

Engaging Students for Success In a Global Society

A Quality Enhancement Plan for
Western Kentucky University

Implementation Plan 2005-2010



Submitted as part of the
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Reaffirmation of Accreditation Process

04 March 2005

AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE PRESIDENT OF WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

This document outlines Western Kentucky University's commitment to enhancing the academic quality of the institution. We have organized our efforts around the broad theme of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*. **We specifically target increases in student learning through a five-year plan to engage students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*.** This concept envisions the university as the center of a broader community in which students learn to think critically, serve generously, and lead responsibly. We will target 10 action initiatives that will directly enhance student learning. We will further support this endeavor by instituting a number of initiatives to enhance our institutional and personnel capacity to promote engaged learning. Our intent is to produce graduates with both the capacity to excel professionally in a global environment as well as the commitment to respect and contribute to society and the world in which they live.

Western has a long tradition of providing experiential and context-based learning experiences for our students. **We believe 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.** That said, a number of internal and external factors, including rapid enrollment growth unmatched by state appropriations, increased breadth of distance education programs, and the need to increase retention and graduation rates have caused us to rethink how best to provide inspiring engagement earning opportunities for our students in all disciplines. We are not the same institution as just ten years ago and, as we approach our centennial year, it is time for us to rededicate the creative energy of our faculty and staff towards an engagement paradigm that will build on those many things we already do well while continuing to add significant value to students' *Western Experience*.

Our plan is ambitious and, we believe, goes well beyond the expectations placed upon us by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaffirmation process. We have taken seriously the challenge to use the Quality Enhancement Plan as a vehicle for driving institutional growth, believing this best advances our goal of becoming a comprehensive institution of national prominence. We are confident that, as this plan comes to fruition, our students will broaden their base of knowledge and deepen their perspectives about their place in society. At the same time, our university will be transformed. It is our hope and expectation that Western will come to be known as

A place where engaged learning inspires academic excellence and social responsibility.



04 March 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Western's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) theme of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society* is based on the premise that students who are more actively involved in their education will learn more, and thus be more successful during their educational careers and beyond. If we can increase the proportion of students who are meaningfully engaged during their education, we will ultimately enhance students' learning and the quality of their educational experiences, which will help to advance Western toward its vision of becoming a leading comprehensive university nationally.

We believe that systematically incorporating relevant societal issues into students' educational training, in forms such as (a) active learning approaches and multidisciplinary coursework, (b) applied scholarship, service learning, leadership and other experiential learning opportunities, and (c) increased commitment to promoting internationalism and appreciation for diverse ideas, cultures and peoples, we will place students' learning in a more practical and professionally-oriented context demanded by today's global marketplace. At the same time, this approach will advance students' understanding of their place in the world and the role of their discipline in modern society.

Foundation and Core Philosophy

The QEP theme was developed as a means of extending, focusing, and realizing aspects of the university's mission stated in its strategic plan, *Challenging the Spirit*.

Western Kentucky University prepares students to be productive citizens of a global society and provides service and lifelong learning opportunities for its constituents.

The university's mission statement reflects our aspiration to prepare our students, who are largely from our immediate geographical region, for challenges they may face in the broader world. The university's mission also includes a commitment to being an active partner in the community and the world of which we are a part. The university's strategic plan, *Challenging the Spirit*, includes a statement of core values that further emphasizes the institutional focus on intentional efforts to develop students' capacity "to be informed, engaged, and dedicated citizens."

Our foundation for student learning is built on three core educational values:

- 1. Student-Centered Education:** All members of the university community – faculty, administrators, support staff, and board members – are committed to creating an institution of quality centered on the growth and development of students.
- 2. Engaged Learning:** Because education takes place everywhere and all the time, it is important both to create an exciting learning environment on campus and to extend opportunities for significant learning experiences into the community and the wider world. Active participation in learning, engaged citizenship, service-driven leadership, and committed stewardship are fundamental components of the outstanding educational experience we strive to provide.
- 3. Disciplinary Expertise within an Interdisciplinary Learning Context:** Western expects students to apply intellectual rigor to the exploration of a range of disciplines and to build a broad foundation of knowledge and experience.

As a comprehensive institution, we feel it is incumbent upon us to develop students' knowledge, skills and abilities within their primary fields of study, while also providing them with a broad, liberal background of knowledge and experience. In a related way, we strive to empower students with opportunities to undertake personal exploration and growth as part of their university education, and to develop their sense of social responsibility and worldview. In the broadest sense, we seek to produce graduates who think critically, serve generously, and lead responsibly.

QEP Concept

Implementation of our QEP will be organized around a number of broad action initiatives designed to engage students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*. This concept envisions the university at the center of a broader community in which students can both learn and contribute. Through these action initiatives, we will work to realize our central QEP learning goal:

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

This goal is linked to three attendant student learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

Over a period of five years, the university will implement new action initiatives directly tied to the three targeted student learning outcomes. **We will hold ourselves accountable to SACS for demonstrating measurable positive change in our student learning outcomes as a result of implementing these action initiatives.** At the same time, the university will support additional activities and initiatives to assure administrative infrastructure and advance the professional development of faculty and staff in ways necessary to achieve the targeted learning outcomes.

By linking the curriculum to issues and opportunities drawn from the broader community, the plan promotes increased student learning and the development of educated citizens. This approach places students' educational training in a more practical and more engaged context as the most potent approach to educating student-citizens in the modern world.

Targeted student learning outcomes include students' knowledge, skills, behavior and values. As such, the learning, competitiveness and potential for success of our graduates will be enriched. In addition, our plan will establish a culture of engagement at Western that will propel us toward our institutional goal of becoming a comprehensive institution of national prominence.

Implementation

QEP learning outcomes have been placed in a curricular context, with desired **goals and indicators that are to be faculty owned, developed by and relevant to individual units' particular contribution to the overall university strategic priorities.** As such, academic resources will be brought to bear on the success of the QEP without compromising overall academic effectiveness and efficiency.

The university will establish QEP leadership to coordinate implementation and assessment of the plan. The Leadership Team will consist of a small number of individuals from relevant units, and will be coordinated by an individual operating out of the Office of the Provost. The Leadership Team will facilitate development of annual implementation priorities, make recommendations regarding funding for QEP initiatives, and help individuals and units develop student learning programs that advance QEP goals.

Personnel and unit evaluation, planning and outcomes assessment procedures will be aligned with QEP goals and priorities. This will ensure that all individuals and units share accountability for the success of QEP initiatives. **Recognition and reward systems will be linked to success in advancing QEP goals. The university has committed significant resources to advance academic quality, with special emphasis on facilitating QEP implementation.**

We have identified 10 initial actions designed to impact student learning at Western. These are listed in no particular order of importance. Direct implementation will be supported by activities that establish associated institutional infrastructure or human capacity.

Action 1: Create an engagement-based University Honors Program that will serve as a model of engaged learning and attract academically-talented students nationwide.

Action 2: Incorporate ethical aspects of the discipline and professionalism standards into major programs of study and/or general education.

Action 3: Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with the knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.

Action 4: Ensure engagement experiences are relevant to students' degree programs and promote awareness of the relationship of the discipline to society and the broader community.

Action 5: Initiate civic or social involvement, along with discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy, in the Freshman Experience.

Action 6: Develop Winter, May and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for study abroad and other experiential learning opportunities to diverse groups of students.

Action 7: Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to promote and track students' participation in experiential and service learning.

Action 8: Use the Alive Center, the Leadership Center, Student Life, Career Services, Advising Center and Freshman Experience as points of entry for students' involvement in community service, service learning, experiential education and leadership activities.

Action 9: Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort addresses one significant university, social or civic issue during its tenure at Western.

Action 10: Institute or orient first-year activities to initiate students to university opportunities and expectations and highlight the passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment.

Assessment

Efforts will be assessed by linking student learning goals and targeted learning outcomes to specific performance indicators. While the university will establish expectations regarding goals to be addressed and outcomes to be targeted by each action initiative, specific performance indicators will be developed by individual units. **Thus, individual academic programs will serve as the direct points of accountability for documenting positive impacts on student learning.** This will ensure that goals and outcomes are faculty-owned, locally-relevant, and well-integrated with the curriculum.

In assessing and documenting results, existing planning, evaluation and outcomes assessment processes will be utilized. There will be continued reliance on measures such as NSSE and WKUSES, as well as examination of additional instruments, such as MSLQ, to quantify students' perception of the learning environment and their growth as intentional learners.

The QEP Leadership Team will also oversee an annual reflective assessment of our progress, involving extraction of relevant data from institutional planning, evaluation and outcomes assessment procedures. The QEP Leadership Team will also be responsible for generating a five-year review and plan assessment.

Chronology of the Plan's Development

Development of the QEP began in Fall 2002 with the Provost's charge to the university SACS Leadership Team to identify an appropriate theme for Western's QEP that would enhance student learning. The chosen theme of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society* was recommended by the SACS Leadership Team to the Provost, who in turn recommended that theme to the President. Once the theme was selected, a QEP Steering Committee was appointed to draft the QEP document, calling on both internal and external data and resources. This committee began its work in Fall 2003, and since that time has worked closely with the SACS Leadership Team and the Provost to develop the QEP.

The QEP Steering Committee included faculty, staff and students representing all facets of the university community. Academic and academic support units were surveyed as to their approaches and challenges to promoting engaged learning, and invited to provide comments and propose specific initiatives throughout development of the QEP. The plan's goals and objectives were shared with faculty and staff in Fall 2003. Discussions of the direction, goals and objectives, and strategies for implementation and assessment continued throughout the course of the 2004-2005 academic year. Draft sections of the QEP have been available to all university personnel on the university's dedicated QEP web site (<http://www.wku.edu/qep/>).

From the onset, we chose to view the SACS Quality Enhancement Plan requirement as an opportunity to affect the university aspirational and transformation goals by further enhancing quality of student learning. The ambitious theme, *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*, was chosen with that spirit in mind. The QEP Steering Committee took seriously its multiple tasks: to develop a plan with integrity that moves the institution forward and meets the SACS requirements; to be inclusive, building grassroots support and institutional ownership; to focus on outcomes that enhance student learning.

The Committee's first efforts generated a plan that went through multiple points of review, ultimately being distilled and refined into this current document. It was particularly challenging to ensure the requirements of SACS for the QEP were met while also capturing the momentum and commitment reflected in the ambitious scope reflected in the work of the QEP Steering Committee. Like all struggles that involve people with institutional commitment to enhance student learning and passion for ideas, the process was arduous and filled with spirited debate. In the end, we coalesced around a document that we believe balances our need to set forth a well-defined approach to advancing student learning while retaining a strong commitment to challenge all facets of our institution to higher levels of excellence.

In broadest terms, the university has identified a set of focused student learning objectives, which in turn have been translated into a set of recommendations and proposed modes and time lines for implementation, with identified points of accountability. Our plan is ambitious and forward-looking, yet is well-grounded in those principles and traditions that have long defined the *Western Experience*. We enter this process with the benefit of strong support among all facets of the university community.

Part I. Foundational Elements



PREAMBLE

"...to be a live school and to impart to [our] students a burning zeal to do and be something."

Henry Hardin Cherry

Since its inception in 1906, Western Kentucky University has been defined by a desire to positively and personally impact the lives of its students. Western faculty and staff place the highest premium on providing opportunities for students to succeed, both in their coursework and beyond. Individual faculty, units and divisions have each been highly successful at providing opportunities for growth within their respective arenas. Our undergraduates routinely gain notoriety as research scholars, creative artists, athletes and entrepreneurs. Among our alumni, Western can point to educators, physicians, and public servants of the highest reputation.

This student-driven focus is evident in the university's mission statement and strategic planning process. Western's mission statement identifies our principal objective: "preparing students to be productive citizens of a global society..." Central to this mission are a set of core values, which include "encouragement of meaningful and active partnerships among students, faculty, staff and constituents to strengthen the learning environment" and "commitment to providing a collegiate experience that prepares students to be informed, engaged, and dedicated citizens." The strategic plan commits the university to increasing student learning through activities which include setting specific targets for "curricular and [co-] curricular involvement that increase students' global understanding" and "student engagement in activities that enhance education (e.g., internships, leadership experiences, community service, undergraduate research, cultural events)." There can be no doubt that the Western model places a high premium on experiential opportunities for learning and self-exploration.

While much has been done, it is now time to build on our successes and take the next step in the process. We must establish a more exact **institutional awareness** of what we hope to achieve with respect to student learning, and how our activities are complementary to that objective. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) represents the logical thematic framework for continued growth of the institution and the university community at large. Besides addressing our goal of enhancing student learning in a systematic manner, adopting a common perspective will help foster a strengthened university culture and increased appreciation for the intrinsic value of higher education. But what should that common theme be ?

Western long ago adopted Henry Hardin Cherry's aphorism that "*The Spirit Makes the Master.*" Nevertheless, it remains unclear to many exactly what defines the *Spirit* of which Cherry spoke. Cherry was correct in seeing that achieving mastery of one's career and life was more than just acquiring vocational training or a set of tangible accomplishments; he knew that true success involved a significant intangible component. It is time for Western to identify a clear sense of the *Spirit* we hope to cultivate in our students and in ourselves, and to place this vision in a modern, practical context.

To that end, we cast Cherry's *Spirit* in terms of engagement. If we can cultivate a pattern of meaningful engagement in our students, we will imbue them with the *Spirit* that will enable them to become true masters of themselves, their professions and of their place in society. This in turn will propel a continuing trend of enhanced quality among our graduates and advancement of the university's reputation and prominence as an institution focused on student learning and subsequent achievement.

The goal of this plan is to stimulate a **systems change** at Western. We do not set out to simply establish new policy or impose additional burdens on faculty and staff; rather, we hope to recognize and promote those things we already do well, and to build upon those strengths to help us improve further. By directing a process of self-reflection organized around a common theme, we hope to enable faculty and staff to work better, not harder and, at the same time, harness the energy, resources and opportunities available throughout the university community to catalyze the continuous enhancement of educational quality and to positively impact student learning. To that end, we define our mission around the tripartite theme of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society.*

What do we mean by engagement ?

Engagement is the **process** by which we will achieve our objective of enhancing student learning at Western. By systematically engaging students in meaningful ways, we can elevate the value of a Western education, as well as our ability to deliver that education in ways that are relevant to the goals and expectations of each student. We see engagement as a means by which students can cultivate in themselves a perspective that will serve them well throughout their lives. To tap into this potential for self-motivated exploration, we must identify the root process, independent of specific examples.

To our way of thinking, **engagement stems from knowledge, sustained commitment, and ultimately passion for the goal.** This passion for learning, aesthetics or service on behalf of a cause helps to shape individuals' worldview and promote their professional and personal development. Through what manner of engagement can this growth be best manifest in students ?.

For non-traditional or first-generation college students, enrolling in university coursework may represent a significant degree of engaged learning beyond what they have experienced previously. Other students might define the opportunity to participate in meaningful independent research or creative activity within their disciplines as the type of learning engagement that sets them apart from their peers. Still others may demonstrate their passion and commitment to excellence through civic or community service activities. The nature of engagement will thus vary among individuals, as well as during the lifetime of an individual; however, the feature common to these myriad of forms is that meaningful engagement is transformative, opening both minds and doors to success. We have adopted a Taxonomy of Engagement to organize the many ways engagement can be brought to bear on student learning. This taxonomy, along with a lexicon of terms relating to engaged learning, is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

It is incumbent upon the university to promote the intellectual growth, personal and professional success of students, faculty and staff, and to create a climate that fosters the opportunities and rewards for growth. In this way, the university serves as an incubator for a pool of thoughtful minds.

How do we define and recognize meaningful engagement ?

In defining meaningful engagement, we can not simply derive a list of activities and opportunities available to students. Nor should we restrict our view of engagement as being the purview of academic training, student life programming, or the world beyond the gates of campus. Engagement involves all of these and more. The challenge is then to organize these disparate aspects of engagement around a shared vision of that which is embodied in the *Western Experience*.

To determine what constitutes engagement in the sense intended, we must ask three essential questions:

- a. Does the activity allow students to step outside the traditional boundaries of their experience and/or training ?
- b. Does the activity encourage personal exploration, enhance students' professional skills and understanding, or broaden their worldview ?
- c. Does the activity have the **potential to be transformative** in the lives of students ?

If we can answer yes to each of these questions, then the activity in question can be seen as complementary to our shared vision, and to the overarching objective of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*.

What do we mean by success ?

Student **success** is the **outcome** we will use to judge our effectiveness. A truly engaged student population will create a positive, synergistic force for continued learning, reflection and personal awareness. If students can place their academic training and co-curricular activities within the broader context of the world of which they are a part, this will enhance their ability to succeed in that environment.

It is essential to realize that, **while some aspects of enhanced student success may be tangible and quantifiable, others are not.** Indicators of academic success, including retention and persistence rates, standardized test scores, graduation, certification and placement success rates are potentially valid measures of the impact of increased efforts at engagement. Complementary to these performance-based approaches, however, are qualitative assessments of students' perceptions of their Western experience and the impact it may have had on their personal lives; such impressions might be derived through the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) and Western Kentucky University Student Engagement Survey (WKUSES), and could indicate success even students that may not persist to graduation. Finally, there may be aspects of success that do not manifest themselves until years after students complete their coursework.

Thus, in defining success, we must consider both the professional and personal advantages derived by students during their Western experience as well as their subsequent capacity to contribute to society in a meaningful way throughout their lives. We can view students as being successful if they have developed the knowledge, skills, behaviors and values that allow them to become productive citizens in a democratic society. It is the responsibility of the university to provide and help students take advantage of opportunities that advance their personal and professional aspirations, while also explicitly highlighting the capacity, even responsibility, of educated citizens to contribute to their communities and society.

What do we mean by a global society ?

The **global** nature of modern society and of the challenges we face daily form the requisite **context** in which our plan resides. Being a productive citizen requires each of us to confront and appreciate diverse opinions and complex questions and, in turn, necessitates an understanding of the genesis of this complexity.

As with engagement and success, there is not a single definition of global to which we can point or orient our actions. Diversity obviously has a spatial component; to that end, exposing students to different cultures through international exchange and by developing a diverse university community represents a critical element of the global context we must recognize and establish. However, we also recognize that a diversity of opinions can (and, arguably, should) exist within a single community, reflecting such things as generational differences, socioeconomic factors, ethnicity, and differing political viewpoints. Likewise, as scholars we know that the most vexing personal, professional and societal problems we encounter are so challenging because they require integrated solutions that synthesize information from various disciplines and perspectives. The conceptual thread running through these examples is that **a global society is integrative.**

It is the job of the university to build this awareness in students, to cultivate an appreciation for this diversity in all its forms, as well as develop their capacity to be competitive in a global society. We must create a climate for living and learning that embraces alternative viewpoints, rewards integrative thinking, recognizes those factors which both define and unite us, and promotes free thought. In this way, the university serves as a model for society at large.

REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

It is apparent from an initial investigation of sources that work on the subject of student engagement is a relatively recent phenomenon. Although the “best practices” literature extends in volume backward at least to the 1980s, the concept of student engagement as it is now being applied--largely toward the notion of preparing more societally-invested, responsible citizens—has come about since 2000. The completion of the first National Survey of Student Engagement in 2001 provided the first incentive for focused examination of the subject, and in the past three years the rate of considered investigation has greatly accelerated. A bibliography of sources relating to best practices in student engagement is provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Although there is now a fair amount of material on the subject of student engagement available on the free Web (see the list of some relevant items given below), recency of the movement is reflected in the fact that the preponderance of related material at this point resides in the serial literature. There appears to be little of import in book form as yet; it is highly likely, however, that within a year or two monographic treatments will begin to appear in greater number as research programs begin to produce larger-scale results. One exception to the preceding is that quite a few theses and dissertations have been appearing on the subject since at least the mid 1990s; some of these are listed in [Appendix 2](#).

Examination of the four bibliographies presented in [Appendix 2](#) (on books, theses and dissertations, magazine and journal articles, and free Web sources, respectively) suggests a clear division of approach (or perhaps a “two-pronged attack”) on the subject of student engagement and how to achieve it. The majority of the literature deals with best practice approaches to improving the quality of in-class instruction as a vehicle for getting students more engaged in their education. However, there is also considerable interest being taken in looking at the problem from a more global perspective.

The “best practices” advocates feel that students will become more engaged in their education--and thus eventually become more enthusiastic and “better” citizens--with the direct application of more insightful instruction methods in the classroom. Most of the best practices literature considers various means of introducing and applying particular teaching techniques, on the premise that these will lead to a more engaged form of learning. However, the newness of the connection between instructional best practices and engagement in the larger scale sense leaves this as an assumption only at this point. Neither does there seem to be much if any literature on how to go about implementing best practice strategies on a mass scale; i.e., in a fashion directly relatable to assessment and planning, and to the interests of teaching faculty. It is important that this should begin to take place, as the subject bears not only on engagement *per se*, but also on related matters such as retention.

Other investigators have been using what might be termed an “ecological” approach to the analysis of the causes of disengagement. This literature examines a variety of possible non-classroom-centered influences, but seems to key especially on two kinds: demographic factors (race, wealth, etc.) and campus site factors (availability and strength of student support and housing and community programs, campus attractiveness and accessibility, quality of campus information dissemination operations, etc.). Ecological influences on the student’s sense of engagement have so far been relatively neglected in favor of best practices approaches to the question. This asymmetry overlooks the fact that the classroom is by no means the only element of the college experience that is significant to students, nor the only possible way of exposing students to the concepts and activities that promote success in citizenship and in life in general.

One cautionary note: The term “student engagement” is frequently applied in the literature to indicate any kind of in-class involvement resulting from the application of a particular technique (i.e., a “best practice”), and it is nearly impossible at present to separate this connotation from the broader one looking toward the training and eventual emergence of socially responsible and productive individuals.

CHRONOLOGY OF WESTERN'S QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Development of a QEP began in 2002 with the charge to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Leadership Team to identify a list of potential themes. The first step was to review the university's mission, strategic planning initiatives over the past several years, results from administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and trends in enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

Since 1998, Western has operated under a comprehensive strategic plan oriented towards building the university's reputation as a comprehensive institution of national prominence. *Challenging the Spirit* comprises five strategic goals.

- Goal 1. Increase student learning:** Promote learning that fully develops individual potential and produces graduates who can successfully live, work, and contribute to society in a global context.
- Goal 2. Develop the student body:** Attract, retain, and graduate an increasingly diverse, academically-talented, and achievement-oriented student population.
- Goal 3. Assure High Quality Faculty and Staff:** Attract, retain, and support high-quality faculty and staff.
- Goal 4. Enhance Responsiveness to Constituents:** Respond to educational, social, cultural, and economic development needs through increased outreach, applied scholarship, service, and innovative opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Goal 5. Improve Institutional Effectiveness:** Commit to continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness and efficiency in all programs and services.

As one means of assessing our efforts to fulfill our mission and realize strategic goals, we have collected and utilized data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) on a periodical basis. Results from surveys of Western students in 2001 and 2003 revealed that, while seniors rated Western higher than predicted on "Enriching Educational Experience," they rated the university lower than predicted on "Active and Collaborative Learning," "Student Interactions with Faculty Members," "Level of Academic Challenge," and "Supportive Campus Environment." Moreover, in both years, fewer than one-fourth of seniors reported that their college experience had contributed to their voting behavior in local, state, and national elections, and just over a third reported that their college experience had had an impact on knowledge, skills, and personal development in contributing to the welfare of their community.

These results added to concerns that rapid enrollment growth (an increase of 4000 students in a five-year period) had weakened the institution's ability to provide the support for student engagement activities believed to be necessary to develop productive citizens of a global society. Because of unfavorable economic conditions, this growth came largely without concomitant increases in state appropriations, placing additional burdens on existing faculty, staff and institutional capacity. Moreover, institutional leaders were determined to increase retention and six-year graduation rates, and these objectives were emphasized as well by the statewide coordinating body, the Council on Postsecondary Education.

A few institutional initiatives related to these concerns had already been planned or were in the process of being implemented, so the requirement to develop a QEP as part of SACS reaccreditation efforts was timely. Some examples of student learning and service activities either begun or planned at the time the QEP theme was under development are the Applied Research and Technology Program, the American Humanics Project, the Global Entrepreneurship Program, the Leadership Studies Program, the Alive Center (A Local Information and Volunteer Exchange), and the American Democracy Project. Thus, the decision was made to build on these and other efforts with a QEP targeting engagement, student achievement, civic responsibility, leadership, and/or cultural and international awareness.

Three potential QEP themes were considered: (a) Increasing student engagement, (b) Promoting student success, and (c) Preparing students to be productive citizens in a global society. Over a period of several months the SACS Leadership Team sought input from the faculty, academic departments, the Student Government Association, the Council of Academic Deans, the University Senate, department heads in the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Services, and the Administrative Council. Based on comments

received in the various forums, the Leadership Team prepared a summary of each potential theme's strengths and weaknesses, ultimately recommending to the Provost a theme that combined elements of all three: *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*. After reviewing the summary and recommendation, the Provost in turn recommended this theme to the President, who made the final decision to approve the theme.

Once the theme was approved, the Provost appointed a QEP Steering Committee to further develop the plan itself. This 37-member committee included faculty, staff and students representing all major constituencies of the university community (see [Appendix 3](#)). Beginning in Fall 2003, the Steering Committee held meetings, participated in retreats, and divided into subcommittees to advance its work.

The QEP Steering Committee began by building consensus among the committee members regarding definitions of "engagement", "success" and "global society." Then, for the purpose of developing and implementing the plan, it adopted two guiding operational perspectives: (a) No New Reports; and (b) No More With Less. The point was to signal our goal of maximizing positive effects on students while minimizing the negative impacts on faculty, staff and administration. The committee challenge was to develop an ambitious plan and simultaneously market it in a way that built institutional ownership. The broadly constituted committee demonstrated to the community that this was an institutional effort.

Like any new or additional endeavor, the QEP Steering Committee recognized that it faced predictable institutional inertia. Consequently, the committee chose to find ways to recognize and celebrate the good things that we were already doing, and worked to enhance, promote, expand and be more intentional about advancing these agendas.

The committee also modeled the behavior it wanted to encourage throughout the university community. For example, committee members gathered data regarding current examples of student engagement on campus in non-traditional ways. Rather than asking, faculty, departments, units, colleges to report on their current activities, each of the committee members interviewed their respective constituencies. We did this for several reasons: (a) to establish a baseline of data; (b) to raise the institutional awareness regarding engagement; and (c) to create a situation where each unit on campus was intentionally introspective regarding their ongoing activities. It is noteworthy that the QEP Steering Committee members assumed the majority of the work collecting data, thereby modeling our philosophy regarding "no new reports."

The committee recognized that one of the major challenges in developing a QEP is demonstrating the connection of the theme to student learning. The concept that students, who are actively engaged in their education, learn more and are more successful than those less-engaged students is well supported in the literature. Consequently, the Steering Committee recognized the opportunity to document engagement activities as one measure of learning; however, we chose to go beyond this process-based assessment model in two major ways. First, as we expect students who are engaged in their educational experience to gain knowledge, develop skills, change their behavior, and deepen their values, the committee resolved to develop performance indicators associated with knowledge, skills, behavior and values as key elements of our QEP assessment. Second, the committee recognized the opportunity to establish and fund an internal research group to help find better ways to refine measurements of learning, while also providing an outlet for interested faculty and staff experts to participate in the scholarship of engagement while contributing to the validity and strength of our assessment paradigm.

In February, 2004, Dr. Margaret Sullivan was brought in as an external consultant to, in part, review the status of the QEP during its initial development phase. In June 2004, ten persons (administrators, faculty, staff, and one student) traveled to Snowbird, Utah, to attend the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Greater Expectations Institute, "Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement," with the objective of further refining the goals and activities to be included in the QEP. At this workshop, the basic framework of the QEP was finalized, and the committee began work on strategies for introducing the QEP to the university community during the Fall 2004 semester.

A two-page summary of the draft QEP was presented to faculty and staff at the Opening Convocation of the Fall 2004 semester. During that same week, members of the Steering Committee met with Department Heads and Directors, as well as faculty from the individual colleges to discuss the QEP and its relevance to particular units, and sponsored a four-hour workshop for faculty and staff representatives

from most units on campus. The purpose of these efforts was to assist individuals and units across campus in becoming educated about the goals and purpose of the QEP, and to help initiate conversations within individual units about the QEP. Over the subsequent three months, the Steering Committee sought out feedback, suggestions and proposals from units across campus to advance the plan's growth into a mature document.

In November 2004, the Steering Committee presented a revised QEP draft to the university SACS Leadership Team. Throughout the next three months, these groups worked to hone presentation of the plan, and specifically begin to articulate discrete, quantifiable, and meaningful student learning indicators related to our student learning goals and desired learning outcomes.

Both the SACS Leadership Team and the QEP Steering Committee have worked deliberately over the past two years to build broad consensus regarding the potential of the QEP to significantly improve students learning. The chosen theme is harmonious with our institutional character and history, and has consequently been received with optimism by the university community.

A CONTEXT FOR ADVANCING STUDENT LEARNING THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

The Western Philosophy

Western's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) theme, *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*, was developed as a means of extending, focusing, and realizing aspects of the university's mission stated in its strategic plan, *Challenging the Spirit*.

Western Kentucky University prepares students to be productive citizens of a global society and provides service and lifelong learning opportunities for its constituents.

The university's mission statement reflects our aspiration to prepare our students, who are largely from our immediate geographical region, for challenges they may face in the broader world. The university's mission also includes a commitment to being an active partner in the community and the world of which we are a part. The university's strategic plan, *Challenging the Spirit*, includes a statement of core values that further emphasizes the institutional focus on intentional efforts to develop students' capacity "to be informed, engaged, and dedicated citizens."

We base our approach to meeting this challenge on the following premise: **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.** Our foundation for student learning is built on three core educational values:

- 1. Student-Centered Education:** All members of the university community – faculty, administrators, support staff, and board members – are committed to creating an institution of quality centered on the growth and development of students.
- 2. Engaged Learning:** Because education takes place everywhere and all the time, it is important both to create an exciting learning environment on campus and to extend opportunities for significant learning experiences into the community and the wider world. Active participation in learning, engaged citizenship, service-driven leadership, and committed stewardship are fundamental components of the outstanding educational experience we strive to provide.
- 3. Disciplinary Expertise within an Interdisciplinary Learning Context:** Western expects students to apply intellectual rigor to the exploration of a range of disciplines and to build a broad foundation of knowledge and experience.

As a comprehensive institution, we feel it is incumbent upon us to develop students' knowledge, skills and abilities within their primary fields of study, while also providing them with a broad, liberal background of knowledge and experience. In a related way, we strive to empower students with opportunities to undertake personal exploration and growth as part of their university education, and to develop their sense of social responsibility and worldview. **In the broadest sense, we seek to produce graduates who think critically, serve generously, and lead responsibly.**

A Shared Perspective

That higher education should cultivate students' professional skills as well as their intellectual capacity and social maturity is not a revolutionary idea, but rather a foundation of the university as a human construct over the past thousand years (Buarque 2004, Laurens 2004). In addition to the validation of history, there exist ample contemporary research data to support the assertion that engaged learning in a liberal educational context produces educated citizens (see [Appendix 4](#)). While the tenets and learning outcomes that result are long-established, the world in which this learning is set is very different from past generations (Laurens 2004), and the university must respond to this highly dynamic and global context (Buarque 2004). A recent report by the Greater Expectations Institute (GEI; 2002; Leskes 2004) identified

“a contemporary liberal education reinvigorated by becoming more practical and more engaged” as the most potent approach to educating student-citizens in the modern world.

Engagement has long been recognized as a vital part of effective education. At the most basic level — participation vs. passivity — it fits Bruner and others’ constructivist theory of learning: learners use their experiences to create a type of understanding uniquely relevant to them. If, as many studies show, this sort of knowledge is especially vivid and likely to be retained, emphasizing appropriate forms of student engagement will lead to improved learning.

Among the engagement techniques that have proved most effective are involving students in designing and conducting experiments; having students give presentations on others’ ideas, with an emphasis on conceptual understanding; having students synthesize a variety of disparate views; and using “authentic” activities: that is, activities similar to the tasks students will be expected to perform in the “real” world. Other possibilities for engaged learning supported by the literature include: travel, especially that associated with academic training; service activities appropriate to a particular discipline; multi-cultural exposure and experiences, and work-study programs and internships. Each of these strategies encourages students to become involved with a community other than their own and to make sense of the experience.

Motivation is another factor clearly related to educational achievement, and studies show intrinsic motivation (which arises within the self) is more effective than extrinsic motivation (for example, praise or money), especially among self-confident students. In this context, self-confidence comes about as students are exposed to a variety of environments and demands and find themselves equal to these challenges. An ideal learning situation, then, is a self-confident student working in response to intrinsic motivation. Active learning that requires students to complete authentic tasks routinely brings these factors together. Students perform meaningful tasks, which if chosen wisely are intrinsically motivating, and gain self-confidence in the process. These experiences increase the power of intrinsic motivation in a self-reinforcing feedback loop. In this way, engagement empowers students as active participants in their own learning.

This perspective is also consistent with Chickering and Gamson’s (1987) seminal statement of the principles of good practice in undergraduate education:

*encourage contact between students and faculty,
develop reciprocity and cooperation among students,
encourage active learning,
give prompt feedback,
emphasize time on task,
communicate high expectations, and
respect diverse talents and ways of learning.*

It is clear that Western’s approach to teaching and learning, and to development of our QEP, reflects a perspective consistent with both history and the educational research literature. This gives us great confidence that our approach to increasing student learning through engagement is both sound and viable.

Emergent Potential

In addition to advancing student learning goals *sensu strictu*, the GEI (2002) report also proposes that a university paradigm based on engagement will assist students’ growth as intentional learners, those “integrative thinkers who can transfer their learning from one context to another and apply it to newly encountered or unscripted problems and environments.” Part of this growth is helping students learn to recognize the limits of their understanding and what they need to move forward (Bransford et al. 1999). Such higher-order skills are cultivated by approaches to learning that focus on building contextual awareness (sense-making), self-reflection, and self-assessment (Bransford et al. 1999). Thus, adopting a participatory, integrative and modern climate for learning at Western should lead to the emergent learning outcome of measurable increases in students’ development as intentional learners and global citizens.

Finally, the GEI (2002) report suggests that adopting innovative approaches to educating students can be transformational for the university as a whole. If we create an environment where engaged learning is accepted as the norm rather than the exception, we will have truly created an incubator for intentional learners: those who are *empowered* by a mastery of skills, *informed* by knowledge from diverse sources, and *responsible* for their own values (GEI 2002). At the same time, we will have advanced our secondary goal of making meaningful contributions to the growth and success of the community of which we are an integral part.

An Approach to Promoting Engaged Learning

How best do we create this climate for learning ? We believe that by looking outwards and systematically incorporating relevant issues of the broader community and the world into students' educational experience, we will create a dynamic, integrative learning environment that will advance our goal of producing globally-competitive and socially-responsible graduates.

Our QEP will implement strategies to engage students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*. We define the phrase "communities other than their own" broadly, to encompass exposure of students to settings or groups that are outside the bounds of their previous experience. **We seek to link community and classroom, living and learning, thought and action, preparedness and passion.** There are three key student learning benefits that will arise:

1. By engaging in applied research or scholarly pursuits, service learning and leadership activities, students will develop their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.
2. By broadening their exposure to diversity in all its forms, students will develop greater respect for diversity of peoples, ideas and cultures.
3. By identifying and integrating contemporary world issues as part of their learning, students will develop awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.

The student learning initiatives we will undertake represent the thrust of our effort to enhance student learning through engagement at Western; however, they cannot stand alone. Success in advancing student learning outcomes requires that we simultaneously address our institutional and human capacity to promote engaged learning. As such, our QEP also identifies critical infrastructural and faculty/staff development targets that we believe undergird the student learning goals we set forth. We believe it is essential that our engagement theme be woven into the administrative fabric of the university, the outlook and professional approach of our faculty and staff. That is, we must become a fully engaged university community in order to effectively engage our students.

ELEMENTS OF AN ENGAGED UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

The philosophies and common principles identified above are necessary prerequisites to full development of Cherry's *Spirit*, and to the success of our goal of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*. However, transduction of abstract ideals into a unique university culture requires a number of tangible factors. To wit, we can define the necessary elements of an engaged university community:

Administrative Leadership	Willingness to take on an ambitious transformation Tangible support and reward for initiatives Appreciation of the positive correlation between value and risk
Academic Creativity	A dynamic curriculum that encourages exploration and action Richness of basic research and creative expression The recognition that universities cultivate minds, not just skills
Infrastructure that Facilitates Change	Policies and procedures that promote rather than impede growth Willingness to adopt new approaches and campus initiatives Commitment to reflect on, streamline and integrate processes
A Dynamic Campus Environment	Student services that foster exposure to new ideas/experiences Opportunities for meaningful involvement and contribution A direct link between student ideas and campus policies
A Sense of Social Obligation	Strong focus on applied research, service and problem-solving Recognition of the university's place in the community A sense that "It's up to me"
Alumni and Community Support	Recognition by outside groups that universities grow and change Confidence in and tangible support for the university's abilities Willingness to invest in Western as a community partner

A key aspect of each of these factors is the element of **risk**. An aggressive strategic plan, the search for knowledge and insight, the willingness to address difficult problems, and the desire to impact others – all carry the potential to be unsuccessful. Yet, **true value lies in those activities that promote positive change, and all significant change carries an inherent risk of failure.**

It is our responsibility as an institution of higher learning to take on such challenges, promote divergent thinking and pioneer novel approaches; this is the process through which growth and transformation occur, both in our students and in our community. As we reflect on and develop ways to implement the recommendations below, we must first determine whether the initiative under consideration constitutes engagement in the sense intended by the QEP. Secondly, we should ask whether the activity carries any professional or productivity risk to the individual or department undertaking it. Activities that have the potential to significantly impact student learning and at the same time represent an opportunity for the individuals or units to extend themselves beyond the status quo should be viewed as particularly desirable.

At the same time, **we must establish a university culture and operational system that explicitly rewards individuals and units for acting in ways that embrace positive change** (without being reckless) as part of their attempt to enhance individual development, unit quality and performance. We must establish the mindset among students, faculty, staff, departments and units that willingness to become engaged and accept some risk is expected and, conversely, that avoiding risk is disadvantageous. Key to building this campus perspective is reinforcing this mindset with real incentives. In this way the university will demonstrate the necessary seriousness of purpose to validate the QEP and its goals.

It is crucial to recognize that engaging students (in fact, in educating students in general) reaches beyond academics to encompass student life and the institutional support systems that, when implemented well, allow learning to occur. Every individual, unit and constituency associated with the university community contributes directly to student learning through their actions. As we move forward, it will be essential that we adopt forward-looking and proactive approaches to budgeting, accounting, purchasing, hiring and other processes that are critically important to the successful implementation of new initiatives. We must establish an infrastructure that is creative in design, dynamic in nature, efficient in organization, and seamless in operation. It is equally important that we establish systems of review and reward that promote positive change and contribute to a holistic view of our actions as individuals and units.

We must also impress upon students the need for them to take primary charge of their own education. Opportunities for engagement are not something to be thrust on students; rather, we must reach a point where they are readily sought out by them. In addition, it is imperative that students develop a sense of ownership in their university and the communities of which they are a member. We feel this can best be achieved by creating a common perspective and direction for the university, and setting high and clear expectations that students will be active participants in the process.

If we reach a point where (a) there exist a diverse range of outlets for meaningful engagement on the part of students, (b) these opportunities are seamlessly aligned with curricular objectives and with university strategic priorities, and (c) students appreciate the value of and actively seek out opportunities to become engaged with their education and the world, we will then be in a position to legitimately claim that Western Kentucky University is ***Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society***.

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Our foremost priority is to actively engage students in their own learning, applying that learning to community and world issues. Such engagement is intentional, reflective, linked to learning outcomes, and integrated within program quality criteria. We also recognize that a major challenge is to keep the theme of the QEP as focused as possible. For the purposes of SACS reaccreditation and accountability under the QEP, we intend to enhance student learning by supporting significant action initiatives related to the following targeted student learning goal and its associated broad elements:

Increase student learning by engaging students with communities other than their own in purposeful learning activities that explicitly address their capacity and responsibility to contribute to community and society.

- A. Cultivate a participatory learning environment in our courses and curricula, especially as it advances development of integrative thought processes and students' appreciation for a diversity of viewpoints.
- B. Increase opportunities for student/faculty collaborative scholarly activity and service learning in the disciplines.
- C. Design curricular and co-curricular experiences to meet the specific needs of and promote a pattern of engagement in students from their first semester onward.
- D. Integrate curricular and co-curricular experiences into the living and learning environment while broadening the spectrum of cultural and civic opportunities available on and beyond campus.

We recognize the need to provide an institutional infrastructure that will fully facilitate achievement of our student learning goal. As such, we will undertake a range of initiatives to advance the following two ancillary goals and their associated elements:

Institutionalize and support the mission of *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*.

- A. Dedicate sufficient institutional resources to maximize our potential for success.
- B. Promote and reward individuals, units and activities that engage students with their discipline, their community and the world.
- C. Foster an environment that promotes innovations in pedagogy, facilitates collaboration, expands the reach of Western students beyond their physical locale, and provides opportunities for engagement to those otherwise excluded by place or time.
- D. Provide mechanisms for information dissemination that support the curriculum and scholarly needs of the faculty and students and ensure that students are aware of these resources.
- E. Foster a campus infrastructure that removes barriers to implementing engagement objectives.

Build capacity within faculty and staff to facilitate student engagement and experiential learning.

- A. Develop an academic advising process that ensures advisors have tools to effectively assist and prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their academic programs, as well as their professional and personal development.
- B. Provide training for faculty and staff in methodologies for engaging students in their courses and beyond.

The plan is built on a discrete timeline with anticipated internal benchmarks. Progress towards meeting specific student learning outcomes will continually be assessed using discrete, quantifiable and qualitative indicators. Yet we must also judge our overall success at creating the institutional transformation we desire. This requires a vision for Western's future that builds on its traditions and significant accomplishments thus far. In this context, our vision will be fulfilled if students and parents, faculty and staff, alumni and friends, peers and colleagues, and the community at large see Western as:

A place where engaged learning inspires academic excellence and social responsibility.

Part II. Enhancing Student Learning: Engaging Students with Communities Other than their Own



INTRODUCTION

Western's QEP will be implemented through a five-year plan to engage students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*. Our vision is to link community and classroom, living and learning, thought and action, preparedness and passion. We believe that, by bringing contemporary world issues into the curriculum, extending the reach of students' learning opportunities into the broader community, and cultivating students' experience within a living and learning environment rich in diversity of ideas, challenges and peoples, we will enhance their professional development, broaden their worldview, and promote their development as intentional learners, educated and responsible citizens.

Our concept is built upon the following premise:

The more students are more 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.

We can translate this premise into a central QEP learning goal:

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

Associated with this learning goal, we will target three attendant student learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

What do we mean by "communities other than their own" ?

There is not a single definition of this concept; it differs for each person, as each individual comes to Western with a unique collection of perspectives and experiences. Engaging in such communities may involve interacting with individuals from different backgrounds or cultures, holding alternative viewpoints, offering unique opportunities, or facing unfamiliar challenges. Likewise, the manner in which students interact with these new communities is variable, involving such things as intellectual discourse, independent research or scholarly activity, service to a cause, leadership, or simple exposure to a new situation. The unifying characteristic of these examples is that engaging with communities other than one's own involves stepping outside the traditional boundaries of one's past experience or training, and doing so with an open mind and in a reflective manner. In the process, learning is inevitable.

An essential feature of a university education is that, in addition to providing knowledge and skills, it broadens one's perspectives and worldview. We believe both of these objectives are best accomplished through active involvement with different people or groups, new challenges, unfamiliar and (in some cases) uncomfortable situations. If done correctly, such interactions are potent forces in developing graduates who are critical thinkers as well as global citizens.

ACTION INITIATIVES (IMPLEMENTATION ENABLERS)

While recognizing that we will undoubtedly generate additional or even enhanced enablers over the course of implementation, we have initially identified 10 action initiatives designed to directly impact student learning at Western. We feel these initial action initiatives are consistent with our QEP learning goal and attendant outcomes. Each of these actions represents a new direction or new synthesis of programs and opportunities, and is linked to one or more targeted student learning outcomes. In some cases, direct implementation is supported by activities that establish associated institutional infrastructure or human capacity to implement these actions. Below we outline some of the key components of each action as currently envisioned.

Action 1: Create an engagement-based University Honors Program experience that will serve as a model of engaged learning and attract academically-talented students nationwide.

The goal of this initiative is to establish a learning model under the rubric of the University Honors Program that exemplifies engaged learning. We intend to design an honors curriculum that enhances students' personal and professional development by (a) strengthening the relationship between the honors experience and students' training in their primary discipline(s), expanding opportunities to link experiential opportunities with students' individual professional and personal interests, and (c) providing thematic integration of honors coursework, independent creative activity and experiential opportunities (study abroad, community service, leadership). We seek to create an honors paradigm that serves as a model of engaged learning for the university, and which enhances the intellectual climate of the university through involvement of current students and increased recruitment of outstanding new students.

Expected learning outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

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|--|-----------|
| 1. Establish McLean Hall as the new honors residence. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Hire a full-time Honors Director through a national search process. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Dedicate resources necessary for programmatic initiatives. | 2005-2007 |
| 4. Begin implementation of an engagement-based Honors learning model. | 2006-2007 |
| 5. Create processes leading to regular nomination of students for national scholarships. | 2007-2008 |

Action 2: Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics and ethical aspects of the discipline into major programs of study and/or general education.

The goal of this initiative is to bring greater curricular emphasis to the relationship between conceptual and technical training in a subject discipline and the practice of that discipline. We intend to enhance students' understanding of the role of their subject disciplines in modern society by (a) developing and implementing strategies to bring explicit discussion of professionalism and ethics into courses and curricula, and (b) implementing reflective components that allow students to consider or demonstrate their understanding of these issues. We seek to produce graduates who are able to thoughtfully articulate the implications of course/program subject matter for modern society, and the responsibility of practitioners of that discipline in contributing to the vitality and success of modern society.

Expected learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 2. 2005-2006
2. Incorporate experiences relevant to Action 2 into major programs and/or general education. 2007-2009
3. Expect syllabi to include relevant meta-learning goals for students in courses. 2008-2009

Action 3. Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with the knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.

The goal of this initiative is to better link service learning activities undertaken by students with curricular training in their primary field(s) of study. We intend to enhance students' skills in bringing their academic training to bear on real-world issues by (a) developing and implementing strategies to tie service learning to conceptual/technical training in the students' major programs of study, and (b) implementing reflective components that allow students to consider or demonstrate their understanding of these issues. We intend to produce graduates who are able to thoughtfully articulate the relationship between the study of their discipline and its application to addressing societal issues.

Expected learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 3. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Continue to advance the American Humanics Project. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity. | 2005-2006 |
| 4. Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-ops, KWSP and volunteer opportunities. | 2007-2008 |
| 5. Incorporate experiences relevant to Action 3 into major programs. | 2007-2008 |
| 6. Expect syllabi to include relevant meta-learning goals for students in courses. | 2008-2009 |

Action 4: Ensure availability of experience relevant to students' degree program that includes consideration of the relationship of the discipline and its practitioners to society and the broader community.

The goal of this initiative is to better elucidate the role of students' primary fields of study and its practitioners to modern society. We intend to enhance students' understanding of the implications of their subject disciplines to modern society by (a) developing and implementing strategies to bring explicit discussion of the application of the subject discipline into major programs of study, and (b) implementing reflective components that allow students to consider or demonstrate their understanding of these issues. We seek to produce graduates who are able to thoughtfully articulate the role of their major discipline in modern society, and their role as practitioners of that discipline in contributing to the state of modern society.

Expected learning outcomes:

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.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 4. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Continue to advance the American Democracy Project. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity. | 2005-2006 |
| 4. Incorporate experiences relevant to Action 4 into major programs. | 2007-2008 |
| 5. Expect syllabi to include relevant meta-learning goals for students in courses. | 2008-2009 |

Action 5: Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience to establish expectations and patterns of engagement by students.

The goal of this initiative is to stimulate awareness and interest on the part of first-time, full-time students in social issues. We intend to enhance the range and depth of students' knowledge of relevant issues in modern society and expand their frame of reference about the world by (a) introducing into the Freshman Experience discussions or activities that deal with contemporary social issues, and (b) educating students about opportunities for involvement in community service, volunteerism, and leadership as part of their *Western Experience*. We seek to cultivate in students a pattern of commitment to and involvement with social issues from the beginning of their educational career onward.

Expected learning outcomes:

Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 5. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Launch a fully-developed chapter of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Incorporate experiences relevant to Action 5 into Freshman Experience. | 2006-2007 |
| 4. Provide physical and virtual spaces to house information dissemination systems related to engagement. | 2006-2007 |

Action 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.

Our goal in this initiative is to provide expanded range and scope of opportunities for experiential learning by students, and to do so in a delivery format that increases access by diverse student populations. We intend to enhance students' global understanding, appreciation for diverse viewpoints and the multidisciplinary aspect of relevant issues by orienting January and May Terms towards offerings (a) promoting study abroad or other aspects of internationalism, (b) highlighting project-based or other experiential learning opportunities, (c) approaching subject matter from a multidisciplinary perspective, and (d) implementing reflective components that allow students to consider or demonstrate their understanding of these issues. We seek to create innovative, dynamic three-to five-week terms that catalyze the growth of an engaged learning climate at Western within the context of a delivery format that increases access to experiential learning opportunities for diverse student populations (full-time, part-time, non-traditional, alternative delivery, etc.).

Expected learning outcomes:

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.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

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|--|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 6. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Financially compensate faculty teaching courses through CCSA, KIIS and other study abroad programs. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Assist in advancing recommendations of the International Task Force to expand opportunities for internationalism and ethnic/cultural awareness. | 2005-2006 |
| 4. Incorporate opportunities relevant to Action 6 into course offerings. | 2006-2007 |
| 5. Encourage innovation in use of technology for engaging students. | 2006-2007 |
| 5. Expect syllabi to include relevant meta-learning goals for students in courses. | 2008-2009 |

Action 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, with opportunities to link to a developmental checklist for students.

Our goal in this initiative is to establish a mechanism for recording students' involvement in experiential learning activities during their *Western Experience*, as a means of both recognizing and promoting the value of active learning to their personal and professional development. We intend to enhance students' skills in bringing their academic training to bear on real-world issues and understanding of the implications of their subject disciplines to modern society by (a) expanding opportunities for experiential involvement (see Action 8), (b) implementing a mechanism to provide graduates an official record of their involvement, and (c) creating resources that identify linkages between experiential involvement and students' development as intentional learners. We seek to produce graduates who can demonstrate to graduate/professional schools or employers a record of involvement in experiential learning activities and have developed both the capacity and the commitment to take an active role in their own learning and in modern society.

Expected learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 7. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Develop online career exploration service. | 2006-2007 |
| 3. Collaborate with external constituents to provide career related events and mentoring opportunities. | 2006-2007 |
| 4. Encourage regular, university-wide participation in National "Make a Difference Day." | 2007-2008 |
| 5. Encourage student-run ventures across campus relevant to the QEP. | 2008-2009 |
| 6. Develop a co-curricular resume passport system. | 2008-2009 |

Action 8: Establish comprehensive points of entry for students' involvement in community service, service learning and leadership activities.

- a. Institutionalize the Alive Center as a vital, long-term link between the university and the community supporting volunteer, service or civic initiatives.
- b. Utilize the Leadership Center as an organizing unit for leadership studies, courses and activities.
- c. Utilize capacities of Career Services, Student Life, Housing and Residence Life, and Academic Advising.

The goal of this initiative is to establish ready points of entry that facilitate students' access to community service, service learning or leadership activities as part of their Western Experience. We intend to enhance students' skills in bringing their academic training to bear on real-world issues and deepen their awareness of and commitment to service on behalf of a cause by (a) organizing related experiential opportunities under appropriate administrative units, (b) promoting availability of experiential opportunities in a cohesive manner, and (c) facilitating placement of interested students with internal and external groups that will benefit from their involvement. We seek to create a system whereby students have a clear knowledge of how and where to seek access to experiential learning opportunities, as well as can gain assistance in initiating meaningful involvement in those activities.

Expected learning outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

1. Determine personnel and operating needs to institutionalize the Alive Center in support of QEP priorities. 2005-2006
2. Provide support for fully operationalizing the Leadership Center in Cravens Library. 2005-2006
3. Create a Student Success Center in DUC. 2005-2006
4. Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-ops, Kentucky Work Study Program and volunteer opportunities. 2007-2008

Action 9: Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social or civic issue during their tenure at Western.

The goal of this initiative is to foster a culture of social and civic involvement on the part of students at Western while actively making positive contributions to the university, surrounding community or to society. We intend to enhance students' commitment to and involvement with university, social or civic issues and skills in bringing their academic training to bear on real-world issues by (a) creating a mechanism whereby student cohorts can identify and take meaningful action on a relevant issue of their choosing. We seek to produce graduates who recognize their responsibility as educated citizens in modern society and are committed to identifying and taking an active role in addressing social or civic issues.

Expected learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.

Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Initiate discussion with Student Government and other student regarding feasibility of a Class Legacy Program. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Increase use of students as presenters in university, civic and social programming. | 2006-2007 |
| 2. Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience. | 2006-2007 |
| 3. Encourage regular, university-wide participation in National Make a Difference Day. | 2007-2008 |
| 4. Establish a system whereby well-conceived student-generated initiatives can be incorporated into university planning and policy. | 2007-2008 |
| 5. Establish a Class Legacy Program. | 2008-2009 |

Action 10: Institute or orient first-year activities to initiate students to university opportunities and expectations and highlight the passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment, with expectations for engagement.

The goal of this initiative is to establish a ceremonial onset to students *Western Experience* that articulates to first-time students the opportunities available to and expectations of them as they undertake university study. We intend to enhance students' perspectives about the world and their role as educated citizens by (a) emphasizing the rarity and significance of the learning opportunities before them, (b) establishing a pattern of inquiry and thought that is multidisciplinary and integrative, and (c) challenging students to be proactive in seeking out opportunities to become actively engaged as part of their educational training.

Expected learning outcome:

Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.

Associated implementation elements and timeline:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Incorporate into unit strategic plans strategies to implement Action 10. | 2005-2006 |
| 2. Utilize Freshman Assembly to highlight passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment. | 2005-2006 |
| 3. Re-energize Humanities Semester and develop similar integrated, multidisciplinary programs. | 2005-2006 |

A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

While we can readily identify components of an invigorating education, and may well prove adept at implementing strategies to promote those elements, demonstrating their effectiveness in valid, measurable ways represents an additional, significant challenge. A recent statement by the Board of Directors of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U 2004) highlights the accountability gap that has troubled higher education for at least 20 years. This report points to a nearly universal reliance on standardized, one-measure approaches as a critical flaw in designing accountability criteria for educational institutions. The AAC&U Board fully supports the view that institutions must be accountable for their programs and strategies, but argues that this is best accomplished by focusing on key outcomes that emerge from a broad, liberal education.

According to AAC&U, appropriate outcomes emerge from an intentional, systematic approach to promoting engaged learning, one that spans students' entire academic career. Further, it is essential to both cultivate and assess these outcomes in a curricular context, recognizing the different meanings of these outcomes to different populations of students and settings. That is, desired outcomes must be translated into goals that are locally owned, developed by and relevant to individual units' particular contribution to the overall university strategic priorities.

We see valuable insight in the AAC&U position, and feel its captures the spirit and mission of a vibrant, comprehensive institution such as Western. Allowing (and expecting) individual units to implement strategies for addressing university priorities in locally-meaningful ways, we will assess progress of the QEP at the institutional level by asking and answering questions directly related to our three targeted student learning outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns 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.

We recognize and celebrate the perspective put forward by SACS that student learning is diverse in its meaning and context, including advancement of students' knowledge, skills, behavior and values. As such, we will allow individual units great latitude in determining how their activities will impact student learning, and the most appropriate ways to quantify those potential impacts. That being said, we will also adopt a set of guiding principles upon which the assessment process will be based. It is our intent to:

- 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. Utilize existing data and reporting vehicles, thereby avoiding placing the burden of additional reports on individuals and units.
- c. Create administrative support positions and systems judiciously so as to not increase workload on faculty, staff and units.
- d. Recognize that the assessment process is not static, but will evolve over time.
- e. Ensure that student learning, not ease of assessment, remains the goal that drives our actions and priorities.

Assessment at the Institutional Level

In one sense, success in a global society is ultimately determined by what students do after they leave school. This issue will require concerted attention to maintaining contact with our graduates in order to evaluate and improve the engagement component of university programs. Working to make this happen will be a central challenge of the Leadership Team from its inception. However, reaching a point where establishment of such connections between program units and their alumni yields statistically-meaningful data will likely fall outside the five-year QEP implementation window.

In the meantime, however, at least two types of near-term indicators are already available and relevant. First, if increased student engagement is as effective as we anticipate, it will be reasonable to expect existing measures of student retention, standardized test scores, graduation, certification, and placement rates to improve. Second, increased student engagement should produce positive responses concerning personal learning outcomes on assessment tools such as the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Western Kentucky University Student Engagement Survey (WKUSES).

From the point of view of theory and practical results, our participation in NSSE will be especially important to gauging the QEP's impact on the institution as a whole. In the first place, NSSE sets a high value on student engagement, and rightly so. To quote the NSSE annual report for 2002:

There are two ways to think about student engagement. The first is a proxy for collegiate quality, reflecting the degree to which students take advantage of the learning opportunities their institution offers. The second is that student engagement is itself an important outcome of college. Taking part in educationally purposeful activities builds the foundation for acquiring and integrating other essential skills, such as learning how to learn, being able to independently identify problems, developing and testing potential solutions, and synthesizing and applying information. Thus, students who are involved in a variety of educationally purposeful activities during college are developing the habits of mind that enlarge their capacity for continuous learning.

NSSE results reveal the number and variety of engagement activities related to our QEP theme that students experience. Like graduation and retention numbers, NSSE figures, which go back to 2001, also provide a baseline from which to measure our institutional progress. In the past, Western has participated in NSSE only every other year, but partly in response to our growing emphasis on student engagement we are now scheduled to do annual administrations in 2005 and 2006. Sample items and results in [Appendix 5](#) illustrate the types of information NSSE can provide that would be pertinent to Western's success in carrying out our QEP. In some cases, they also indicate how far we have yet to go.

The WKUSES instrument is a questionnaire administered to students annually and contains items pertinent to specific departments and colleges. Data from this survey will be useful for QEP assessment as well. In fact, because it is locally generated, WKUSES may provide a vehicle for the QEP Leadership Team and particular programs to investigate QEP issues as they emerge (see [Appendix 6](#)).

Assessment at the Program Level

Assessment at the program level provides a direct link between engagement and student learning outcomes, namely what students know, think, or are able to do as a result of their educational experiences. No doubt individual programs will define engagement in their own unique ways. However, consistent with our QEP theme, we expect each academic program to develop engagement activities that promote and document our touchstone student learning goal and learning outcomes:

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

In our sense of the phrase, “community and society” encompasses a spectrum of issues affecting civic, business, industrial, social, cultural, health, education, and other groups. We hope to contextualize student learning and make it personal through meaningful engagement, encouraging students to experience issues at first hand in order to see for themselves what their education can mean to them as individuals, professionals, and citizens. We believe this goal is sufficiently focused to be effectively evaluated, yet flexible enough to be pursued in a variety of ways by individual areas and programs.

A key responsibility of the QEP Leadership Team will be to assist academic, student support, and service departments in identifying appropriate student engagement activities and accounting for their success in implementing them. As is the case with academic programs, we anticipate that this unit-level reporting can be seamlessly incorporated into existing university strategic planning and outcomes assessment processes.

Western’s strategic planning process already embraces the entire institution. All units develop individual action plans and performance indicators keyed to at least one of the university’s five strategic goals, including departmental objectives for each relevant goal and specific activities to achieve them. Unit plan activities must specify who is responsible for carrying out the activity, the timeframe for completion, and budget implications. For the purposes of the QEP, all units will be expected to expand their action plans to include engagement activities and assessment of the results.

New student engagement efforts will mesh equally well with Western’s performance review processes, which include Annual Performance Reviews, Year-End Progress Reports, and Unit Productivity Awards. Each of these assessment mechanisms can easily be expanded to include engagement initiatives, their impact on student learning, and future plans for the area.

The relationship between engagement and learning will be documented through the university’s outcomes assessment process. Faculty in each academic program annually identify intended educational outcomes: what program faculty intend students to know, think, and be able to do when they have completed the program. Programs regularly assess for these outcomes using a variety of tools, including norm-referenced, standardized examinations, locally developed examinations, oral examinations, performance appraisals, simulations, portfolios, written surveys and questionnaires, and exit and other interviews. Qualitative or quantitative criteria for success must be appropriate and clearly defined, and assessment activities must lead to specific improvements designed to address documented needs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT

In designing a system that will appropriately and with high integrity measure the progress and success of the QEP, we need to consider:

- a. What are the germane data ?
- b. How can we most reliably and efficiently report these data ?
- c. What patterns in the data would be indicative of progress ?

Each of the 10 new initiatives outlined in [Action Initiatives](#) above address one or more targeted student learning outcomes. We do not expect our implementation process to be limited to only these 10 identified actions. Building on our guiding principles, we will expect units addressing individual action initiatives to develop specific performance indicators along with implementation plans for the new initiatives. Below we consider categories of indicators units will draw on as they develop performance indicators, as well as expected outcomes associated with assessment indicators.

The university's existing strategic planning process will serve as the structure within which QEP activities will be implemented and assessed. As part of this process, all units in the university develop action plans and performance indicators consistent with university priorities but directly relevant to each role in the university community. For the purposes of the QEP, each unit will be expected to purposefully consider ways to incorporate engagement activities into its action plan and determine activities and performance indicators supportive of associated student learning goals and outcomes. [Appendix 7](#) provides sample initiatives illustrating how these provisions might be implemented.

Additional data on the relationship between engagement and learning will be documented through the university's outcomes assessment process. Currently, each academic program identifies intended educational outcomes, defined as "what program faculty intend for a student to know, think, and be able to do when they have completed the program." These cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, respectively, are consistent with the SACS' definition of student learning as encompassing impacts on knowledge, skills, behavior and values. Units regularly assess the achievement of these outcomes using a variety of appropriate assessment tools, including norm-referenced, standard examinations, locally developed examinations, oral examinations, performance appraisals, simulations, portfolios, written surveys and questionnaires, exit and other interviews. These indicators will be incorporated into QEP assessment as appropriate.

At the institutional level, a number of global indicators of student engagement will be utilized, including NSSE and WKUSES results, the Motivated Student Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), course evaluations, student retention and graduation rates.

It will be the responsibility of the QEP Leadership Team to define and derive appropriate assessment data from these various reporting structures and to ensure that relevant data are readily accessible. Progress will be assessed by tracking vectors of improvement using relevant indicators including but not necessarily limited to those described above.

What are the germane data ?

Appropriate data for this question will derive from reflective evaluation of initiatives designed to positively impact students' knowledge, skills, behavior and values in ways consistent with targeted student learning outcomes. While the available research data indicate that creation of an appropriate context for engaged learning will in fact advance students' growth as educated citizens (i.e., by demonstrating existence of appropriate processes that incorporate desired learning goals), it remains incumbent upon us to demonstrate this connection through measurable change in indicators of student learning (i.e., by quantifying progress in advancing student learning outcomes). **In the broad sense, relevant data are those that indicate whether we have engaged students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*, and have consequently better prepared students to think critically, serve generously, and lead responsibly.**

We will consider such variables as (a) integration of engagement themes into program learning outcomes, (b) involvement of students in active and experiential learning opportunities, (c) personal development of students as intentional learners, and (d) academic success of students throughout their career at Western and beyond.

As we carry out this process, we must continually evaluate our actions with respect to the following questions: (a) Does the activity/initiative in question implement one or more identified student learning goals; and (b) Does the activity/initiative in question advance development of students' knowledge, skills, behavior or values in ways consistent with targeted student learning outcomes ?

How can we most reliably and efficiently report these data ?

Data for this question will be extracted from:

- a. Unit planning and progress reports
- b. Unit outcomes assessments
- c. Students' co-curricular transcripts
- d. Attendance figures reported for cultural events and student life programming
- e. Responses as part of NSSE, FSSE and WKUSES processes
- f. Student responses on voluntary online self-assessment tools, including MSLQ and SDTLA
- g. Student retention and graduation rates

As part of the QEP implementation process, document templates will be modified to facilitate inclusion and extraction of data that will assist assessment of the QEP process. Templates will be developed in collaboration with divisions, colleges and units during the first year of implementation (2005-2006).

As part of yearly planning, progress and outcomes assessment documents, units will be expected to identify and report on their contributions towards enhancing the professional and personal growth of our students in manners consistent with QEP priorities. Units will be expected to reflectively consider ways to incorporate such activities within their academic mission and/or unit productivity goals. Similarly, proposals for unit productivity and other special funding awards should address the units' success in advancing relevant QEP goals and outcomes within the context of their particular discipline or role.

The Leadership Team will track institutional measures of student success, such as retention and graduation rates, as indicators of progress in QEP initiatives. This report will be made available to all members of the university community, accompanied by the opportunity for individuals to participate in a survey for use in subsequent assessment cycles. The survey will explore faculty and staff awareness and perceptions of QEP initiatives, the extent to which they feel these have positively impacted institutional effectiveness, faculty/staff development and student learning.

What patterns in the data would be indicative of progress ?

The following would be indicative of an increase in our capacity to prepare Western students to be productive citizens in a global society:

- a. Increased involvement and success of students in engagement activities through
 - i. growth of independent research, internship, co-op, service learning and leadership programs
 - ii. expanded impact of experiential learning programs as those above
- b. Increased success in unit student learning outcomes measures such as
 - i. proficiency of student cohorts on program exit exams, portfolios and other performance appraisals
 - ii. placement success of students following graduation
- c. Expansion of students' co-curricular resumes as indicated by the co-curricular transcript

- d. Increased attendance at cultural events and student life programming
- e. Increases in students' personal development and academic maturity evidenced through voluntary online self-assessment
- f. Increased NSSE, FSSE and WKUSES scores on questions related to student learning outcomes
- g. Increased university retention and graduation rates

Examples of process and learning indicators for targeted outcomes might include:

Outcome	Process Indicators	Learning Indicators
1. Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.	<p>Integration of action initiatives into the curriculum.</p> <p>Expansion of opportunities for student research, scholarly activity, service learning, project-based learning, etc.</p> <p>Increased participation of students in above activities.</p> <p>Incorporation of reflective components designed to assess learning.</p>	<p>Increased proficiency on exit exams, national exams, or reflective components.</p> <p>Increased involvement of students as presenters, coauthors, project leaders, etc.</p> <p>Expansion of experiential learning aspects of students' co-curricular transcripts.</p> <p>Increased scores on student self-assessments of growth as intentional learners.</p> <p>Increased scores on relevant NSSE, WKUSES items.</p>
2. Students will demonstrate respect for diversity of peoples, ideas and cultures.	<p>Integration of action initiatives into the curriculum.</p> <p>Incorporation of reflective components designed to assess learning.</p>	<p>Increased proficiency as evidenced through reflective components.</p> <p>Increased scores on relevant NSSE, WKUSES items.</p> <p>Increased scores on student self-assessments of growth as intentional learners.</p>
3. Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens living and working in a global society.	<p>Integration of action initiatives into the curriculum.</p> <p>Incorporation of reflective components designed to assess learning.</p>	<p>Increased proficiency as evidenced through reflective components.</p> <p>Increased involvement of students in socially-responsible activities related to the discipline.</p>

Utilizing the QEP as a vehicle for spawning external funding proposals and research projects examining the relationship between engagement initiatives and student learning at Western.

Establishing a causative link between our efforts to promote engaged learning and increases in student learning and subsequent success in a global society is admittedly the most difficult task of our (or any) assessment paradigm. As the university undergoes its institutional transformation, we anticipate shifts in student demographics, increased competitiveness of the incoming student classes, and a change in the culture of the university; each of these variables will likely impact our indicators of student learning along with those engagement initiatives we aim to assess. In addition, we do not presume to have identified all the indicators of student learning from the outset; we will come to appreciate other potentially valuable indicators as implementation proceeds.

While the literature base indicating a relationship between engagement and student learning and student success is strong, we feel it will be essential to directly evaluate this link in a local context; that is, we will attempt to demonstrate the strength and nature of this relationship at Western and for our particular set of student demographics. This will allow us to reliably judge our initiatives while simultaneously assisting our reflective consideration of the progress we have made and must yet make.

We also cannot ignore the opportunity to use the QEP as a research model to advance the broader understanding of an engagement paradigm and alternative strategies thereof. Such a focus will allow Western to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the role of engagement in student learning, and provide a vehicle for interested faculty and staff to pursue the scholarship of engagement as part of their professional development and growth.

Thus, we propose to establish robustly-designed internal research studies to validate the efficacy of engagement initiatives undertaken as part of the QEP. Facilitation of this research arm will initially be undertaken by the QEP Leadership Team. It will be essential to develop guidelines for submission of research proposals, assure reasonable support for viable proposals, and integrating appropriate portions of the resultant data into the QEP assessment process. It is our hope that this research arm of the QEP will (a) help us better evaluate the impact of our engagement actions on student learning, (b) enhance the human capacity for engagement by our faculty and staff, (c) provide a mechanism for facilitating pilot studies that may ultimately support grant proposals to external funding agencies, and (d) encourage faculty participation in the scholarship of engagement.

BUDGETARY COMMITMENTS

Western Kentucky University is committed to providing significant resources in support of all activities associated with the Quality Enhancement Plan. This commitment will be in terms of financial, physical and human capital as well as direct support from the areas of Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Research.

Financial resources have been budgeted to support costs associated with QEP start-up plans as well as to sustain the process over the next several years. Effective July 1, 2005, additional reoccurring budget allocations totaling \$450,000 will be in place to develop and advance QEP related activities. The QEP Leadership Team will recommend funding for activities that address the goals set forth in the QEP to the Provost through processes currently in place. Examples of funding opportunities include such areas as:

- Development of Student Leadership and University Honors Programs
- Direct support of student engagement activities
- Funding for infrastructure to advance QEP and engagement goals
- Support International Programs and Study Abroad
- Training and professional development
- QEP support staff and faculty time
- Civic Engagement activities
- Faculty and Student Applied Research activities
- Student Success Support initiatives
- Assuring adequate assessment of targeted outcomes

Further, Western's QEP will receive indirect benefits from increased dollars currently earmarked for increased funding for various Academic Quality initiatives. Among these initiatives are:

- Graduate assistantships and student workers
- Instructional equipment and technology
- Classroom renovations
- Operating budgets
- Addressing market competitiveness for faculty/personnel salaries

These allocations made to support Western's Academic Quality initiatives include added opportunities to support the QEP implementation.

We believe our QEP is adequately funded at this point in time, and that sufficient dollars have been designated to initiate those activities essential to establishing a strong QEP. Our initial funding allows for start-up costs associated with personnel, facilities, equipment, and baseline measures. Full implementation funding for the QEP will be made possible by institutional assurances, coupled with a rigorous budgetary review process. Western's QEP is an institutional priority and as such will receive strong institutional commitment.

Certain budgetary requirements can be linked to specific action initiatives in Implementation above. However, many activities will be funded through discretionary resource pools established to promote QEP-related goals. This will allow individual units the flexibility and opportunity to tailor requests to their particular needs or missions, and allow the university to be responsive to emerging opportunities to reinforce QEP goals. Allocation of such resources will be dynamic and based on yearly evaluation of the progress of QEP implementation as well as consideration of the evolving priorities outlined in the Strategic Implementation Timeline below.

IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT

The university will establish a Leadership Team to oversee implementation (including assessment and reporting) of the QEP. This committee will be appointed by and report to the Provost, and will consist of members representing a broad spectrum of facilitators and stakeholders in the QEP implementation process. The committee will also include some individuals who are very familiar with the QEP development phase; this will facilitate a smooth transition from development to implementation. As implementation proceeds, committee composition will change as needed to reflect naturally evolving priorities and focus of the QEP.

The QEP Leadership Team will be charged with developing implementation schedules for 2005-2006 and beyond, recommending budgetary and human resource needs to facilitate QEP initiatives, and communicating QEP objectives and opportunities to faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends. This committee will further be responsible for extracting relevant data from reporting instruments to support assessment of the QEP, and to develop annual progress reports for major stakeholders (including the university administration, external agencies, as well as faculty, staff and students).

The coordination for the Leadership Team will be assigned from within the Office of the Provost. This individual will be responsible for integrating QEP priorities, activities and processes with existing policies and procedures regarding academic programs and personnel, planning and assessment, budget and resource allocation, and enrollment management. The Chair (in conjunction with the Leadership Team) will also work with individuals and units to facilitate alignment of policies, reporting procedures, activities and funding proposals with QEP priorities, so as to (a) minimize the workload on those individuals and units while (b) maximizing the impact on QEP student learning and assessment goals.

Part III. Institutional Context



ALIGNMENT OF ACTIVITIES WITH THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

It is essential that implementation of our engagement objectives be concordant with established university strategic priorities. In this way, individuals and units can best identify and address their responsibilities in promoting the advances in student learning we all seek. At the same time, we can use this framework to readily incorporate engagement initiatives into *Challenging the Spirit* and other university planning documents. Below we cast our proposed efforts in this light.

Strategic Goal 1: Increasing Student Learning

Academic units clearly have the most direct responsibility for promoting the educational development of our students. Thus, academic units should be expected to focus much of their effort in the area of engaging students in areas complementary to students' academic training (both major/minor as well as general education). Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Promoting active learning in the course setting, especially as it advances development of critical and integrative thought processes and/or advances students' appreciation for a diversity of viewpoints.
2. Cultivating opportunities for academic engagement within the context of students' coursework, especially through independent research, scholarship or creative activity related to the subject discipline, and project-based learning.
3. Developing students' appreciation of the historical context of the discipline and/or the relationship of the subject discipline to modern society.

We propose to implement the following new initiatives in this area:

- a. Create a dynamic, engagement-based University Honors Program experience that will serve as a model of engaged learning and be seen as a destination point for the most outstanding students nationwide.
- b. Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics and ethical aspects of the discipline into major programs of study and/or general education.
- c. Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with the knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.
- d. Ensure availability of experience relevant to students' degree program that includes consideration of the relationship of the discipline and its practitioners to modern society and broader community.
- e. Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience to establish expectations and patterns of engagement by students.
- f. Orient Winter, May and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for experiential learning opportunities to all groups of students.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- g. Increase the extent and diversity of active learning strategies in the curriculum.
- h. Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity that enhances the knowledge/creative base within the discipline or addresses tangible issues in the broader community.
- i. Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-op, KWSP and volunteer opportunities, particularly those in which students engage with communities different from their own and address issues facing those communities.
- j. Re-energize Humanities Semester and develop similar integrated, multidisciplinary learning venues.

- k. Continue to advance the American Democracy Project.
- l. Assist in advancing recommendations of the International Task Force that support continued growth of internationalism and ethnic/cultural awareness and diversity among our students and faculty, including study abroad and regular participation in opportunities such as the Fulbright Program.
- m. Expand opportunities for graduate students to serve as role models/mentors for undergraduates by promoting appropriate use of graduate teaching assistants.
- n. Expect syllabi to appropriately include both strategies for engaging students with the material as well as meta- learning goals for students in the course.

Strategic Goal 2: Developing the Student Body

We anticipate units within the area of student affairs and student life to be most directly involved in fostering engagement objectives that promote the intellectual and personal growth of our students, as well as in contributing to the evolution of the characteristics of our student population over time. Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Developing programming within residence halls and/or living/learning communities that organize students' thought around common, multidimensional problems and challenge students to become educated and contributing citizens.
2. Implementing strategies to extend learning experiences into the student life experience and allow students to advance their own learning through action.
3. Emphasizing the role of leadership, volunteerism and active commitment to civic and social issues as mechanisms for advancing professional and personal development.
4. Formulating strategies for promoting personal exploration, maturity, responsibility and development among students.

We propose to implement the following new initiatives in this area:

- a. Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to promote, record and document students' participation in experiential and service learning activities, with opportunity for linking to a developmental checklist for students.
- b. Establish comprehensive points of entry for students' involvement in community service, service learning and leadership activities.
 - i. Institutionalize the Alive Center as a vital, long-term link between the university and the community supporting volunteer or civic initiatives.
 - ii. Utilize the Leadership Center as an organizing unit for leadership activities.
 - iii. Utilize capacities of Career Services, Student Life, HRL, and Academic Advising.
- c. Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social or civic issue during their tenure at Western.
- d. Institute or orient first-year activities to initiate students to university opportunities and expectations, and highlight the passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment, with expectations for engagement.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- e. Establish a chapter of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars at Western, linking nomination of outstanding first- and second-year students to both academic excellence and commitment to engaged service.
- f. Increase support for the university Cultural Enhancement Series in order to allow presentation of additional high-profile events per year.
- g. Continue to advance the American Humanics Project.
- h. Develop online career exploration service accessible to different units and programs, including UE 175 and the advising process.
- i. Provide and track use of physical and virtual spaces to house institutional information dissemination systems that help students become aware of engagement-promoting services, programs, civic and cultural events across the university and community.
- j. Encourage regular, university-wide participation in the national Make a Difference Day program to engage the university with our community partners.
- k. Encourage student-run ventures across campus to serve as both gathering places for students as well as opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- l. Commit and create processes to facilitate to increased, regular nomination of outstanding students for national scholarships.
- m. Collaborate with student affairs staff trained through the Office of Diversity Programs to provide diversity awareness experiences on campus.

Strategic Goal 3: Assuring High-Quality Faculty and Staff

The success of any quality enhancement plan depends on establishing a university climate in which faculty and staff are both committed to and trained in successful implementation of strategic initiatives. To that end, it is incumbent upon all units to think creatively of ways to help current faculty and staff be successful in their professional responsibilities and development, to appropriately expect and reward individuals for their significant accomplishments, and to consider new ways that faculty and staff talents might be brought to bear on the goal of enhancing student success through engaged learning. Such objectives may include but are not limited to:

1. Establishing resources for faculty and staff that facilitate sharing of engagement strategies, resources and data.
2. Implementing procedures that consider potential or tangible contributions to engagement goals as part of hiring, performance review and recognition of faculty and staff.
3. Establishing the expectation that faculty, staff and units will contribute positively to engagement goals.
4. Providing tangible incentives and recognition for individuals and units that successfully enhance the level of student engagement in their area.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Establish reward and recognition system for faculty, staff and units that demonstrate significant accomplishment in engaging students for success.
- b. Incorporate contribution to engagement goals as an evaluative element in performance review, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review processes.
- c. Promote recognition of research on the scholarship of engagement as one element in performance review, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review guidelines.
- d. Consider ability to contribute to unit student engagement goals in the hiring of faculty and staff.
- e. Financially compensate faculty teaching courses through CCSA, KIIS and other study abroad programs.
- f. Increase support for graduate assistants to levels competitive with our benchmark institutions and incorporate expectations for appropriate and meaningful interaction with undergraduates in the classroom, in research/creative activity or in service delivery area.
- g. Strengthen commitment to graduate programs as a means of attracting and retaining high quality faculty and staff.
- h. Encourage innovation in use of technology for engaging students.
- i. Create a faculty instructional technology training program centered on promoting engagement in the classroom through web-based teaching tools, video conferencing, multimedia authoring, etc.
- j. Support continued professional development of faculty and staff in areas related to engaged learning and student success.
- k. Support initiatives that may serve as a teaching resource for faculty and staff interested in applying engagement strategies to advance student learning.
- l. Establish university-wide awards for advancing student learning through engagement.
- m. Provide training to faculty and staff related to promotion, recording and tracking of student experiential learning and engagement activities.
- n. Provide appropriate training for faculty and staff in online career exploration and group self-assessment and counseling processes.

Strategic Goal 4: Enhancing Responsiveness to Constituents

The university maintains a diverse manner of relationships with constituencies and individuals outside the local university community; as such, individuals and units from multiple divisions will likely be involved in advancing engagement objectives in this area. Such objectives may include but are not limited to:

1. Involving students in applied research and service activities that address problems relevant to the region, state and nation.
2. Cultivating relationships with alumni and friends of the university that provide additional opportunities for students to participate in meaningful experiences which enhance their professional or personal growth.
3. Fostering civic engagement activities that broaden students' worldview while positively impacting the lives of others.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Increase use of students in university, civic and social programming as presenters, guest speakers, etc.
- b. Engage members of the Board of Regents as informed advocates and passionate ambassadors for areas related to student engagement.
- c. Work with Alumni Affairs to design and implement specific avenues for alumni to take a leadership and mentoring role with Admissions, Career Services or academic departments.
- d. Target local, regional and selected urban communities for reciprocal relationships as a means of both enhancing those communities as well as strengthening student recruitment, fundraising and career opportunities from within those communities.
- e. Collaborate with Career Services and external constituents to provide career related events and mentoring opportunities for students.
- f. Enhance access of internal and external constituents to physical and virtual campus.
- g. Incorporate QEP themes into centennial celebrations and other university occasions and events.

Strategic Goal 5: Increasing Institutional Effectiveness

Responsibility for promoting engagement activities that advance the efficiency of and capacity for student learning lies with all the divisions of the university. The support and service units are key contributors to enabling attainment of QEP goals, and their shared responsibility is absolutely essential. By creating an institutional process that promotes advance of specific objectives as well as facilitates the efforts of other units, we can expand the range of meaningful opportunities available to students and increase the likelihood that students will benefit from investing in these opportunities. Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Promoting the continued growth of transdepartmental programs that directly impact student engagement for success while increasing students' appreciation for diversity in all its forms.
2. Coordinating partnerships between the university and outside groups that provide meaningful opportunities for practical and context-driven learning by students.
3. Creating proactive budgeting, purchasing and facilities management systems within the university that seamlessly allow student learning initiatives to move forward.
4. Organizing university planning and assessment documents and procedures within an efficient timeline and around a common language centered on engaged learning and student success.

We propose to achieve continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Establish the Leadership Team to spearhead implementation of engagement programs.
- b. Ensure policies for purchasing are streamlined and facilitate acquisition of materials, supplies and products that support engaged student learning.
- c. Consolidate budgetary resources and processes to create more effective mechanisms for supporting and implementing engagement recommendations.
- d. Align university strategic planning, performance evaluation, continuance, tenure, promotion and PTR criteria documents with emerging engagement initiatives.
- e. Establish a dynamic process of review and realignment of QEP objectives, activities, priorities and funding associated as part of the implementation process.
- f. Restructure unit reporting expectations and timelines to increase efficiency of information flow.
- g. Adopt a common language for individual and unit assessment documents.
- h. Strengthen relationship between proactive, integrative advising practices and salary/merit increases, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review.
- i. Assure effectiveness and efficiency of library information delivery to faculty and students.
- j. Advance ways to use the Laptop/PDA University concept to support QEP goals.
- k. Incorporate designs for participatory learning classrooms or technology in plans for new or renovated academic and student life spaces.
- l. Establish a mechanism by which well-conceived student/faculty/staff-generated initiatives for advancing QERP goals can be incorporated into university planning, process and policy.
- m. Establish a comprehensive campus recycling program that can serve as a model of good citizenship as well as a tool to promote student learning.
- n. Integrate QEP themes into next capital campaign.

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

2004-2005 Academic Year

The 2004-2005 will serve as a pre-implementation year for the QEP. Our primary areas of emphasis will be to organize and prepare for full implementation beginning in 2005-2006. Specifically, we will (1) align existing policies, procedures, plans and priorities to include QEP goals, (2) educate the university community about the QEP and its priorities, and (3) establish the necessary leadership infrastructure to facilitate implementation of programmatic recommendations.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Establish the Leadership Team to oversee implementation.	Office of the Provost	5a
Develop budgetary and human resource needs for 2005-2006 implementation.	Leadership Team	5e
Finalize implementation schedule for 2005-2006 implementation.	Leadership Team	5e
Work with units to embed QEP activities in current reporting and planning documents.	Leadership Team; All units	5d
Incorporate into 2005-2006 strategic plans activities designed to advance the goal of Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society.	All units	Multiple
Develop assessment protocol and collect baseline data.	Leadership Team; Assessment Office; Office of Institutional Research	5e
Establish guidelines for soliciting and funding research studies on the relationship between engagement and student learning at Western.	Leadership Team; Deans; Department Heads; Faculty Research Council	3k
Provide engagement best practices workshops and support prototype engagement events.	Leadership Team; Office of the Provost; FaCET	3j

 2005-2006 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the first year of implementation will be to establish university-wide systems to facilitate implementation of student learning initiatives. Specifically, we will (1) ensure administrative policies and procedures complement achievement of QEP goals, (2) incorporate QEP priorities into individual and unit evaluation procedures, and (3) expand support for transdepartmental/departmental initiatives that engage students for success.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Incorporate QEP themes into next capital campaign.	VP for Institutional Advancement	5n
Consolidate budgetary resources and processes to create more effective mechanisms for supporting implementation.	Office of the Provost	5c
Ensure purchasing policies are streamlined and facilitate implementation of recommendations.	Chief Financial Officer	5b
Institutionalize the Alive Center as an organizing link between the university and the community.	Office of the Provost	2b
Restructure unit reporting expectations and timelines to increase efficiency of information flow.	All units; Planning Office	5f
Align university strategic planning, performance evaluation, continuance, promotion, tenure, and PTR criteria with emerging QEP initiatives.	All units	5d
Establish a dynamic process for regular and systematic review of QEP objectives, activities, priorities, funding and progress assessment.	Leadership Team	5e

 2005-2006 Academic Year continued

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Incorporate designs for participatory learning classrooms in plans for new or renovated academic or student life spaces, including creating a Student Success Center in DUC.	Office of the Provost; Facilities Management; VP for IT; Relevant units	5k, 2b
Utilize the Leadership Center as an organizing unit for leadership studies, programs, certificate courses and activities.	Office of the Provost; Leadership Center	2b
Continue to advance the American Humanics Project.	Office of the Provost; Dean of CEBS	2g
Continue to advance the American Democracy Project.	Office of the Provost; FaCET	1k
Utilize Freshman Assembly to highlight passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment.	Director of University Experience	2d
Increase support for the university Cultural Enhancement Series.	Office of the Provost; Cultural Enhancement Committee	2f
Financially compensate faculty teaching courses through CCSA, KIIS and other study abroad programs.	Office of the Provost	3e
Incorporate contribution to engagement goals into performance review, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR processes.	All units	3b
Solicit and fund research studies by faculty and staff on the relationship between engagement and student learning at Western.	Leadership Team	3k

2005-2006 Academic Year continued

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Engage members of the Board of Regents as informed advocates and passionate ambassadors for engagement activities.	Office of the President	4b
Integrate QEP themes into university centennial celebrations and other university occasions and events.	Chair of Centennial Committee	4g
Increase the extent and diversity of active learning strategies in the curriculum.	All units	1g
Establish McLean Hall as new honors residence.	Office of the President; Office of the Provost; HRL; University Honors Program	1a
Hire a full-time Honors Director.	Search Committee; Office of the Provost	1a
Re-energize Humanities Semester and develop similar integrated, multidisciplinary programs.	Office of the Provost; Dean of PCAHSS	1j
Launch a fully developed chapter of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars.	Office of the Provost; Director of Freshman Experience	2e
Assist in advancing recommendations of the International Task Force to expand opportunities for internationalism and ethnic/cultural awareness.	Office of the Provost; VP for SA&CS; Office of International Programs; All units	1l
Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity.	Office of the Provost; Deans; Departments Heads; Faculty	1h

 2006-2007 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the second year of implementation will be to establish the link between infrastructure and human capacity for engagement. Specifically, we will (1) incorporate engagement priorities in processes of faculty, staff and unit evaluation and reward, (2) enhance our commitment and capacity to assist faculty and staff in fostering engaged learning, and (3) launch programmatic initiatives designed to foster an increased culture of curricular and co-curricular engagement on the part of students.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Dedicate resources necessary for programmatic initiatives related to creation of an engagement-based Honors learning model.	Office of the Provost; Honors Director	1a
Begin implementation of an engagement-based Honors learning model.	University Honors Program	1a
Develop online career exploration service accessible to different units and processes, including UE 175 and the advising process.	VP for SA&CS; Career Services	2h
Increase support for graduate assistants to levels competitive with benchmark institutions and incorporate expectations for appropriate and meaningful interactions with undergraduates.	Office of the Provost; Dean of Graduate Studies	3f
Collaborate with Career Services and external constituents to provide career related events and mentoring opportunities.	Alumni Affairs; All units	4e
Enhance access of internal and external constituents to physical and virtual campus.	VP for SA&CS; VP for IT; Transportation Committee, ODL; DELO	4f
Advance ways to use the Laptop/PDA University concept to support QEP goals.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT	5j
Increase use of students as presenters in university, civic and social programming.	All units	4a

 2006-2007 Academic Year continued

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Strengthen commitment to graduate programs as a means of recruiting and retaining high quality faculty and staff.	Office of the Provost; Dean of Graduate Studies	3g
Provide physical and virtual spaces to house information dissemination systems related to engagement.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT; FaCET; University Libraries	2i
Encourage innovation in use of technology for engaging students.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT; ODL; FaCET	3h
Establish reward and recognition system for faculty, staff and units that demonstrate significant accomplishment in engaging students.	Office of the President; Office of the Provost; Administrative Council; Budget Council	3a
Support continued professional development of faculty and staff in areas related to engaged learning and student success.	All units	3j
Orient Winter, May and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for experiential learning opportunities.	DELO; All academic units	1f
Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience.	Director of Freshman Experience; Associate VP for Enrollment Management	1e

 2007-2008 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the third year of implementation will be to broaden and deepen the capacity of faculty and staff to promote engaged learning. Specifically, we will (1) provide outlets for faculty and staff professional development related to engagement, (2) more fully integrate engagement opportunities into the curriculum, and (3) establish venues and systems that promote academic excellence, social responsibility and global awareness as critical elements of student success.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Expand opportunities for graduate students to serve as role models/mentors for undergraduates by promoting appropriate use of graduate teaching assistants.	Dean of Graduate Studies	1m
Create processes leading to regular nomination of students for national scholarships.	University Honors Program	2l
Establish a mechanism by which well-conceived student/faculty/staff-generated initiatives can be incorporated in university planning and processes.	Administrative Council; Planning Office	5l
Adopt a common language for individual and unit assessment documents.	All units	5g
Assure effectiveness and efficiency of library information delivery to faculty and students.	Dean of Libraries	5i
Collaborate with student affairs staff trained through Office of Diversity Programs to provide diversity awareness experiences.	VP for SA&CS; Office of Diversity Programs; AAEEEO Office	2m
Create a faculty instructional technology training program centered on promoting engagement in courses.	VP for IT; FaCET; DELO	3i

 2007-2008 Academic Year continued

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Consider ability to contribute to student engagement goals in the hiring of faculty and staff.	All units	3d
Provide training to faculty and staff related to promotion, recording and documenting student experiential learning and engagement.	Office of the Provost; VP for SA&CS; Office of the Registrar; Assessment Office	3m
Provide appropriate training to faculty and staff in online career exploration and group self-assessment and counseling processes.	Career Services	3n
Strengthen relationship between proactive, integrative advising and salary/merit increases, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR.	All units	5h
Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics and ethical aspects of the discipline into courses and programs.	All academic units	1b
Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.	Academic units	1c
Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-ops, Kentucky Work Study Program and volunteer opportunities.	Academic units; Alive Center; Student Affairs units	1i
Encourage regular, university-wide participation in national "Make a Difference Day."	VP for SA&CS; Student Affairs units	2j

 2008-2009 Academic Year

Our primary area of emphasis in the fourth year of implementation will be to deepen our commitment to engaged learning in all its forms. Specifically, we will (1) establish mechanisms to quantify students' involvement in experiential opportunities as part of their university record, (2) develop an explicit focus on value-added aspects of courses and curricula, and (3) institute university-wide exemplars of socially-responsible, integrative learning opportunities.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Expect syllabi to appropriately include both strategies for engaging students with the material as well as meta-learning goals for students in the course.	All academic units	1n
Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to document students' participation in experiential learning opportunities and growth as intentional learners.	VP for SA&CS; Student Affairs units; Office of the Registrar	2a
Encourage student-run ventures across campus to serve as gathering places as well as opportunities for entrepreneurial training.	VP for SA&CS; Center for Entrepreneurship and Global Business	2k
Establish a comprehensive campus recycling program to serve as a model of good citizenship as well as tool for student learning.	Campus Services	5m
Promote recognition of the scholarship of engagement as a recognizable element in performance review, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR.	All academic units	3c
Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social or civic issue.	Student Government Association	2c

 2009-2010 Academic Year

Our primary area of emphasis in the fifth year of implementation will be to Specifically, we will (1) reach out to our constituents in ways that contribute to engaged learning of our students, (2) recognize and celebrate individual and unit successes at translating QEP themes into increased student learning, and (3) formalize our commitment to engaging students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Target local, regional and selected urban communities for reciprocal relationships.	Associate VP for Enrollment Management; Career Services	4d
Develop assessment report for 5-year implementation plan, and deliver this assessment to SACS.	Leadership Team	5e
Evaluate progress and develop a strategy for continued improvement over the subsequent five years.	Leadership Team; Office of the Provost; Planning and Assessment Office	5e
Design and implement specific avenues for alumni to take a leadership and mentoring role with Admissions, Career Services and academic departments.	Alumni Affairs; All units	4c
Establish university-wide awards for advancing student learning through engagement.	Leadership Team; Office of the President; Office of the Provost; Council of Deans	3l
Ensure availability of experience relevant to students' degree program that considers relationship of the discipline to modern society.	All academic units	1d

PART IV. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 A TAXONOMY AND LEXICON OF ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is not one thing, but many. Diverse in form but consistent in function, meaningful engagement activities inspire students to become active contributors to their own learning, and to take responsibility for their own education, personal and professional growth. Our role as faculty and staff is to promote and facilitate engagement and leadership opportunities relevant to our particular disciplines and areas of focus, including:

Activities Conducted Within the Context of a Course and During Class Time:

- Soliciting questions and active discussion as a learning tool
- Requiring team projects and/or presentations by students
- Including diverse perspectives in class discussions
- Providing academic challenges that stimulate critical thinking, application of concepts, and communication skills
- Utilizing a variety of teaching techniques to promote learning
- Incorporating a variety of student assessment tools to evaluate the learning process

Activities Conducted Within the Context of a Course but Outside of Class:

- Requiring written assignments necessitating multiple drafts
- Assigning papers or projects that integrate ideas or information from diverse sources or disciplines
- Students working with others to prepare class assignments
- Students tutoring or teaching others in the course
- Including participation in community-based projects as part of the course
- Students and faculty engaging in ongoing discussion of course-related issues
- Students using the Internet to investigate particular aspects of other cultures

Activities Not Related to a Specific Course but Related to Vocational Preparation:

- Students working on independent research or creative projects under the direction of a faculty member
- Students participating in a culminating senior experience
- Participating in study abroad programs
- Students tutoring or teaching others in the students' discipline
- Active involvement in career planning and preparation

Activities Not Necessarily Related to Specific Courses Nor to Vocational Preparation:

- Interaction with students and faculty/staff on departmental or university committees and student life activities
- Participation in community service or volunteer work
- Involvement in learning communities or cohort programs

Experiential Learning Activities:

- Practicum or clinical assignments
- Internship or cooperative education programs
- Field experiences

Social Engagement Activities:

- Involvement in campus or community organizations
- Contribution to campus publications and media outlets
- Participation in student government or other leadership activities
- Involvement in fraternities or sororities
- Participation in intercollegiate or intramural athletics or competitions

Intellectual and Cultural Engagement Activities:

Student led conversations with individuals of different races or ethnicities
 Reflective interactions among students of different religious beliefs, political opinion or personal values
 Immersion in cultures different from one's own
 Attending cultural performances including lectures, concerts, theater or museum shows
 Discussions among students, faculty and staff about music, arts, philosophical issues or public affairs

Civic Engagement Activities:

Involvement in initiatives relevant to the community or society
 Participation in projects aimed at promoting social change
 Students seeking the opportunity to have their voices heard in a public forum
 Students developing the capacity for leadership
 Working as a volunteer, lending time and skills to assist others

Embarking on a process of intentional change requires that all involved have a common understanding of what is intended. To that end, the university must adopt a common language for speaking about engagement, its modes and impacts. Below we define 18 terms that occupy prominent positions in our thought processes and recommendations. While not exclusive, these definitions are meant to capture the spirit and intent of the terms as we employ them throughout the QEP document.

Active Learning (1): Assumes that for learning to occur the student must be actively mentally engaged with the material, that listening is insufficient. Instructional methods involve students in doing activities to enhance learning and in thinking about their learning while they are doing it. The role of the instructor is a facilitator of student activity, not deliverer of information. Many of the other terms in common use (e.g., cooperative learning, service learning) can be seen as subcategories of Active Learning.

Case-Based Learning (1): Assumes the learner must construct his/her learning in order to advance from theory to practice. Students review a specific, realistic, complex event (case) requiring some type action on their part (e.g., a recommendation). The role of the teacher is to facilitate student analysis, discussion, and resolution of the cases through effective questioning.

Civic Responsibility (2): The commitment of a citizen to his or her community. Service-learning and community engagement are often cited as developing students' civic responsibility.

Co-Curricular: Signifies service or activity that is not explicitly connected to an academic course.

Collaborative Learning (1): Assumes that "learning is a naturally social act." (Gerlach, p.8) We learn from sharing our ideas with others in an active, constructive manner that encourages participants to collectively work through problems. The connections between the learners (telling and listening) are a vital part of the process. The role of the instructor is to create the conditions (e.g., setting up student roles) and help the class to synthesize the outcome.

Community Engagement (2): Community engagement, when used in specific reference to scholarship, describes scholarly work that is done with, and for, members of a group outside higher education. It involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences in ways that are consistent with university and unit missions.

Community Service (2): Community service refers to actions taken to meet the needs of others and better the community as a whole.

Cooperative Learning (1): Assumes that learning happens when participants realize they are interdependent and seek outcomes beneficial to everyone in the class. Cooperative learning occurs when students "work together to maximize their own and each other's learning." (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, p.3) Small groups work on assignments until everyone understands and can do them. It is often associated with Collaborative Learning.

Critical Thinking (1): "...is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness. It entails the examination of those structures or elements of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem, or question-at-issue; assumptions; concepts; empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions; implications and consequences; objections from alternative viewpoints; and frame of reference." Scriven, M. & Paul, R., (no date). Statement for the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction. <http://www.criticalthinking.org/university/defining/html>.

Engaged Campus (2): The engaged campus is a college or university that emphasizes community engagement through its activities and its definition of scholarship.

Experiential Education (2): Described by Bill Proudman as "emotionally engaged learning" in which the learner experiences a visceral connection to the subject matter.

Learning Communities (1): This approach takes a more curricular perspective. Learning is assumed to be enhanced when learning activities from two or more courses are integrated or coordinated. Models for accomplishing that integration range from coordinating a single activity for several courses, such as a speaker, to blending a group of interdisciplinary courses in such a way that the separation between the courses is lost. The interdisciplinary focus requires cooperation and coordination by the instructors of the involved courses.

Mastery Learning (1): Learning occurs when the student receives clear performance feedback in progress toward specified learning objectives in the course. Student continue with instructional activities until they achieve mastery on the criterion. The instructor prepares materials and guides the students toward this goal.

Pedagogy of Engagement (1): Quote from Edward Zlotkowski "I'd define the 'pedagogy of engagement' as a teaching strategy comparable to the 'scholarship of engagement'; i.e. it refers to activities that link academic skills and activities with a broader set of public or civic concerns and outcomes. 'Engagement' is not to be equated with any activity that results in personal involvement in the teaching/learning process. Hence, it does not refer to all forms of active learning. Indeed, if the engagement in question does not include both an element of planned reciprocity with the non-academic partner (including goals, decisions, and benefits) and an element of designed reflection (that allows all participants to run simple intervention into complex learning), then that engagement is inherently 'thin' or underdeveloped" DeZure, Deborah. "pedagogy of engagement." 20 Aug 2001. POD@listserv.nd.edu (26 November 2001).

Problem-based Learning (1): Assumes that learning follows from exploring an authentic problem. Students are presented with an appropriate real-world problem and small groups of students work to resolve the problem. The role of the teacher is to facilitate or guide, asking key questions. The outcome is an integrated set of knowledge and skills.

Reflection (2): Reflections describes the process of deriving meaning and knowledge from experience. Virtually all thought entails some level of reflection. Effective reflection engages both teachers and students in a thoughtful and thought-provoking process that consciously connects learning with experience.

Service Learning (1): Assumes that student motivation to learn is enhanced when course activities are involved in fulfilling real world needs. Civic responsibility, as well as critical thinking, is enhanced with this method. The role of the instructor is to reinforce the links between service activity and the course.

Service Learning (2): Service-learning is a particular form of experiential education which includes responding to students' desire to be in the world, learning from experience as well as classes, and to put education to use for the good of others.

Sources:

1. Feedback on Self-evaluation of Teaching Methods for College Faculty

<http://atech2.wku.edu/skuhlens/selfeval/resources.html>

2. Campus Compact Glossary

<http://www.compact.org/aboutcc/glossary/glossary.html>

APPENDIX 2 A LITERATURE REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES

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two best practices resources at the University of Delaware: <http://cte.udel.edu/bestpract.htm>
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“Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities” (The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, 1998):
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news article on NSSE and DEEP, with links: <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news/page/normal/487.html>
 NSSE homepage: <http://www.iub.edu/%7EEnsse/html/sample.shtml>

“A Brief Summary of the Best Practices in Teaching” (North Seattle Community College):
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“Documenting Effective Educational Practice (Project DEEP)” (Interim Report, Fayetteville State University): http://www.uncfsu.edu/plret/DEEP_Interim_Report.htm

NGA Center for Best Practices, Center Online: <http://www.nga.org/center/>

“Promoting Student Success: Using Student Engagement Data to Improve Educational Practice (Project Deep): http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/acrobat/DEEP_framework.pdf

“Documenting Effective Educational Practice (Project DEEP)” (Interim Report, George Mason University):
http://www.assessment.gmu.edu/deep/PD_GMU_Interim.pdf

“Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” (Chickering):
<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/7princip.htm>

Learning Community Commons: http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/03_start_entry.asp

Vision for the 21st Century: A Plan for Excellence (Student Task Force, California State University Fresno): http://www.csufresno.edu/plan/reports/student_summary_appendix.htm

“Can Online Technology Enhance Student Engagement & Learning? Implications for New Pedagogy in Higher Education” (Kennedy): <http://smccd.net/accounts/kennedyc/rsch/>

Student Engagement (Madison Area Technical College):
http://matcmadison.edu/op/vanguard/CriticalQuestions/student_engagement.htm

Student Life--Center for Student Engagement (University of Evansville):
<http://www.evansville.edu/prospects/campuslife/studentlife.asp>

Examples of Good Practice in Earth Science Learning & Teaching: Fieldwork (UK Geosciences Fieldwork Symposium Proceedings): <http://www.gees.ac.uk/essd/field.htm>

Good Practice Showcase (Economics, University of Bristol):
<http://econltsn.irlt.bristol.ac.uk/showcase/all.htm>

LINK: Linking Teaching with Research and Consultancy in the Disciplines of Planning, Land and Property Management, and Building: Resources: <http://owwww.brookes.ac.uk/schools/planning/LTRC/resources.htm>

Student Experiences in the Research University in the 21st Century: A University of California Undergraduate Academic Experience Study: <http://ishi.lib.berkeley.edu/cshe/seru21/index.html>

APPENDIX 3
QEP STEERING COMMITTEE, UTAH GROUP, AND SACS LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

QEP Steering Committee		
Chair:	Dr. Richard Bowker	
Vice Chair:	Dr. Karl Laves	
BGCC:	Ms. Heather Strobe	
CEBS:	Dr. Pam Petty	Dr. Katrina Phelps
CHHS:	Dr. Suzie Cashwell	Dr. Richard Wilson
GFCB:	Dr. Jerry Gottlieb	Dr. Bob Wharton
OCSE:	Dr. Darwin Dahl	Dr. John Reis
PCAHSS:	Dr. Ted Hovet	Dr. James Kanan
	Dr. Paula Quinn	
DELO and Extended Campus:	Dr. Juanita Bayless	Dr. Dawn Bolton
University Libraries:	Dr. Charles Smith	
General Education/BOR:	Dr. Robert Dietle	
University Honors Program:	Dr. Doug McElroy	
American Democracy Project:	Dr. John Hardin	
American Humanics Project:	Dr. Ray Poff	
Student Affairs and Campus Services:	Dr. Becky Bennett	Mr. Ben Ellis
	Ms. Donna Gregory	Ms. Lynne Holland
	Mr. Scott Taylor	
Graduate Students:	Ms. Lisa Buttrey	Ms. Lindsey Bale
Student Government Association:	Ms. Jennifer Corum	Mr. M. Todd Osborne
	Mr. Troy Ransdell	
University Senate:	Dr. John Bruni	Dr. Tracey Young
SACS Reaffirmation Review Project:	Dr. Dennis George	Dr. Retta Poe
VPAA Office:	Dr. James Flynn	Dr. John Petersen

Utah Group

Team Leader:	Dr. Barbara Burch	
Steering Committee Chair/Vice-Chair:	Dr. Richard Bowker	Dr. Karl Laves
Team Members:	Dr. Dennis George	Dr. Mark May
	Ms. Jessica Martin	Dr. Doug McElroy
	Dr. Katrina Phelps	Dr. Retta Poe
	Dr. Lawrence Snyder	

SACS Leadership Team

Chairs:	Dr. Dennis George	Dr. Retta Poe
Team Members:	Dr. Gary Ransdell	Dr. Barbara Burch
	Dr. John Petersen	Mr. Robert Cobb
	Dr. Jim Flynn	Dr. Joe Glaser

APPENDIX 4
SELECTED REFERENCES RELATED TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGAGED LEARNING
AND GROWTH OF EDUCATED CITIZENS

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**APPENDIX 5
SAMPLE NSSE QUESTIONS AND ASSOCIATED 2003 RESULTS**

Unless otherwise indicated, student responses are coded as follows:

1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, and 4 = Very Often

In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following ?

Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 2.48, Seniors = 2.78

Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 1.23, Seniors = 1.59

During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following ?

Attended an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance, or other theater performance.

No Data - Question not on 2003 NSSE

Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective.

No Data - Question not on 2003 NSSE

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution ? (0 = Undecided or No and 1 = Yes)

Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 0.79, Seniors = 0.73

Community service or volunteer work.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 0.67, Seniors = 0.61

Culminating senior experience (capstone course, thesis, project, comprehensive exam, etc.)

2003 Results: Freshmen = 0.30, Seniors = 0.51

To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following ?

Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 2.36, Seniors = 2.28

Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.).

2003 Results: Freshmen = 2.51, Seniors = 2.42

To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas ?

Voting in local, state, or national elections.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 1.69, Seniors = 1.85

Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 2.41, Seniors = 2.60

Solving complex real-world problems.

2003 Results: Freshmen = 2.40, Seniors = 2.61

Contributing to the welfare of your community.

2001 Results: Freshmen = 2.08, Seniors = 2.22

APPENDIX 6
SAMPLE WKUSES ITEMS AND 2004 RESULTS RELEVANT TO SUDENT ENGAGEMENT

In all cases, student responses are coded as follows: 1—unfavorable, never—to 4—excellent, very often

To what extent has the COURSE WORK in your MAJOR contributed to your:

acquiring job/work-related knowledge ?
2004 Results 4

applying theories/concepts to practical problems/new situations ?
2004 Results 3.87

working effectively with others ?
2004 Results 3.9

To what extent have your GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES contributed to your:

thinking critically and analytically ?
2004 Results 3.3

understanding diverse cultures ?
2004 Results 3.26

As a student at Western, HOW OFTEN have you:

participated in practicum courses, internships, co-ops, clinical assignments, or field experiences ?
2004 Results 2.97

interacted with people from different backgrounds or cultures ?
2004 Results 3.52

performed community service/volunteer activities ?
2004 Results 2.64

participated in research projects with a faculty member ?
2004 Results 1.73

presented a project or paper with a faculty member ?
2004 Results 1.6

attended a play, concert, art exhibit, lecture, or other cultural event ?
2004 Results 2.88

participated in a meeting or activities of a professional organization ?
2004 Results 2.63

participated in study abroad or other international activities ?
2004 Results 1.4

participated in leadership training or had a leadership role ?
2004 Results 2.23

worked with a faculty member on a project outside class ?
2004 Results 3.74

How many of the courses in your major included knowledge or activities that will help you become a contributing citizen ?

2004 Results 3.31

How many of your non-major courses included knowledge or activities that will help you become a contributing citizen ?

2004 Results 2.95

How many of the courses in your major required community involvement, volunteerism or other out of class learning activities ?

2004 Results 2.63

How many of your non-major courses required community involvement, volunteerism or other out of class learning activities ?

2004 Results 2.18

During the past year, how often have you participated in a community-based project as part of your course work ?

2004 Results 1.52

To what extent has your course work at Western:

contributed to your voting in local, state, or national elections ?

2004 Results 1.45

affected your contribution to the welfare of your community ?

2004 Results 1.56

**APPENDIX 7
SAMPLE STUDENT LEARNING INITIATIVES**

The following represent examples of student learning initiatives cast in the rubric of Western's existing Outcomes Assessment process. The first example illustrates a possible approach to integrating engagement priorities within the context of an academic major.

Outcomes	Students will demonstrate their capacity to apply knowledge and training to address relevant concerns in community or society.
Social problem	Hearing loss suffered by workers exposed to excessive noise on the job.
Engagement activity	Measuring workers' noise exposure in the local industrial community.
Relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to measure noise exposure • Ability to interact with workers and supervisors at the worksite • Ability to interpret noise exposure data • Ability to recognize the personal and social implications of hearing loss •
First means of assessment and criterion for success	Using a rubric designed to score the disciplinary preparation aspects of this activity (e.g. use of instruments, interpretation of data, etc.), the average score will be no less than 80% and on no individual rubric category will the average be less than 70% of the possible points.
Second means of assessment and criterion for success	Students will write a three- to four-page essay on the engagement experience, reflecting upon excessive noise exposure, the effect of hearing loss on quality of life, and the social impact of hearing loss in a significant portion of the population. Thirty percent of the essays will be scored by designated program faculty using a rubric developed for this purpose. The average score will be no less than 80% and on no individual rubric category will the average be less than 70% of the possible points.

This next example illustrates how two colleges or departments might cooperate to provide a valuable engagement experience to students from both their areas:

Outcome	Students will demonstrate respect for diversity of people, ideas, and cultures.
Social problem	A wide difference in perspectives between typical humanities majors and majors in more quantitative disciplines.
Engagement activity	Current issue discussion sessions between students in the two groups, moderated by a faculty member from each area—one from humanities and one from a quantitative field.
Relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of perspectives on the other side. • Ability to interact productively with persons representing different values. • Ability to reflect on perspective differences themselves, not just the issues discussed. • Ability to recognize the personal and social implications of such differences. •
Means of assessment and criterion for success	Students will write a reflective essay on their experience. The faculty members involved will score the essays using a rubric designed to evaluate the maturity of the responses (e.g. balanced language, focus on perspective differences, etc.). Both faculty moderators will score each essay and average their results. The average score will be no less than 80%, and no individual rubric category will average less than 70% of the possible points.

This final example reflects application of engagement priorities in a student affairs context:

Outcomes	Students will demonstrate awareness of their opportunities as responsible citizens working and living in a global society.
Social problem	Lack of funding for post-secondary education in Kentucky.
Engagement activity	Participating students plan and attend a Higher Education Day rally in Frankfort in support of placing post-secondary education as a funding priority.
Relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to organize a state-wide effort • Ability to communicate values in a public forum • Ability to interact productively with persons representing different values • Ability to effectively share concerns with legislators •
Means of assessment and criterion for success	Students will write a 200-word essay on what they learned about the importance of being politically engaged as a direct result of their participation at the rally. A group of WKU faculty and/or staff will review the essays using an agreed-upon rubric and determine students' eligibility for the Provost's Civic Engagement Award. The average score will be no less than 80% and no individual rubric category will average less than 70% of the possible points.

**APPENDIX 8
INVESTMENTS IN ACADEMIC QUALITY 2004-2006**

Academic Quality Initiative (Phase I): \$5,996,000 beginning January 2004

Faculty Staffing, Recruitment and Retention

\$1,576,632	Create 20 new full-time faculty positions
	Convert 10 part-time faculty full-time equivalents to full-time faculty
\$ 152,000	Increase professional development funds
\$ 117,000	Fund budget for faculty recruitment
\$ 256,000	Increase operating budgets

Academic Support / Student Success

\$ 600,000	Create Student Success Center in Downing University Center
\$ 300,000	Provide support and expand opportunities for student success
\$ 100,000	Enhance budget for the University Honors Program
\$ 300,000	Expand support for student engagement programs
\$ 127,592	Expand support for International Programs and Leadership Studies
\$ 280,000	Increase graduate student assistantship stipends
\$ 74,776	Provide support for graduate student recruitment and retention
\$ 65,000	Provide Academic Quality targeted scholarships
\$ 57,000	Provide additional student worker funds
\$ 25,000	Provide Academic Quality Leadership scholarships
\$ 100,000	Provide need-based, Highly-Qualified Student scholarships
\$ 60,000	Provide funding for scholarships in Program of Distinction disciplines

Academic Learning Environments

\$ 200,000	Provide funding for instructional equipment and maintenance contracts
\$ 500,000	Renovate classrooms, clinical areas and 'smart' classrooms
\$ 500,000	Provide funding for instructional technology support and enhancement
\$ 605,000	Alleviate crowded conditions and satisfy space needs at South Campus

Academic Quality Initiative (Phase II) (Proposed): \$5,045,000 effective January 2005

Faculty Staffing and Market Competitiveness

\$1,750,000	Create 25 new full-time faculty positions
\$ 600,000	Provide funding to address market competitiveness for faculty salaries

Increased Support for Academic Programs

\$ 450,000	Increase operating budgets
\$ 275,000	Increase staff support for academic and student engagement initiatives
\$ 450,000	Support implementation of Western's Quality Enhancement Plan

Additional Library Support

\$ 175,000	Provide funding for staffing adjustments and library faculty salaries
\$ ---,-----	Conversion of Cravens 2 nd floor to Visual and Performing Arts Library (Funds generated from savings in other areas)
\$ 50,000	Provide funding to address inflationary costs for library holdings

Enhancement of Information Technology

\$ 695,000	Provide bonding capacity for \$8 million, 5 year IT plan
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Enhancements of Graduate Assistantships

\$ 420,000	Provide funding to enhance existing graduate assistantships
\$ 180,000	Create approximately 17 additional graduate assistantships