

Part V. QEP Impact Report

1. Title and brief description of the institution's Quality Enhancement Plan

Western Kentucky University received reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in December 2005; this followed an on-site visit that occurred in April 2005. As part of the reaffirmation of accreditation process, WKU developed and received approval of its Quality Enhancement Plan, *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*.

This QEP theme was chosen because it reflected WKU's long tradition of providing experiential and context-based learning opportunities for students, while also complementing the university's vision and mission. WKU has long believed that the more students are actively engaged in and by a broad educational experience, the richer their learning will be and the greater their potential to contribute to society in positive ways. This concept envisions the university as the center of a broader learning community in which students learn to think critically, serve generously, and lead responsibly.

The QEP theme complements WKU vision of becoming *A Leading American University with International Reach*. Moreover, it provides a concrete framework for extending, focusing and realizing the institution's mission, which states:

Western Kentucky University prepares students to be productive, engaged and socially-responsible citizen-leaders of a global society. It provides research, service and lifelong learning opportunities for its constituents. WKU is responsible for stewarding a high quality of life for those within its reach.

The QEP establishes a single overarching learning goal for students at WKU (WKU 2005), namely that:

Students will engage with communities other than their own in purposeful learning activities that explicitly address their capacity and responsibility to contribute to society in positive ways.

This goal is linked to three attendant student learning outcome (WKU 2005):




















- Outcome 1. Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant issues in community or society.
- Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate respect for diversity of peoples, ideas and cultures.
- Outcome 3. Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.

By linking the curriculum to issues and opportunities from the broader community, the QEP is intended to promote increased student learning and the development of educated citizens. WKU's approach places students' educational training in a practical and engaged context, which we believe to be the most potent approach to educating student-citizens in the modern world.

2. List of initial goals and intended outcomes of the QEP

WKU identified ten Action Items (Table 1) designed to impact student learning in ways directly applicable to targeted QEP student learning outcomes, and held ourselves accountable for demonstrating measurable positive change in our student learning outcomes as a result of implementing these action initiatives. In addition, WKU committed to support additional activities and initiatives to assure administrative infrastructure and advance the professional development of faculty and staff members in ways necessary to achieve the targeted learning outcomes.

Table 1. QEP Action Items and Student Learning Outcomes. WKU's three targeted QEP student learning outcomes are being addressed through implementation of 10 Action Items. Symbols indicate student learning outcomes addressed by each Action Item.

Action Item	QEP Student Learning Outcome		
	1. Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.	2. Students will demonstrate respect for diversity of peoples, ideas, and cultures.	3. Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens in a global society.
1. Create an engagement-based University Honors Program that will serve as a role model of engaged learning and attract academically-talented students nationwide.			
2. Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics, and ethical aspects of the discipline into major programs of study and/or general education.			
3. Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with the knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.			
4. Ensure availability of experiences relevant to students' degree programs that include consideration of the relationship of the discipline and its practitioners to society and community.			
5. Initiate civic or social involvement, discussion of social responsibility, and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience.			
6. Orient Winter, May, and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for study abroad and other experiential learning opportunities to all groups of students.			
7. Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to promote, record, and document students participation in experiential and service learning activities as well as educate students to the value of active learning.			
8. Establish comprehensive points of entry for students' involvement in community service, service learning, and leadership activities.			
9. Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social, or civic issue during their tenure at WKU.			
10. Institute or orient first-year activities to initiate students to university opportunities and expectations and highlight passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment.			

3. Discussion of changes made to the QEP

As initially implemented, all academic major programs, undergraduate and graduate, were charged with addressing each of the three QEP student learning indicators in ways that were relevant to their individual missions and students. We recognized that our diversity of disciplines required a diversity of approaches. We therefore instituted a phased-in implementation, whereby major programs were expected to develop and begin addressing at least one QEP student learning outcome each year beginning in 2006-2007; all programs were expected to be addressing all three QEP outcomes by 2008-09. Programs were free to choose the order in which they began addressing QEP outcomes.

Since that time, we have found it necessary to modify this charge with respect to graduate programs. It was recognized from the outset that some graduate programs might find it difficult to integrate all QEP outcomes into their programs. We felt this would be especially problematic for professional degree programs, and this indeed proved to be the case. Many programs felt that, while one or more QEP outcomes were complementary to their mission and curriculum, incorporating all three outcomes would require them to step outside their core educational mission in ways that were not genuine, merely to comply with an assessment requirement. This is inconsistent with three of the five guiding principles for assessment that we established in the original QEP document (WKU 2005. *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society: A Quality Enhancement Plan for Western Kentucky University*, p.32. <http://www.wku.edu/qep>), namely

- a. Expect all departments and units to translate university QEP priorities into specific goals, activities, and student learning indicators relevant to their particular discipline and/or mission;**
- b. Recognize that the assessment process is not static, but will evolve over time;**
- c. Ensure that student learning, not ease of assessment, remains the goal that drives our actions and priorities.**

Consequently, we made the decision to modify our original plan and require graduate programs to each address at least one of the QEP student learning outcomes (of their choosing); undergraduate programs are still expected to address each of the three QEP student learning outcomes. We believe that this modification strikes an appropriate balance, bringing QEP principles into the domain of graduate education while not encumbering programs with a mandate to address learning outcomes that could not be integrated into the curriculum in an authentic way.

It had also been our intent to treat General Education as an academic program, and to ensure that the core curriculum was aligned with QEP student learning outcomes. In 2007-08, General Education was charged with developing and incorporating assessments reflective of QEP student learning outcome 2. Since that time, however, several factors have arisen that have caused us to defer implementation of this charge.

In Spring 2008, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs appointed a General Education Review Task Force to evaluate and (as deemed applicable) make recommendations for a redesigned General Education program at WKU. This action was based on two factors: (1) the most recent comprehensive review of WKU's General Education program had been completed in 2001, and (2) issues arising at the statewide level with respect to transfer necessitated that public institutions in Kentucky take steps to better align General Education across the system.

Both the internal and statewide review processes are ongoing. At the statewide level, Kentucky public institutions have agreed to align their General Education programs within the AAC&U Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) framework (AAC&U 2008. *College Learning for the New Global Century*. <http://www.aacu.org>). The LEAP document proposes four essential learning outcomes for students, including (1) knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, (2) intellectual and practical skills, (3) personal and social responsibility, and (4) integrative learning (AAC&U 2008).

These outcomes are well aligned with our QEP student learning outcomes. Internally, the General Education Review Task Force is working to translate LEAP outcomes into a curriculum plan that both facilitates seamless transfer as well allows for establishment of institutional uniqueness in the core curriculum. Once the review processes have been completed, likely over the next year, we will be in a position to implement an assessment plan for General Education that incorporates QEP student learning outcomes as originally intended.

4. Description of the QEP's direct impact on student learning

WKU has approached the question of documenting the QEP's direct impact on student learning from multiple perspectives. At the most basic level, we have increased opportunities for students to become actively engaged in and by their educational experience. We have completed or made significant progress on implementation of each of the 10 Action Items outlined in the QEP. Moreover, all academic departments are addressing QEP student learning outcomes within the context of their programs; in addition to providing a basis for program-level assessment of learning, this has created a wealth of opportunities for student engagement that are authentic and relevant to students' particular programs of study.

By 2011-12, all departments will have implemented these strategies through at least two assessment cycles. At that point, we will be in a position to directly examine evidence for enhanced student learning within individual academic programs; we recognize that these represent the most potent tests of our QEP effectiveness. Up to this time, we have focused our attention on institutional-level indicators of enhanced student engagement and student self-reported perceptions of their resultant learning. All measures show clear, positive impacts on student learning.

Investments in support of the QEP

WKU has invested considerable financial and human capital in support of the QEP. A key component of this commitment is establishment of the Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility (ICSR) to provide the academic infrastructure necessary to place students' community engagement activities within the broader learning context. ICSR offers courses and programs focused on issues of stewardship and social responsibility, promotes faculty capacity for community-based scholarship, and administers the Class Legacy Project and WKU's involvement in AACSU's American Democracy Project. We have invested \$160,000 in one-time dollars to establish a physical home for the ICSR, and \$134,000 in recurring funds to sustain its capacity to support the QEP; this latter investment includes both an operational budget and 3 FTE faculty/staff lines.

We have supported the development of student engagement initiatives within academic departments and educational support units through the Provost's Initiatives for Excellence (PIE) Program. This competitive grant program provides funding for activities that support innovation in approaches to teaching and learning. Priority is given to proposals that advance student engagement and the QEP, civic and social responsibility, leadership development, internationalization, and sustainability. PIE funds are intended as venture capital, serving as a fiscal bridge until an activity can be fully tested and/or become self-sustaining; in some cases, initiatives that show significant promise of impact earn recurring funding through PIE.

Since implementation of the QEP began in Fall 2005, PIE has provided full or partial funding support for 166 proposals that have directly supported student engagement and QEP priorities. This represents an investment of \$641,564 by the Office of Academic Affairs; departments, colleges, and units provided significant cost-sharing towards these initiatives as well. Table 2 provides a summary of the investments in advancing student engagement through the PIE program.

Table 2. Investments in the QEP through the Provost's Initiatives for Excellence Program. Shown are number of funded proposals and dollars allocated by engagement category and academic year through 2009-10.

Engagement Category	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	Total
Student Engagement/QEP	31 \$103,066	29 \$92,615	16 \$57,122	10 \$49,495	6 \$8,157	92 \$310,455
Civic/Community Engagement	8 \$48,915	6 \$25,470	3 \$18,700	5 \$27,823	5 \$8,806	27 \$129,714
Leadership Development	1 \$12,000	5 \$39,850	2 \$4,000	3 \$21,910	1 \$2,990	12 \$80,750
Diversity/Internationalization	11 \$29,686	5 \$14,742	4 \$12,861	1 \$1,091	4 \$19,934	25 \$78,314
Sustainability Education	1 \$448	5 \$19,083	1 \$850	1 \$16,650	2 \$5,300	10 \$42,331
Total	52 \$194,115	50 \$191,760	26 \$93,533	20 \$116,969	18 \$45,187	166 \$641,564

Involvement of students in engagement activities

The Student Engagement Activities Transcript (SEAT) provides evidence that students are taking advantage of the learning opportunities presented. Since its roll-out in fall 2007, the database has grown to 101,830 records, each representing an engagement experience recorded for an individual student. Table 3 provides a summary of the types of engagement experiences recorded in the SEAT.

The SEAT data show the level of student participation in cultural, global and diversity experiences has increased steadily over time. Several large-scale initiatives have contributed to this pattern. An emphasis on global learning opportunities has led to a three-fold increase in the number of students undertaking study abroad since QEP implementation began, from 145 in 2004-05 to 583 in 2009-10. In addition, WKU has established or expanded ongoing international service learning programs in Kenya, Belize, Ghana and Ecuador; these programs engage significant numbers of students from multiple disciplines each year. Finally, WKU was one of eight institutions chosen to participate in the 2007-08 American Council on Education Internationalization Laboratory; through this program, faculty and staff members have defined strategies to promote internationalization across the university and worked to establish overarching student learning goals related to internationalization. WKU has developed an Emphasis in Global Studies transcript designation, built on a 30 hour curriculum that includes courses with a significant international component, foreign language study, and a required international experience.

Student engagement in volunteerism, service-learning, and citizenship have also been areas of particular emphasis. While the SEAT data show a somewhat cyclical pattern, reflecting patterns of experiential emphasis associated with national presidential elections (McElroy and Cobb, 2010. *Planning and Changing* 41(1/2), 18-41), more students have been engaged in civic experiences that may not be fully reflected in the SEAT. The number of students engaged in academic service learning has increased from 2,133 across 79 course sections in 2006-07 (the first year for which data are available) to 3,227 across 195 sections in 2009-10. In addition, since QEP implementation began, WKU has launched an undergraduate certificate program in Citizenship and Social Responsibility, and proposed a master's program in Social Responsibility and Sustainable Communities.

In general, the SEAT data are indicative of an increased emphasis on engaged teaching and learning by both students and faculty/staff. Faculty and staff members are being more intentional about creating or promoting the value of experiential learning opportunities, and students are responding. The majority of these activities are tied to course curricula and assignments; students are often asked to reflect upon the experiences they have had, and discuss what they have learned from them within the context of QEP student learning outcomes. We believe the opportunity to reflect upon and contextualize these activities is contributing significantly to students' abilities to perceive and articulate the learning gains they have made during their WKU Experience (see student self-report data below).

Table 3. Growth and Distribution of Records in the Student Engagement Activities Transcript. Data in each cell represent number of individual records by engagement category and year. QEP student learning outcomes addressed by engagement categories are indicated, as appropriate.

Engagement Category	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	Total	% Increase
Professional Development/Research, Creative Activities (QEP 1)	1,756	5,194	3,374	10,324	92.1
Cultural, Global and Diversity Experiences (QEP 2)	2,183	3,056	3,490	8,729	60.0
Leadership Development (QEP 2)	668	556	675	1,899	1.0
Volunteerism, Service Learning and Citizenship (QEP 3)	621	1,590	651	2,862	4.8
University-Wide Engagement	7,657	11,519	16,790	35,966	119.2
Employment	170	223	201	594	18.2
Clubs, Organizations and Teams	3,464	4,074	3,341	10,879	-3.6
Honors, Awards, Scholarships	7,581	10,192	12,804	30,577	68.9
Total	24,100	36,404	41,326	101,830	71.5

Increases in student perceptions of learning

We are tracking changes in students' perceptions of their learning using our internal WKU Student Engagement Survey (WKUSES). This survey was developed in 2002 to complement data derived from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). WKUSES is distributed each year to juniors and seniors across all disciplines, and contains 45 items used to gauge students' involvement in and perceived benefit from diverse aspects of an engaged teaching and learning paradigm.

The spring 2005 administration of WKUSES represents our baseline year; this administration preceded the beginning of QEP implementation in fall 2005. The 2005 data were subjected to principal components analysis of the correlation matrix derived from the original data. Resulting factors were rotated using the Varimax procedure. Component loadings of individual items on rotated factors were used to categorize the derived axes. The raw data were projected onto the axes defined by the rotated factors to evaluate the distribution of scores within and among departments and colleges.

Each year, raw WKUSES data are projected onto the 2005 factors. This allows changes in mean scores to be tracked over time; in addition to providing information at the institutional level, these data can be tracked by college and/or department. Tests for significant increases in factor scores relative to the 2005 baseline can be conducted using ANOVA. Our multivariate approach to assessing institutional goals is described more fully in McElroy and Cobb (2010).

Factor analysis of WKUSES data indicate that students' perceptions of their learning have increased significantly since implementation of the QEP began in fall 2005. 34 of 45 (75.6%) individual WKUSES items show significant increases in 2010 relative to 2005 baseline values. 23 of 45 items can be directly related to QEP student learning outcomes; of these, 15 (65.2%) have increased significantly between 2005 and 2010. These results indicate that our directed focus oriented around QEP student learning outcomes is rapidly paying dividends in terms of students' perception of the value of their WKU Experience.

Multivariate analysis identified 10 factors of engagement. These factors account for over 61% of the total variation in the 2005 data set. Seven of these factors directly reflect QEP student learning outcomes. Of these, four factors have shown significant increases between 2005 and 2010. A summary of these factors and their patterns of change are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Engagement Factors Derived from Factor Analysis of 2005 WKUSES Data. Derived factors represent combinations of original university-wide items. The last column summarizes important variables contributing to each factor. Note that the course-related citizenship factor showed a significant decrease in mean value in 2007 relative to 2005, reflecting cyclical emphasis on civic behavior related to the timing of national elections (McElroy and Cobb 2010).

Factor	% total variation	Significant ($p < 0.005$)	Important variables
Major course metaskills (QEP 1)	10.06	2010	Acquiring work knowledge, writing/speaking effectively, thinking critically, applying theories, working with others
Gen Ed metaskills (QEP 2)	8.52		Acquiring broad general education, writing effectively, thinking critically, understanding diverse cultures
Advising	8.38	2008-2010	Overall quality, availability of advisor, advisor's help, advisor's knowledge
Independent scholarship (QEP 1)	6.94	2006-2010	Participated in research projects with faculty, presented a project/paper, worked with faculty outside of class
Non-course related community involvement (QEP 3)	6.19		Performed volunteerism, meetings of professional organization, leadership training, hours spent doing volunteer work
Academic climate	5.52	2006-2010	Discussed career plans with faculty, challenged by expectations of faculty, discussed ideas with others outside of class
Course-related community involvement (QEP 3)	4.90	2007-2010	Courses promoted citizenship, and/or required community involvement
University Experience (QEP 3)	4.02	2010	UE contribution to college experience, UE contribution to campus and community involvement
Course-related citizenship (QEP 3)	3.75	2007 (-)	Coursework contribution to voting, coursework contribution to contribution to community welfare
Attendance vs. hours worked	3.03		Participation in WKU athletic events, number of hours worked per week

Analysis of results at the college level provides clear evidence of the impact of our QEP implementation to date. For example, the Independent Scholarship factor has increased significantly over the course of QEP implementation, and is directly reflective of our efforts to address QEP student learning outcome 1. The data demonstrate that WKU students perceive themselves to be more engaged in independent research and other scholarly pursuits under the direction of faculty members than prior to implementation of the QEP. More important, this engagement encompasses a much broader array of disciplines.

In 2005, only Ogden College of Science and Engineering (OCSE) showed a reported level of engagement in independent scholarship above the university mean, by 2010, however, all six academic colleges had means above the 2005 university mean; students' reported level of engagement in scholarly activities increased in every college. When developing the QEP, we committed to building on pedagogical strengths that existed in colleges across our university, and replicating those best practices in other colleges. Our goal was to offer students similar opportunities for high-impact engagement regardless of their study discipline. OCSE has a long tradition of engaging students in meaningful research activities. Through an intentional focus on helping students 'apply [their] knowledge and training to address relevant issues in community or society,' students across the university are now gaining experience as practitioners of their disciplines to a degree not seen prior to QEP implementation.

These results are complemented by positive changes in the Major Course Meta-Skills factor. This factor captures the perceived influence of courses in students' major discipline to development of critical reasoning and problem-solving skills. In 2005, three of six colleges were above the university mean (as might be expected); in 2010, all six college means were above the university average prior to QEP implementation. This suggests that departments across the university are successfully placing students' learning in a more practical, applied context.

Other factors also show evidence of value-added gains by students. While the General Education factor did not show a significant difference at the institutional level between 2005 and 2010, means scores in five of the six colleges improved over that time period. Similarly, five of six colleges showed improvements in mean score on the University Experience factor; here, five colleges showed 2010 means above the 2005 baseline.

Increases in QEP student learning outcome response variables

Beginning in 2006, we incorporated four questions into the WKUSES survey designed to capture information related to students' perception of their learning relative to targeted QEP student learning outcomes. The intent was to provide a set of holistic, institution-wide indicators of students' perceptions of our progress in creating an engaged learning environment. Specifically, these items ask students:

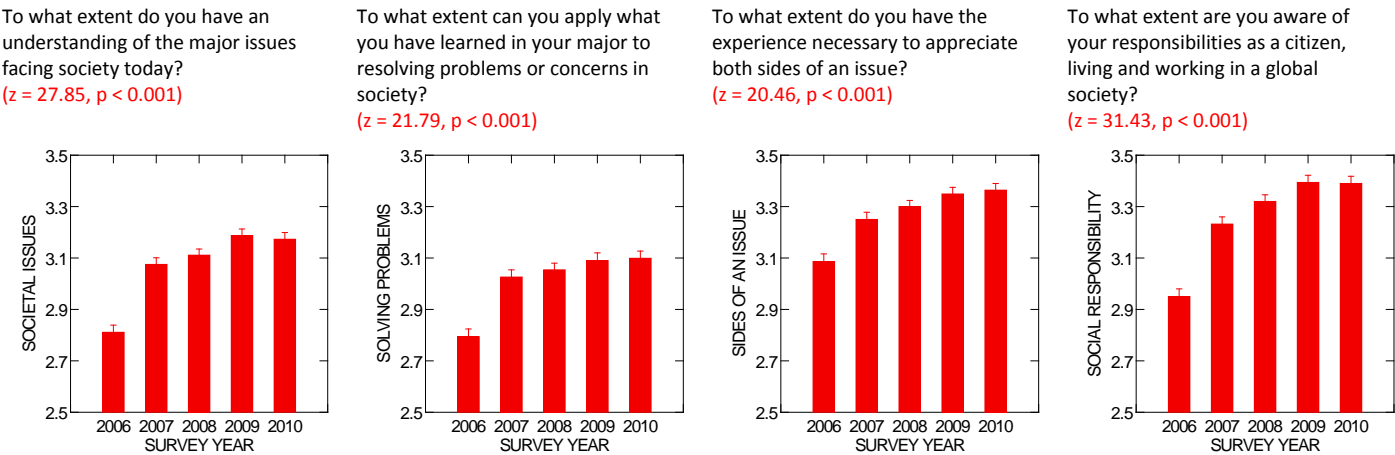
- 1. To what extent do you have an understanding of the major issues facing society today?**
- 2. To what extent can you apply what you have learned in your major to resolving problems or concerns in society?**
- 3. To what extent do you have the experience necessary to appreciate both sides of an issue?**
- 4. To what extent are you aware of your responsibilities as a citizen, living and working in a global society?**

Each of these response variables shows strong, statistically significant positive changes (Figure 1). The greatest change was seen in response variable 4, evaluating students' perceived understanding of their responsibilities as global citizens. This is striking and somewhat unexpected, as the social responsibility outcome is perhaps the most challenging for academic programs to translate and incorporate within the context of the majors. We believe this change reflects a broader shift in the academic climate at WKU, as a result of our codifying academic priorities around QEP student learning outcomes.

Even response variable 2, related to students' perceived ability to apply their knowledge and training to solve problems, showed statistically-significant positive change within two years. This is noteworthy, as this area is one in which WKU has always placed strong emphasis (particularly in the natural, social and behavioral sciences); the fact that this variable shows such dramatic change is indicative of the power of intentionality in implementing engaged learning across the university community.

More generally, our student cohorts are reporting increasingly greater awareness of key societal issues, enhanced capacity to apply their knowledge and skills in addressing societal concerns, increased appreciation of diverse perspectives, and a greater sense of social responsibility and accountability. The fact that these increases are associated with significant increases in students' level of involvement in engagement activities, supports the accepted view that integration of educational best practices should result in at least perceived gains in students knowledge, skills and perspectives (e.g., Chickering and Gamson 1987, *AAHE Bulletin* 39(7): 3-7; Kuh 2001, *Change* 33(3): 10-17; Carini et al. 2006, *Research in Higher Education* 47(1): 1-32).

Figure 1. Change in Mean Responses to QEP Student Learning Outcome Response Variables from WKUSES Survey. Responses to all items are on a four-point scale. Values in parentheses indicate the number of standard deviation units of change from 2006 to 2010 followed by degree of statistical significance (z scores, p values). Error bars shown are ± 2 SE.



Unanticipated outcomes of the QEP

Analysis of WKUSES data indicates that students perceive an enhanced academic climate at WKU since the beginning of QEP implementation; the Academic Climate factor showed a significant increase each year relative to the 2005 baseline year. The Academic Climate factor is driven by variables associated with the degree of interaction and expectations among students and faculty members outside the classroom (McElroy and Cobb 2010). In particular, the following WKUSES items showed the highest loadings on (correlations with) this factor:

- U24. As a student at WKU, how often have you discussed career plans with a faculty member?
- U25. As a student at WKU, how often have you been challenged to meet the expectations of faculty?
- U26. As a student at WKU, how often have you discussed ideas from your classes with others outside of class?

These individual survey items increased by 10.41, 14.84, and 12.19 standard deviation units, respectively, from 2005 to 2010. Table 5 summarizes the positive change seen in the Academic Climate factor since 2005.

While not specifically targeted by the QEP, enhancement of the academic culture at WKU is likely the result of pedagogical strategies employed by faculty members and departments to engage students with more discrete outcomes in mind. For example, involving students in independent scholarly and creative activities under the direction of faculty members represents a key approach utilized by academic programs to address QEP student learning outcome 1; such individualized apprenticeships establish direct accountability on the part of students as well as facilitates one-on-one discussions of their professional development and career goals. Similarly, increased emphasis on collaborative, project-based experiences fosters ongoing reflection among student team members and extends the opportunity for learning beyond the classroom setting. Regardless of the exact source, the ancillary benefits we see are evidence of a strengthened environment for learning at WKU.

Table 5. Increase in the Academic Climate Factor at WKU. Values in column 2 represent university-wide mean factor scores + 1 standard error (SE). Mean factor scores for 2005 are scaled to 0.000. z scores indicate the number of standard deviation units of change in means relative to the 2005 baseline value. Generally, a value of $z \geq 2$ can be considered statistically significant.

Survey Year	Mean +SE	z Score
2005	0.000 + 0.035	0
2006	0.148 + 0.036	4.09
2007	0.186 + 0.037	5.02
2008	0.218 + 0.037	5.91
2009	0.308 + 0.041	7.49
2010	0.223 + 0.038	5.87

Future Assessment of QEP Student Learning Outcomes

Ultimately, direct evidence for enhanced student learning as a result of the QEP will come through positive documented changes in QEP-related student learning outcomes within individual academic programs. On an annual basis, undergraduate and graduate programs collect and analyze assessment data using instruments and rubrics defined in the outcomes assessment plans. Data are analyzed longitudinally to identify strengths and weaknesses of student cohorts across the dimensions of the assessment instruments. These results in turn are used by the program coordinators and faculty members to close the loop and develop strategies or initiatives to improve the program. Closing-the-loop strategies include curricular modification, mode of delivery, and/or departmental advising and mentoring programs, as well as continuous refinement of assessment rubrics.

Since 2002, the Division of Academic Affairs at WKU has used an online planning and assessment database to facilitate outcomes assessment. This online process allows department heads and deans to review and (as necessary) refine outcomes assessment plans for programs under their direction. The Assistant Vice President for Academic Enrichment and Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research provide additional oversight and support to program coordinators and units. In 2009-10, WKU adopted the Digital Measures platform as the means for capturing and maintaining outcomes assessment and action plans. This integrated system offers several distinct advantages that improve the planning and assessment process. First, program coordinators, department heads, deans, and the Assistant Vice President for Academic Enrichment and Effectiveness have real-time access to planning and assessment documents of units and programs under their direction. Second, the system offers the ability to generate assessment reports that track change in performance indicators across multiple academic years, thus facilitating trend analysis. Third, the data stored in Digital Measures can be more readily integrated into the Academic Program Review process. Finally, the integrated nature of the database allows for direct integration of closing the loop activities derived from outcomes assessment into unit action plans.

Academic programs have been charged with developing authentic, locally-relevant learning outcomes that address institutional QEP student learning outcomes; these outcomes have been incorporated into the ongoing outcomes assessment process described above. As noted above, implementation of QEP student learning outcomes represented a phased-in process; by 2011-12, all academic programs will have developed and assessed their QEP-related learning outcomes through at least two assessment cycles. At that point, we will be in a position to directly examine evidence for enhanced student learning within individual academic programs, as we have done since 2002 for other program learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, we can examine the range and diversity of ways that academic programs have interpreted and applied QEP student learning outcomes to their curricula and students. Faculty members and programs utilize independent projects and capstone experiences, project-based learning, internships and practica, and diverse means of community engagement to develop students' knowledge, skills and perspectives regarding their study discipline and its relevance to current problems or issues in society. Means of assessment include multidimensional rubrics, reflective essays or exit interviews, and assessments of learning resulting from students' engagement in curricular and co-curricular experiential learning activities (including study abroad, service-learning, and community engagement). A sample of QEP-related learning outcomes is provided in Table 6. In addition to tracking evidence for increased student learning over time, faculty members and programs will continue to refine these and other outcomes, as well as their assessment, to more fully capture direct impacts of the QEP on student learning.

Table 6. Sample of student learning outcomes developed by academic departments and programs.

Department	Learning Outcome	QEP Outcomes Addressed
Sociology	Undergraduates will consider themselves to be proficient in analyzing and understanding societal behavior.	QEP 1
Engineering	Graduates can design a system, component, or process to meet desired needs, including the consideration of both technical and non-technical issues and applicable standards and constraints.	QEP 1
History	Students will be able to provide historical perspective on a current issue facing our society.	QEP 1
Kinesiology, Recreation and Sport	Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate professional and theoretical concepts in practical and experiential ways in conjunction with professional organizations.	QEP 1
Art	Student portfolios will exhibit creative strategies that effectively serve personal or client intentions.	QEP 1, 2
Economics	Students will demonstrate their ability to provide an accurate economic interpretation to current events.	QEP 1, QEP 2
Educational Leadership	Candidates will demonstrate responding to, and influencing political, social, economics, legal, and cultural context.	QEP 2
Communication Disorders	Students will observe and interact with community elders to increase knowledge of geriatric issues, and to gain respect and empathy for this population.	QEP 2
Music	Students will demonstrate proficiency in musicianship and the application of analytical and reflective thinking processes through performing music literature representative of historical periods and world cultures.	QEP 2
Mathematics	Students will be aware that mathematics was developed by diverse peoples from various cultures around the world.	QEP 2
Art	Students will acknowledge increased sensitivity to diversity issues due to their studies in visual arts.	QEP 2
Finance	Finance graduates will be aware of ethical issues in business decisions and the impact of ethical behavior on the local and global economy.	QEP 2
Political Science	Graduates will understand and appreciate the rich fabric of political ideologies and thoughts that are shaped by cultural differences.	QEP 2
Marketing and Sales	Students will demonstrate an ability to understand and function in an international marketplace.	QEP 2
Communication	Students will demonstrate excellence in an organizational presentation focusing on social responsibility in a global society.	QEP 3
Journalism and Broadcasting	Students will demonstrate that they understand and can apply First Amendment principles and the law as appropriate to professional practice.	QEP 3
Teacher Education	Through personal responses to articles, short stories, and poetry, students will conceptualize and demonstrate a personal understanding of the (1) definitions of being literate; (2) privileges of being literate; (3) demonstrations/behaviors of being literate, and (4) myths regarding language and culture.	QEP 3
Biology	Students will examine scientific problems, issues, or hypotheses from a global perspective.	QEP 3
Public Health	Students will evaluate environmental and occupational health risks associated with water, air, and land resources, and develop and communicate solutions to the risks for diverse human health and environmental protection.	QEP 1, QEP 3
Psychology	Students can apply the knowledge gained from their training to complete a basic or applied research project that conforms to recognized ethical principles and contributes to the understanding of behavior.	QEP 1, QEP 3