills with a structure and language that employers use themselves.” The findings of the study led the researchers to conclude that “universities should integrate institution-wide, course-level employability skills articulation assignments for students in all years of study and programs (co-op and non-co-op).”

Furthermore, a study by Joy. et al (2015) engaged instructors in different courses to identify

career readiness skills in their course assignments and to include the skills in their syllabus descriptions. At three points in the semester the researchers led discussions about the readiness competencies and then had students write reflections “connecting coursework with competencies to interrogate their personal level of competency achievement.” In a survey of 450 students, “72 percent found the reflection exercise helpful, supported by some anecdotal evidence that students later articulated these skill sets during employment interviews.”

One final point from the AAC&U study that can be important for students and also a useful assessment instrument for the QEP is the finding on the student use of portfolios to record their academic achievements. The AAC&U study found that “business executives and hiring managers find electronic portfolios that summarize and demonstrate a candidate’s accomplishments in key skill and knowledge areas more useful than college transcripts alone in evaluating recent graduates’ potential to succeed in the workplace.” Almost 80% of executives and hiring managers find ePortfolios useful when hiring recent graduates, compared with about 50% who find college transcripts useful.



Revised Goals and Outcomes

The listening sessions, input from career services staff, and a deeper review of the literature related to career competencies of college graduates led the QEP Committee to make some revisions to the language of the goal and outcomes of the MUW QEP. Although there was a modest shift in the language of the goal and outcomes, the revisions to the QEP maintain the intent of the chosen topic and offer a pathway to improved student success beyond MUW through a strong university partnership among academic programs, student life, and career services. The QEP Committee also decided that a title that students might see as forward looking would be appropriate, so “Empowering Your Journey” was selected.

“Empowering Your Journey”

GOAL: To support student success by promoting professional development and career readiness through curricular programming and by helping students develop and demonstrate career-readiness competencies appropriate to their field.

- 1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of career-readiness competencies appropriate to their academic disciplines and to their career goals.***
- 2. Students will be able to communicate effectively their career-readiness competencies.***



Chapter 4: Implementation Plan

Action	Student Activities	Responsibility
<p>1. First year experience and UN 101</p>	<p>Students engage in service learning and civic engagement project(s) that culminate in presentation experience in UN 101.</p> <p>Students participate in a revamped Majors and Minors Fair that prioritizes exploration as part of UN 101.</p>	<p>First Year Experience Coordinator</p>
<p>2. Career exploration for first generation and at-risk students</p>	<p>Students in Academic Support and Academic Recovery classes create career plans.</p> <p>Students in Academic Support and Academic Recovery classes take interest inventory tests that highlight their abilities and interests.</p> <p>First generation students identified through UN 101 survey and additional support and mentorship are provided.</p>	<p>The Student Success Center will create a cohort for first generation students that includes peer mentors and service learning.</p> <p>The Center for Career Services and Professional Development (CSPD) will administer career assessment to students as part of professional development programming.</p>
<p>3. Develop career exploration and planning resources, online and face to face.</p>	<p>Students create and complete profiles in Handshake.</p> <p>Students use Handshake to explore experiential learning opportunities, develop a professional profile, and connect with employers.</p> <p>Students access online career center website and Canvas for resources on career readiness competencies and career planning.</p>	<p>CSPD creates online help to guide students and faculty through the process of creating profiles.</p> <p>The CSPD holds programming on how to improve a student's Handshake profile.</p> <p>The CSPD creates and maintains a resources page available via a website and Canvas.</p>

<p>4. ePortfolios</p>	<p>Students complete e-Portfolios or portfolios as part of their academic programs.</p> <p>Students complete and utilize Handshake profiles.</p> <p>Student mentors guide other students through e-Portfolio and portfolio development.</p>	<p>The CSPD holds programming on how students can improve their Handshake profile.</p> <p>Faculty fellows work with student peer mentors through CSPD to train students in portfolio development.</p> <p>Departments increase use of ePortfolios or portfolios in Capstone and senior seminars.</p>
<p>5. Develop toolkits for faculty and others to incorporate career-based assignments into courses across the curriculum.</p>	<p>Students in programs that utilize the career readiness toolkit develop knowledge of career competencies important to their field.</p> <p>Students in courses that utilize toolkits complete activities related to their career plan and assignments to build proficiency in NACE competencies.</p>	<p>Faculty fellows develop curriculum materials (tool kits) related to the NACE competencies in Canvas for use in courses across campus.</p> <p>Professional Development Certificate Program of the CSPD develops toolkits to incorporate NACE competencies.</p>
<p>6. Create a marketing campaign and faculty committee to explain the General Education Curriculum.</p>	<p>Students communicate the value of the foundational Gen Ed learning in reflective assignments and through surveys.</p> <p>Students communicate their abilities related to the NACE competencies in reflective assignments and surveys.</p>	<p>Faculty General Education Committee generates and shares marketing materials that explain the value of the Gen Ed.</p> <p>The Office of Institutional Research administers revised Graduation Survey.</p> <p>Faculty create and enhance reflective assignments in Gen Ed learning.</p>

<p>7. Create additional and enhance existing opportunities for high impact learning.</p>	<p>Students complete internships, service-learning, and experiential learning activities.</p> <p>Students engage in undergraduate research projects.</p> <p>Students connect with alumni to learn more about careers and professional opportunities.</p> <p>Students complete study abroad and study away.</p>	<p>The Internship Coordinator works with faculty and staff to develop additional internship, experiential learning, and service learning opportunities.</p> <p>The Director for the CSPD develops more scholarships to support high impact learning and professional development.</p> <p>The Director for the CSPD develops an alumni mentorship program to promote professional development.</p> <p>The Director of the Student Success Center incorporates high impact learning and career readiness into Academic Recovery, Learning Skills and Turning Point courses.</p> <p>The Office of Student Life incorporates service learning projects into Blues Week programming.</p> <p>Faculty create and enhance reflective assignments for high impact learning.</p> <p>Faculty market existing high impact experiences.</p>
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<p>8. Create cocurricular professional development programming.</p>	<p>Students complete activities in classes, workshops, and seminars utilizing NACE competency toolkits to build proficiency in the competencies.</p> <p>Student workers and work study workers get opportunities to complete professional development programming as part of their employment.</p>	<p>The Director of the CSPD develops a Professional Development Certificate Program related to NACE competencies.</p> <p>Faculty use toolkits to connect existing learning outcomes to NACE competencies.</p> <p>The Director of the CSPD develops new or adapts existing courses focused on NACE competencies and career readiness.</p> <p>Supervisors provide student workers the time needed to attend professional development activities as part of duties of the job.</p>
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1. Implement High Impact and Career Readiness Experiences in the First-year Experience

Students will engage in high impact learning and career readiness programming as part of their first-year experience. Although MUW is a transfer-majority institution, the first-year experience and first-time freshmen are an important cohort for the work of the QEP. The first-year coordinator in cooperation with the Director of the Student Success Center will implement a revised UN 101 curriculum that includes a service learning project, a majors and minors fair, and a civic leadership component. The UN 101 course also will add assessment measures so that it can be evaluated in the same way that the university reviews the General Education curriculum.

2. Career Exploration for First Generation and At-Risk Students

Students will complete career assessments (such as the Strong Interest Inventory) and engage in career planning programming. The first-year coordinator will administer a survey to identify first generation students. Dr. Clear Moore, the Director of the Student Success Center, began work in Fall 2022 to incorporate high impact learning and career readiness into Learning Skills, Turning Point, and Academic Recovery classes. These classes serve a range of students considered to be at-risk. The Learning Skills classes are required for students who must enroll in two or more Intermediate courses. UN 99 Turning Point is required of students who are returning from academic suspension and UN 98 Academic Recovery is required of students who

are placed on academic probation. Connecting these students with the resources and support to prepare for career advancement is vital, as they have already experienced setbacks in their academic pathway and sometimes face more than one semester of non-credit bearing classes to overcome low test scores. By incorporating an interest inventory survey and related professional development programming, we encourage them to prepare for a professional future beyond coursework alone and see themselves as possessing skills, abilities, and knowledge that employers value. These courses serve online students, as well as face to face students, and highlights our approach of reaching students where they are and in classes they are required to take.

Many of the same resources will be evident in the work we do with first generation students. First generation students often do not engage in high impact learning due to lack of time and money, but the issues do not end there. Scholars agree that students' status as first generation and their social and cultural background "play a critical role in forming their disposition to determine out-of-class experiences' future value" (Jehangir et al., 2022). This means that first generation students "are unlikely to be able to invest extra time in activities and relationship building viewed as ancillary to classroom engagement." They often overlook the value of unpaid internships or time invested in a mentorship relationship given the need they have to work and financially support themselves and their families. There is an "equity imperative" to make sure first generation students and students from working class and low-income backgrounds (which is a large number of MUW students) are able to participate in the activities that result in the competencies, skills, and knowledge necessary for professional employment and a successful career. The Student Success Center will develop a first-generation mentorship program that addresses the challenges faced by this diverse demographic and creates additional support and mentorship for them. The Center for Career Services and Professional Development (CSPD) will develop an alumni mentorship program for students as well.

3. Develop Career Exploration and Planning Resources

Before Fall 2023, MUW had a career center, but it was underutilized and provided limited programming and support to students. Starting in August 2023, MUW has a Center for Career Services and Professional Development on campus, located in Whitfield Hall on front campus, which serves as the site for individualized visits and support for students seeking appointments for résumé help and consultations on high-impact experiences, employment, and application for graduate school. However, online support and resources are necessary to reach all students, as heavy caregiving responsibilities, off-campus employment, and other responsibilities burden our student body. A large number of MUW students are non-traditionally aged (26 percent) and a majority of MUW students are commuters (83 percent). Some students attend the university in online programs and rarely come to campus (35 percent of classes are online and 34 percent are hybrid; 31 percent of undergraduates are "exclusively" in distance education). To serve this diverse student body, the CSPD will develop a robust online presence and offer virtual one-on-one help. The CSPD website will provide information for how to utilize Handshake, promote

online programming, and be a one-stop-shop for all things related to career development. The QEP website will also promote CSPD activities.

The CSPD will develop a presence in Canvas, MUW's learning management system (LMS), to promote the curriculum developed by faculty fellows and add additional programming related to the Professional Development Certificate Program when appropriate. The Canvas "shell" can be an all-inclusive site for curriculum materials, including help with developing a résumé/ curriculum vitae, interview skills, internship opportunities, and how to research professional employment. Aiding students in creating and completing Handshake profiles will be a focus of this work. Programming related to the Professional Development Certificate Program can be housed on Canvas, allowing students to access it when they need it.

4. Develop Toolkits for Faculty to Incorporate Career-based Assignments across the Curriculum

With a transfer majority student population, MUW cannot rely on the first-year experience course to reach most students. Faculty and staff noted in feedback sessions that students rarely have time for extra-curricular or co-curricular activities, even those recommended and hosted by the departments. For these reasons, the QEP Committee wants to continue a tradition of faculty fellows on our campus to help create curriculum related to professional development and share it with colleagues. In this way, the curriculum related to the goals of the QEP are embedded into existing courses and programs. We do not want to simply provide additional programming opportunities; we want curriculum related to the NACE competencies to show up in the classes that students have to take. This is the only way to ensure that students as busy as ours will get the chance to benefit from QEP goals and initiatives.

Faculty fellows were used in our last QEP to create and disseminate activities and curriculum related to active learning, student problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning (those fellows were known in the 2014 QEP as "APIL specialists"), and we also use faculty fellows as advising leaders on campus. For this QEP, each college will have a faculty fellow representative and new fellows will be selected each semester. The position comes with a course release and financial support. As modeled on our previous initiative, faculty will submit brief proposals that outline their initiative or curriculum idea. Proposal guidelines will make clear that the curriculum must engage with NACE competencies and must be shared with others at the university through Canvas Commons. The QEP Committee working in conjunction with the Kossen Center for Teaching and Learning (KCTL) and CSPD will select the faculty fellows every semester and make sure the curricula are posted on the Commons. The goal is to have a small library of curricular options and ideas for faculty – all based on NACE competencies – that can be used by the CSPD and faculty in courses across departments and programs. This is a critical aspect of the work of the QEP because we believe that reaching students will require faculty adopting assignments and curriculum within classes for their majors.

5. ePortfolios

EPortfolios and traditional portfolios provide an excellent way to demonstrate knowledge and abilities to employers. The AAC&U survey “Fulfilling the American Dream” made clear that some employers value ePortfolios even more than transcripts. Research indicates that students who engage in ePortfolio pedagogies perform better in mock interviews and that when “career readiness training is combined with ePortfolio pedagogical training the overall effectiveness of the career center training improves” (Ring et al, 2017). This means the creation of ePortfolios is helpful in at least two ways: the product of an ePortfolio can be shared with potential employers and the process of creating the ePortfolio requires students to articulate learned skills and abilities. That self-reflection and iteration promises to help students in other forms of communication with potential employers, such as interviews.

In our review of the use of portfolios and ePortfolios on campus, we found great variety across the disciplines. While some programs, like Elementary Education, require an ePortfolio using Watermark Insights, LLC, other programs like history require a Capstone project but no portfolio of any kind. Programs in nursing require a portfolio but use physical binders to capture student work. Each program understands the needs of its students and we want to preserve the flexibility of departments to select their own pathway, but we seek to encourage the use of ePortfolios and portfolios on campus because of their utility with employers.

The major issues identified in the MUW Survey on Portfolio Practice were: “Lack of faculty time to attend training;” “Lack of student time to engage in digital portfolio development;” “Faculty are not sure of the benefits this instrument presents;” “Students lack interest or confidence to develop their portfolios fully;” and “Students do not have access to the proper technology to manage digital portfolios.” We want to address these concerns and make ePortfolios easier for faculty to understand and assign to students (especially in gateway and Capstone courses) and make it easier for students to access the help and support they need to complete ePortfolios. Ideally, if programs think it prudent, students will complete ePortfolios as part of the requirements within their academic programs.

Faculty can apply to be faculty fellows to support their department (and others across campus) by creating a program to train student mentors. Since 2020, an ad hoc group of faculty has been working on supporting ePortfolios on campus. Their work centers around the creation of student mentors, who can assist fellow students in completing ePortfolios. This model can be used in programs that do not require an ePortfolio or portfolio as part of their curriculum or in programs that do. To support the work of student mentors, the QEP will offer institutional work study positions for students each semester to work with faculty in becoming student mentors and helping guide other students through the ePortfolio process. Students who successfully complete an ePortfolio or portfolio will be identified by faculty as potential student mentors in the following semesters. In this way, MUW will support students in creating ePortfolios and

provide mentorship and leadership opportunities for those who show ability in the area by paying them to guide other students through portfolio development.

These faculty fellows who focus on ePortfolio development can offer professional development classes through the KCTL for other faculty interested in adopting ePortfolios. The curriculum that they develop related to guiding students through the portfolio process and through the process of training student mentors to do the same will be shared on Canvas for others to use. Because we will support faculty fellows from different colleges, we intend faculty to engage different technologies (whether Watermark, Handshake, Folio, etc.), in their curriculum, which is a strength to this approach. We also want to support portfolio development in those disciplines who do not offer digital portfolio options and do not think it suited to their field.

Faculty, in collaboration with department chairs, will determine which system is right for their programs and students, and some departments have already selected specific software to utilize. However, for those programs that require no ePortfolio and do not wish to require a specific technology, the university already provides access to Folio through Canvas. Since 2019, Canvas has migrated its ePortfolio users to Folio, which is a more robust ePortfolio option that provides students access to their ePortfolio after graduation. Additional programming from the KCTL and CSPD will support faculty in understanding and adopting Folio into courses. A completed Handshake profile works like an ePortfolio in important respects and the CSPD will provide faculty and student programming related to Handshake in developing programming to support this initiative. In this way, we seek to address the concerns of faculty who did not feel that they had enough time or support in figuring out how to help students develop ePortfolios.

6. Explain the Value of the General Education Curriculum

MUW's General Education (Gen Ed) curriculum, which has served us well with minor changes since 2009, seeks to provide the liberal arts grounding that we believe all university graduates need in life and on the job market. It is assessed using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics. Early on, the QEP Committee noted a significant overlap between the Gen Ed student learning objectives and NACE competencies (see table below). The QEP Committee sought to work with Gen Ed faculty and courses to encourage the use of reflective assignments in order that students better understand how what they are doing in the Gen Ed aligns with what employers are looking for in job seekers.

In 2018 MUW rolled the work of the General Education Committee of faculty, a standing committee that oversaw issues related to the Gen Ed, into the work of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, because the Gen Ed curriculum was fixed and the university anticipated little benefit from regular meetings. What no one could expect was the COVID pandemic and the way in which teaching had to change, immediately and substantively. Increasingly, the meaning and value of the Gen Ed seemed harder for students to grasp and questions during advising focused on completing requirements, not transformative learning. It has become clear

that without a committee dedicated to the Gen Ed on campus, it has been left without specific and vocal support at a time in which liberal arts generally is under threat. Dr. Scott Tollison, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, implemented a faculty working group in late spring 2023 to consider strategies to better demonstrate the value and importance of the General Education Curriculum to current and prospective students. The group is headed by Dr. Kim Whitehead, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and seeks to increase students' understanding of and investment in the Gen Ed curriculum.

The QEP Committee and QEP Director will work with the Gen Ed working group to support a messaging strategy and marketing campaign related to the General Education curriculum. A new messaging strategy and marketing campaign related to the Gen Ed will include student-friendly messaging and visuals that communicate the value of these courses to students' knowledge, skill, and leadership development in college and their success beyond. Digital and print materials for students will facilitate academic advising, providing student success navigators and faculty with talking points and resources to share.

The Provost has appointed an Associate Director of the QEP who will help with assessment reports related to the QEP and Gen Ed. Having a point person who can guide ongoing work among the Gen Ed faculty will ensure that the messaging of the Gen Ed is consistent and continuous, and it will ensure that important QEP goals embedded in the Gen Ed include assessment and reflective assignments so that students can understand and later communicate the value of that learning to others. At the request of the QEP Committee, the Provost re-created the General Education Committee to provide ongoing assessment and advocacy of the Gen Ed.

MUW General Education Curriculum with AACU and NACE Competencies Cross-referenced:

MUW General Education SLOs	AAC&U VALUE Rubric	NACE Competency and Rubric
1. Critical Thinking & Effective Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to: a. Evaluate information for the purposes of making informed decisions.	Problem Solving VALUE Rubric Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric	Critical Thinking Communication

<p>b. Analyze the arguments and points of view of others. c. Present information, arguments, and ideas in oral, written and visual forms for their contexts.</p>	<p>Written communication VALUE Rubric Oral Communication VALUE Rubric</p>	
<p>2. Cultural Literacy: Students will demonstrate the ability to: a. Analyze individual aesthetic and cultural works b. Compare human endeavors across cultures and through history c. Discuss global perspectives and cultures objectively</p>	<p>Intercultural Knowledge & Competence VALUE Rubric Inquiry & Analysis VALUE Rubric</p>	<p>Equity & Inclusion</p>
<p>3. Quantitative and Technology Skills: Students will demonstrate the ability to: a. Solve problems, draw conclusions, and make predictions using quantitative information. b. Analyze quantitative information presented in different formats.</p>	<p>Quantitative Literacy & Analysis VALUE Rubric</p>	<p>Critical Thinking Technology</p>
<p>4. Understanding of Self, Society, and the Natural World: Students will demonstrate the ability to: a. Analyze the interactions between the individual and society. b. Engage in activities that promote personal and civic well-being. c. Apply the scientific method to solve problems.</p>	<p>Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric Inquiry & Analysis VALUE Rubric</p>	<p>Teamwork Leadership Equity & Inclusion Critical Thinking</p>
<p>5. Life-Long Learning: Students will demonstrate the ability to: a. Transfer general education strands to their major fields of study and to make connections between disciplines</p>	<p>Foundations & Skills for Life-long Learning VALUE Rubric Teamwork VALUE Rubric</p>	<p>Teamwork Communication Critical Thinking</p>

7. Create Additional and Enhance Existing Opportunities for High Impact Learning

MUW students indicated in the QEP High Impact Experiences Survey that they would like to participate in a high impact learning experience. Roughly one third said they had engaged in a high impact experience, one third said they had not but would like to, and one third said that they had not and did not intend to participate in such an activity. However, in written comments many in the last third noted that the reason they indicated disinterest was because they did not expect they could afford such experiences. Time and money were cited repeatedly in the explanation of the two thirds of respondents who had not yet had a high impact experience. Data confirms the need of MUW students to work and their lack of resources. At MUW, 57 percent of first-time, full-time freshmen qualify for a Pell grant and 97 receive some sort of scholarship or aid to attend the university. MUW students need help and support if they are going to be able to fit a high-impact experience into their busy schedule or afford to take the time off to complete such activities. Academic programs will explore ways to integrate more high impact experiences into the degree program to make the experiences more accessible and to fund them through existing academic scholarships. The Center for Career Services and Professional Development will work with the MUW Foundation to fundraise for more scholarships that can help students take the time off from work to complete high impact experiences, including study abroad, undergraduate research, internships, and others. Current scholarships to support high impact experiences include Mary Lou Peyton, Summer Scholars, and the Nancy Yates Fellowships.

In the QEP High Impact Experiences Survey, students also reported that they did not know where to find information about internships, and faculty reported needing help connecting students with internship partners. The QEP Committee identified internships as something mentioned repeatedly among different constituencies, and to coordinate the work necessary across campus MUW will hire an Internship Coordinator to be housed in the Center for CSPD. (Note: The Internship Coordinator has been hired and begins work on August 12, 2024.) The Internship Coordinator will connect and build relationships with businesses, students, faculty, staff, and alumni, and will also provide career training for students through courses, workshops, and seminars to include a mandatory “boot camp” for the Preferred Internship Program—a structured internship-training program. If students complete the bootcamp, they could qualify for scholarship support for their internship. In this way, training is coupled with scholarship money—both of which will aid students in successfully completing internships. Additionally, the CSPD staff will offer training for campus supervisors of student workers that will help create impactful experiences, enhance career readiness, and provide mentorship for students to have greater success in their first job upon graduation. The Internship Coordinator will make the CSPD a clearinghouse for information regarding internship, experiential learning, and service learning opportunities.

The CSPD will develop an alumni mentorship program to promote professional development and support students in creating professional networks. The MUW CSPD is housed within the

MUW Office of Development and Alumni and is uniquely suited to connect current students to alumni in fields related to their major. Guidelines for mentors and mentees are needed and the program will take several semesters to build, but it presents a remarkable opportunity to connect the newest members of the “Long Blue Line” (alumni) with those who came before them. As an institution focused on individualized learning and creating a culture of caring, the QEP Committee sees this aspect of student support as special to our campus. In this program, we will leverage our long history of producing graduates with exceptional careers to aid our current students in finding their standing in the professional world. The benefit of underrepresented minority students to mentors of “similar-background role models, mentors, and informal networks” is well noted in scholarship and the alumni of the institution are well suited to provide that support (Markle et al., 2022).

The Vice President for Student Affairs will incorporate a service learning project into Blues Week programming. This programming happens at the beginning of the fall semester and it will introduce first-year students to teamwork and leadership skills even before the start of classes.

Encouraging students to complete high impact experiences relevant to their program will be important to career readiness at MUW, but so, too, is having them reflect on those experiences. It is in reflecting on what they have learned that students come to understand how their abilities, knowledge, and networks have shifted and grown. First, students must be able to explain to themselves the value of what they have just accomplished in a particular high impact experience. and then they can explain it to others, including potential employers. Through faculty fellows and programming with the Kossen Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Career Services and Professional Development, faculty will find ready-made reflective assignments to adapt for their classes. This will benefit the high-impact learning already underway on campus, including study abroad, study away, and undergraduate research.

8. Create a Professional Development Certificate Program

Through the CSPD and following the NACE guidelines, MUW will provide students a series of professional development workshops that will allow students to earn a Professional Development Certificate. Students will complete a specified number of workshops to achieve this certification and workshops will be taught by subject matter experts. The workshops will be housed in Canvas.

The QEP Director will work with the Director of CSPD to encourage departments to send all institutional and federal work study students and student workers to this programming. It will encourage professional development among students and eliminate the barriers of time and money to students’ ability to attend.

Implementation Timeline

Area	Tasks
Year 0 – Fall 2023	
Marketing	Launch marketing plan to introduce <i>Empowering Your Journey</i> to the university community.
Career Services and Professional Development Center	Hire a director for the Career Services and Professional Development Center and pilot programming related to career readiness and NACE competencies.
UN 101, First Generation, and At Risk Students	<p>Pilot a service-learning and civic engagement project in UN 101. Pilot revamped Majors and Minors Fair.</p> <p>Identify first generation students in UN 101.</p>
Handshake	Begin promoting Handshake and encouraging student adoption.
General Education	Develop a marketing/branding plan for the Gen Ed.
Assessment	Begin collecting baseline data for assessment measures.
Year 0 – Spring 2024	
Faculty Fellows and Faculty Toolkits	Advertise and select Faculty Fellows with at least 4 faculty fellows ready to begin work in the fall.
Marketing	<p>Continue marketing to introduce <i>Empowering Your Journey</i> to the university community.</p> <p>KCTL programming on the QEP and at the Faculty Development Conference</p>
UN 101, First Generation, and At Risk Students	Assess UN 101 pilot from the fall and make adjustments to course.

	<p>Develop student mentorship program for first generation cohort.</p> <p>Develop professional development programming in LS and UN courses.</p>
QEP Director	Hire a permanent QEP director (to replace the interim).
Professional Development Certificate Program	Develop new programming for the Professional Development Certificate Program. [ongoing]
Internship Coordinator	Hire an Internship Coordinator housed in the Center for CSPD.
Co-curricular Technology	Develop training for faculty and students to use co-curricular tracking technology (Suitable or Engage) to track high impact learning inside and outside the classroom.
Handshake	Develop faculty and student guides for using Handshake.
Assessment	<p>Continue collecting baseline data for assessment measures.</p> <p>Develop alumni survey to collect data related to employment and the pursuit of advanced degrees.</p> <p>Develop and add relevant questions to the Graduation Survey and Faculty Satisfaction Survey.</p>
General Education	Roll out marketing campaign for Gen Ed. Revive General Education Committee.
Year 0 – Fall 2024	
Internships	<p>Create “boot camp” programming for Preferred Internship program</p> <p>Offer programming related to preparing students to be successful in internships</p> <p>Create a clearinghouse for internship opportunities for W students.</p>

<p>UN 101, First Generation, and At Risk Students</p>	<p>Launch revised UN 101 with service-learning and civic engagement project, and Majors and Minors Fair.</p> <p>Pilot student mentorship program for first generation cohort.</p> <p>Pilot professional development programming in LS and UN courses.</p>
<p>Online Career Resource Center</p>	<p>Build online resources on website and Canvas, along with developing Handshake programming.</p>
<p>Faculty Fellows and Faculty Toolkits</p>	<p>Pilot Faculty Fellows and their creation of toolkits for use in curriculum across campus.</p> <p>Share the faculty toolkits at the end of the term.</p> <p>Select Faculty Fellows to continue developing Canvas faculty toolkits related to NACE competencies.</p>
<p>Student Services</p>	<p>Pilot service learning project as part of orientations and Blues Week programming.</p>
<p>ePortfolio/Portfolio</p>	<p>Faculty fellows develop a student mentorship program to assist students in creating portfolios/e-Portfolios.</p> <p>Faculty programming on how to use Handshake/Folio to create student ePortfolios.</p>
<p>Gen Ed</p>	<p>Work with Gen Ed Committee to embed NACE competencies into Gen Ed curriculum and develop reflective assignments.</p>
<p>High-impact Learning</p>	<p>Code attributes into Banner to designate high impact learning courses. Make courses searchable to students by those attributes on the course schedule.</p>
<p>Co-curricular Technology</p>	<p>Launch new or revised technology for faculty and students to track high impact learning.</p> <p>Promote technology adoption through campus programming.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Collect fall semester assessment data.</p> <p>Work with departments and program coordinators to develop QEP assessment measures in programmatic assessment of majors.</p>

	Pilot the revised alumni survey.
Year 1 – Spring 2025	
Professional Development Certificate Program	Develop the guidelines of the Professional Development Certificate Program
ePortfolio/Portfolio	Faculty Fellows launch a student mentorship program to assist students in creating portfolios/ePortfolios.
Online Career Center	Continue developing the online career center, along with developing Handshake programming. Launch interest inventory for students.
Faculty Fellows and Faculty Toolkits	Launch Faculty Fellows and their creation of toolkits for use in curriculum across campus. Share the faculty toolkits at the end of the term. Select Faculty Fellows to continue developing Canvas faculty toolkits related to NACE competencies.
Alumni Mentorship Program	Create guidelines for Alumni Mentorship Program for mentors and mentees. Develop alumni network of potential mentors and begin marketing the program to encourage participation.
Assessment	Collect spring semester and annual assessment data. Review assessment data and make changes and updates for the next academic year, including to the alumni survey. Share results of pilot alumni survey with the campus. Launch revised Graduation Survey and Faculty Satisfaction Survey. QEP assessments embedded in programmatic assessment of the majors.

	Write and publish annual QEP report.
Year 1 – Fall 2025	
Online Career Center	Launch the online career center on Canvas that is integrated with virtual and online Handshake resources and opportunities.
Professional Development Certificate Program	Pilot the NACE-aligned certificate program.
Alumni Mentorship Program	Pilot the Alumni Mentorship Program
Internships	Pilot the Preferred Internship Program
Student Services	Launch service learning project in orientation and Blues Week.
UN 101, First Generation, and At Risk Students	<p>Continue to assess revised UN 101 with service-learning and civic engagement project, and Majors and Minors Fair.</p> <p>Launch student mentorship program for first generation cohort.</p> <p>Launch professional development programming in LS and UN courses.</p>
Assessment	<p>Collect fall assessment data.</p> <p>Launch the alumni survey.</p> <p>Coordinate with the Gen Ed assessment point person and share results of Gen Ed annual assessment with QEP Committee.</p>
Year 2 – Spring 2026	
Internships	Launch Preferred Internship Program

Professional Development Certificate Program	Assess the pilot from the fall
Alumni Mentorship Program	Assess the pilot from the fall
Assessment	<p>Collect spring semester and annual assessment data.</p> <p>Share results of pilot alumni survey with the campus.</p> <p>Review assessment data and make changes and updates for the next academic year.</p> <p>Share results of the alumni survey.</p> <p>Write and publish annual QEP report.</p>
Year 2 – Fall 2026	
Professional Development Certificate Program	<p>Launch the NACE-aligned certificate program.</p> <p>Provide faculty development opportunities for campus regarding the certificate program.</p>
Alumni Mentorship Program	Launch the Alumni Mentorship Program
Assessment	<p>Collect fall semester assessment data.</p> <p>Conduct the alumni survey.</p> <p>Coordinate with the Gen Ed assessment point person and share results of Gen Ed annual assessment with QEP Committee.</p>
Year 3 – Spring 2027	
Assessment	<p>Collect spring semester and annual assessment data.</p> <p>Review assessment data and make changes and updates for the next academic year.</p> <p>Share results of the alumni survey.</p> <p>Write and publish annual QEP report.</p>

Year 3 – Fall 2027	
Assessment	<p>Collect fall semester assessment data.</p> <p>Conduct the alumni survey.</p> <p>Coordinate with the Gen Ed assessment point person and share results of Gen Ed annual assessment with QEP Committee.</p>
Year 4 – Spring 2028	
Assessment	<p>Collect spring semester and annual assessment data.</p> <p>Review assessment data and make changes and updates for the next academic year.</p> <p>Share results of the alumni survey.</p> <p>Write and publish annual QEP report.</p>
Year 4 – Fall 2028	
Assessment	<p>Collect fall semester assessment data.</p> <p>Conduct the alumni survey.</p> <p>Coordinate with the Gen Ed assessment point person and share results of Gen Ed annual assessment with QEP Committee.</p>
Year 5 – Spring 2029	
Assessment	<p>Collect fall semester assessment data.</p> <p>Conduct the alumni survey.</p> <p>Coordinate with the Gen Ed assessment point person and share results of Gen Ed annual assessment with QEP Committee.</p> <p>Begin writing the QEP Impact Report.</p>
Year 5 – Fall 2029	

Assessment	Collect spring semester and annual assessment data. Review assessment data and make changes and updates for the next academic year. Share results of the alumni survey.
Reporting	Submit the QEP Impact Report to SACSCOC.



Chapter 5: Assessment Plan

Empowering Your Journey relies on a two-part assessment plan. First, we assess the SLOs and then the programming around the QEP.

I. Student Learning Outcome Assessment

SLO	Method	Baseline Measurement	Criteria for Success And Frequency	Responsible Party
<p>SLO 1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of career readiness competencies appropriate to their academic disciplines and to their career goals.</p>	<p>Department / programs select relevant NACE competencies and measure student competency in those standards. When possible learning will be measured in gateway and Capstone classes.</p>	<p>2018-2019 Annual Assessment Report, 67.2% of university programs reported meeting Gen Ed Goals</p>	<p>5 YR Goal: 75% of programs with a major will report that students met their NACE aligned target(s) with positive growth annually</p> <p>Annually assessed</p>	<p>Academic program coordinators and QEP Director</p>

	Graduation survey	2021-24 Graduation Survey 3 year average, 86.7% students reported positive growth of career competencies on relevant questions	<p>5 YR Goal: 95% of students will report that they gained career competencies important to their discipline</p> <p>5 YR Goal: 25% of students will take a class that requires a high impact experience</p> <p>Annually assessed</p>	Director of Institutional Research & Assessment
	Number of students completing Professional Development Certificate program	New Report–will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	<p>5 YR Goal: 10% of students will complete career readiness certificate, with 3% annual growth</p> <p>Annually assessed</p>	Director of the CSPD

	Rubric applied to certificate program activities	2018-2019 Annual Assessment Report, 67.2% of university programs reported meeting Gen Ed Goals	5 YR Goal: 75% of participating students will achieve a satisfactory rating on rubric criteria Assessed fall and spring semesters	Director of the CSPD
	Number of classes coded with required high impact learning experiences	No direct measure of classes exists. New Report–will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 15% of classes will require high impact learning experiences Assessed fall and spring semesters	QEP Director
	Rubric applied to Preferred Internships	New Report–will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 95% of students will achieve a satisfactory rating on rubric criteria Assessed fall and spring semesters	Director of the CSPD
SLO 2. Students will be able to communicate effectively their career-readiness competencies.	Number of students completing ePortfolios, digital portfolios, or portfolios	New Report–will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 50% of students will create an ePortfolio, digital portfolio, or traditional portfolio Assessed fall and spring semesters	QEP Director

	Number of students completing Handshake	2023-4 data revealed that of the students who logged into Handshake, 7% completed a profile and 32% activated a profile	5 YR Goal: 50% of students will activate a Handshake profile, with 10% annual growth for completed and activated profiles Assessed fall and spring semesters	Director of the CSPD
	Interest from employers in W students on Handshake	2023-4 data revealed 0% interaction with employers	5 YR Goal: 10% of W Handshake users will interact with employer, with 2% annual growth Annually assessed	Director of the CSPD
	Rubric applied to certificate program activities	New Report–will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 75% of students will achieve a satisfactory rating on rubric criteria Assessed fall and spring semesters	Director of the CSPD

	<p>Department / programs select relevant NACE competencies and measure student competency in those standards. When possible learning will be measured in gateway and Capstone classes.</p>	<p>2018-2019 Annual Assessment Report, 67.2% of university programs reported meeting Gen Ed Goals</p>	<p>5YR Goal: 75% of programs with a major will report that students met their NACE aligned target(s)</p>	<p>Academic program co-ordinators and QEP Director</p>
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SLO 1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of career readiness competencies appropriate to their academic disciplines and to their career goals.

Academic Program Review of Majors: The QEP Director will work with all academic programs with a major to aid department faculty in selecting NACE competencies that align with program goals and curriculum. NACE rubrics available through Sutable will be used to assess NACE competencies so all departments and programs will be using the same pre-aligned rubrics. Faculty will select the NACE competencies that are most important for their disciplines and integrate evaluation of that NACE-aligned competency and benchmarks for student achievement and learning into their annual academic review process. Program coordinators and the Director of Institutional Research will work with the QEP Director to generate annual reports on whether academic programs have achieved their specific goals and benchmarks. For most academic programs, gateway and Capstone courses will serve the QEP goals well and the QEP Director will assist faculty in selecting formative and summative assessment measures of learning.

Graduation Survey: The Graduation Survey is administered annually to seniors and will include questions related to QEP goals. Competencies assessed in the Graduation Survey to create the benchmark data include the last three years and questions related to: Leadership, written communication, oral communication, awareness of national and global issues, technology, a critical thinking, and awareness of other philosophies, cultures, and ways of life.

Faculty Satisfaction Survey: The Faculty Satisfaction Survey is administered annually to all faculty and will include questions related to QEP goals. We will use the Graduation Survey to measure SLOs and program goals.

The QEP Director will work with ITS and the Office of the Registrar to code courses with high impact learning into the Banner system. This will allow the university to track both students enrolled in classes that require high impact learning and the number of courses which require high impact learning each semester. This coding will also allow students to search courses for specific high impact experiences when they register for classes.

The CSPD will connect students with internship opportunities and measure QEP goals using a rubric in those internships. The CSPD will also track student numbers in CSPD programming and utilize rubrics and assessments for programming.

SLO 2. Students will be able to communicate effectively their career-readiness competencies.

The assessment of this SLO will include measures from the Academic Program Review of Majors. Given the importance of embedding the QEP goals into the curriculum, measuring the QEP in formative and summative ways within the majors is of critical importance. We will track the number of students completing Handshake profiles and ePortfolios and will use a standardized rubric to assess ePortfolios with input from the MUW ePortfolio working group. Importantly, we also will be able to measure the amount of interaction and communication between students and employers in Handshake, which is one measure of the success of a student profile. Finally, we will utilize rubrics applied to CSPD programming to measure student learning.

II. Program Effectiveness Assessment

Outcome	Assessment Method	Baseline Data	Criteria for Success and Frequency	Responsible Party
1. Students will report increased engagement with career services.	Number of students who report using career services on Graduation Survey	2023-4 Graduation Survey, 18% of students reported engagement with Career Services	5 YR Goal: 75% of graduates will report they have visited the CSPD Center, with 15% growth annually Annually assessed	Director of Institutional Research & Assessment
	Number of Handshake users using career services Handshake survey	New Report and Program –will create annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 75% of Handshake users will report they engaged with the CSPD Center, with annual goal of an increase of 15% in Handshake users. Annually assessed	Director of the CSPD

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN QEP

2. Students will attend events/programs held by CPSD	Number of students who attend career readiness programs	2023-4, 420 (5.3%) students attended CPSD sponsored programs.	5 YR Goal: Number of students who attend career readiness programs will increase 50%, will annual increase of 10% Assessed in fall and spring semesters	Director of the CPSD
3. Faculty will report using toolkit resources to incorporate career readiness into classes	Number of courses using toolkits in Canvas	New Report–will reevaluate annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 15% of courses will use toolkits in courses, with annual growth of 3% Assessed in fall and spring semesters	QEP Director
4. Faculty will report satisfaction with the CPSD and QEP efforts	Faculty Satisfaction Survey (added question)	New Report–will reevaluate annual benchmarks based on first year data	5 YR Goal: 75% of faculty will report being satisfied with QEP and Career Services. Annually assessed	Director of Institutional Research & Assessment
5. Students will have access to high impact learning	Number of courses with required high impact learning	New Report–will reevaluate annual benchmarks based on first year data	5YR Goal: 15% increase in number of classes coded with high impact learning, with 3% annual growth	QEP Director

6. Students have support in accessing high impact learning	Number of scholarships to support high impact learning increase	No scholarships offered currently through CPSD.	5 YR Goal: 10% increase in number of scholarships that support high impact learning, with 2% annual growth	Director of the CSPD
7. Students report feeling prepared for employment or advanced degree	Graduation Survey	2021-24 Graduation Survey data, 87.9% of students feel prepared for employment	5 YR Goal: 95% of students report feeling prepared for employment, advanced degree, or next steps on Graduation Survey	Director of Institutional Research & Assessment
8. Alumni report they are well prepared for employment	Alumni Survey	2022 Alumni Survey (most recent), 81% of respondents reported being prepared for their first job	<p>5 YR Goal: 75% of respondents will report that they were well- prepared to adapt to the demands of the workforce</p> <p>5 YR Goal: 90% of respondents will report that they were well- prepared for their first job after graduating.</p>	Director of the CSPD and QEP Director

9. Gen Ed	Gen Ed faculty will report meeting benchmarks for Gen Ed learning.	2018-2019 Annual Assessment Report, 67.2% of university programs reported meeting Gen Ed Goals	5 YR Goal: 75% of Gen Ed and NACE aligned competencies	QEP Director
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Assessment of program effectiveness will include a mix of measures and the benchmarks reflect where we intend to be after full and complete implementation of the QEP. We will update the Graduation Survey and the Faculty Satisfaction Survey with specific QEP questions. We will measure student use of Handshake and student involvement in CSPD programming, as well as the students enrolled in courses that require high impact learning and the number of classes being offered that require high impact learning. In Canvas, we will track the use of faculty toolkits. We will also coordinate with the Gen Ed committee to track student learning and assessment of the Gen Ed.

An important component of program assessment will be updating the Alumni Survey. The Alumni Survey has been administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment every three years and has struggled with low response rates and limited reach. One new feature that the QEP will add to annual assessment work is updating the Alumni Survey with questions related to QEP goals and running the survey annually. Using Qualtrics, the QEP Director and QEP Committee will create and manage the survey. The Director of the CSPD will provide important support in marketing the survey to alumni and encouraging alumni participation. The QEP Director will share results of the alumni survey annually with campus.

The QEP Director will work with the Director of the CSPD and the MUW Foundation to increase scholarships to support high impact learning. This is one of the more ambitious goals of the QEP, but given the financial needs of students and the results of survey related to high impact learning, a focused campaign to build scholarship opportunities is needed.

Chapter 6: Supporting Budget and Resources

Mississippi University for Women has committed the necessary resources to initiate, implement, and complete the Quality Enhancement Plan. The QEP will be implemented through a mix of enhanced existing services and new services, practices, and activities, as well new and existing personnel. The QEP budget provides for one new position, and internship coordinator, who will be hired in the second half of Year 0. The Director of the QEP and the Faculty Fellows will be appointed from existing faculty and/or staff. Additional budget lines include professional development for Faculty Fellows, conferences for appropriate personnel (including SACSCOC conferences), supplies for supporting the QEP activities, funds to market the QEP to the campus, and funds to pay student mentors.

The Interim Director of the QEP is a faculty member who has a reduced teaching load and is paid an additional stipend for the QEP responsibilities. The permanent QEP Director will be appointed from within the faculty or staff and will receive comparable compensation. The QEP Director will report to the Provost/VPAA and will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the QEP, chairing the QEP Committee, preparing annual progress and assessment reports, and preparing the final QEP report to SACS.

Each college/school within the university will have a Faculty Fellow, who will work with the academic programs in the college/school to develop teaching modules and assignments within existing courses to help students develop and demonstrate their competency in the NACE skills emphasized in the QEP. The Faculty Fellows will receive course release and additional compensation.

In August 2023 MUW filled the vacant position of Director of Career Services and Professional Development (CSPD). The CSPD Director will play a significant role in implementing parts of the QEP, such as providing workshops and certification in NACE competencies, serving as a resource for faculty fellows, training student mentors, and guiding students through the Handshake career software system. The CSPD is housed in Whitfield Hall and has adequate space, equipment, and resources to support the QEP. The CSPD is also a member of NACE.

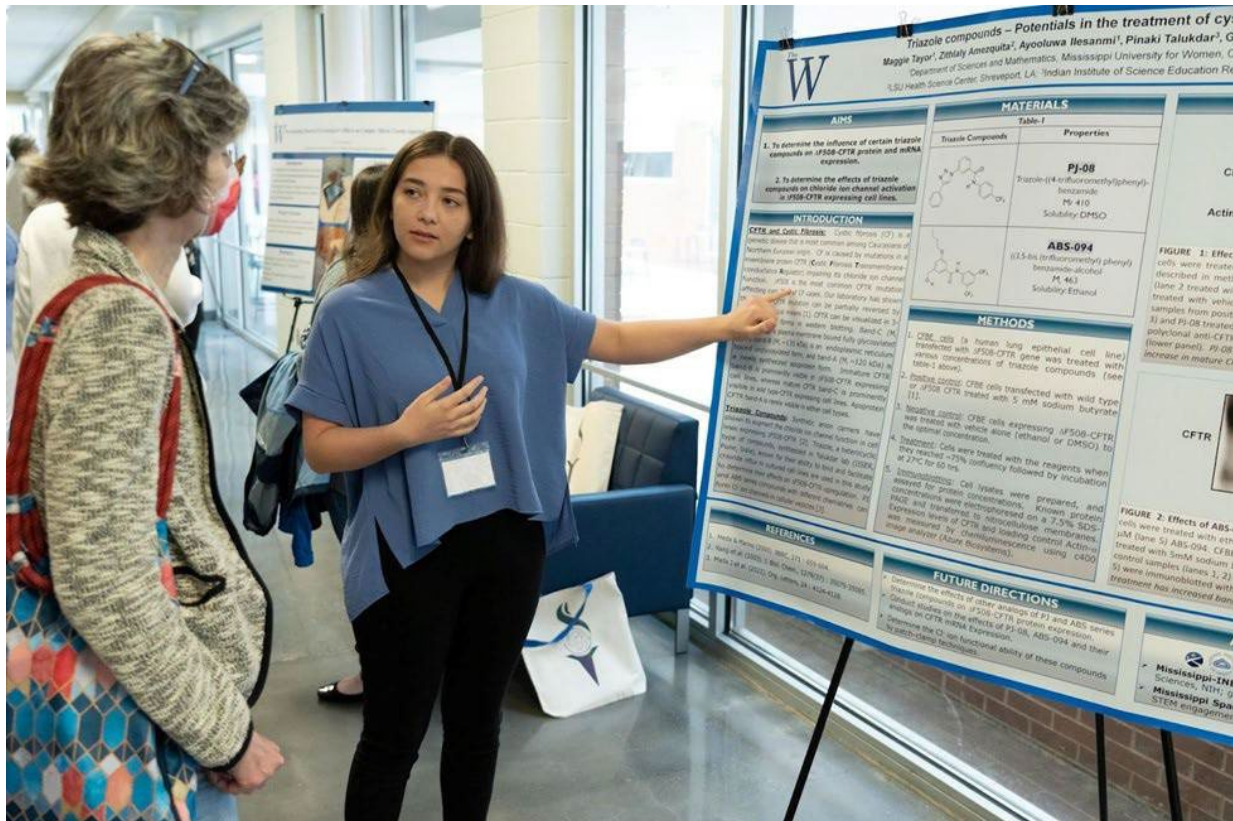
The university will hire an internship coordinator who will be responsible for working with academic programs to provide a central source for finding internships and other high impact experiences, for providing professional training for students before they begin internships, for helping students to assess their experiences, and for marketing the high impact opportunities to the campus. The internship coordinator will be housed in the CSPD, but the coordinator's primary responsibility will be to support the activities of the QEP.

In addition to implementing career-focused assignments within students' academic programs, the QEP will draw on many existing campus resources to ensure students have a successful experience. For example, the Office of Undergraduate Research, which is housed in

Fant Library, provides campus-wide opportunities to participate in undergraduate research. The Office provides small grants to students and maintains a database of undergraduate research internships. The Student Success Center will enhance the first-year experience and support programs to provide service-learning opportunities to students and to provide peer mentors to aid first generation and at-risk students. The Office of Student Affairs will offer—and track—student extracurricular and service learning experiences.

The QEP will make use of the university’s existing learning management system (Canvas), which has the capability of supporting co-curricular programming, record keeping, and portfolio development for students, as well as the Student Affairs software system (Engage) that allows students to maintain records of their co-curricular and extracurricular activities. A software upgrade will permit Canvas and Engage to connect. These systems also serve online students. All programs of the QEP will be available to MUW’s online students.

Finally, the QEP will make use of assessment measures that are already in place. For example, QEP-focused questions will be added to existing General Education and Academic Program assessments and to existing student, faculty, and alumni surveys. Existing courses that include high-impact experiences will be coded in DegreeWorks so that assessment data on participation can be drawn directly from the system. The Director of Institutional Research will assist the QEP Director with implementing assessment measures and collecting assessment data.



QEP Program Budget

Budget Category	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Salary and Benefits</i>						
QEP Director	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$12,250	\$13,250	\$15,000	\$15,000
QEP Assoc. Director	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$10,500	\$11,500	\$13,000	\$13,000
Adjunt/Overloads	\$14,000	\$29,000	\$29,000	\$33,000	\$33,000	\$35,000
Internship Coordinator	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$51,000	\$52,000	\$54,000	\$55,000
Faculty Fellows	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
<i>Operating Expenses</i>						
Student Mentors	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Professional Development	\$5,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Conference Travel	--	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Supplies and Materials	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Marketing	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,500
Software (Suitable)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$103,750	\$153,250	\$154,250	\$159,250	\$166,000	\$169,000

Budget Narrative Addendum

Revisions to the Budget Following the On-site Committee Visit

1. We have filled the position of Internship Coordinator; the start date is August 12, 2024.
2. The Provost has appointed an Associate Director of the QEP who will focus on the General Education coordination and assessment. This faculty member will receive a reduced teaching load and a stipend. That cost is now included in the budget.
3. The university has a budget line for hiring adjunct faculty or paying overloads to faculty. The QEP Director, Associate Director, and the Faculty Fellows will have reduced teaching loads for their QEP responsibilities. Depending on course demands, the courses left open by the reduced loads will need to be covered by adjuncts. Since this is already a budget line, we did not include the cost in the original budget. The on-site team suggested we include that cost as part of the cost of the QEP budget.
4. At the time of the site visit, we had anticipated using current software systems to support the programs and assessments of the QEP. However, we were also exploring other options. We have now decided to purchase "Suitable" for supporting the QEP. This software will support the work of the Student Support Center and its QEP functions, but most importantly Suitable now is merged with the NACE competencies and it also now integrates with Canvas, our learning management system. Suitable will enable us to easily maintain student QEP records and to record data to conduct the QEP assessments. The cost of Suitable is now included in the budget.
5. Also, on the suggestion of the on-site team, we increased the anticipated expenses over the five-year period of the QEP.

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