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**A Model for QEP
Implementation and Assessment that
Facilitates Documentation of
Improvement in Student Learning**

Dr. Clayton Hess

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**About Lincoln Memorial University (LMU)
and the Presenter**

Lincoln Memorial University

- A SACSCOC Level VI institution
- Small, private, independent institution
- Intentionally serving Appalachia
- Undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs
- Located in rural East Tennessee (Cumberland Gap area)

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Quality Enhancement Plan Overview

- The QEP describes a carefully designed and focused plan of action that enhances student learning (student learning is defined broadly) and/or student success.
- The QEP is typically a campus-wide project created and implemented within one to two years. The QEP should be consistent with the institution's strategic plan and appropriate to the institution's mission.
- The QEP topic is typically identified through an examination of institutional assessment results, and is informed by empirical data. The QEP should have broad-based support of institutional constituencies.

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Quality Enhancement Plan Overview

Common examples of topics or issues recently selected as the focus of QEPs include, but are not limited to:

- Enhancing the academic climate for student learning
- Strengthening the general studies curriculum
- Developing creative approaches to experimental learning
- Enhancing critical thinking skills

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Institutional Planning and Effectiveness provides the foundation for QEP development

CR 7.1 – The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated, research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional **quality and effectiveness** and (b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. (*Institutional planning*) [CR]

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Specific QEP Standard (7.2)

The institution has a Quality Enhancement Plan that

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

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Indicators of Standard 7.2

- An institutional planning and evaluation process was used to identify the QEP topic.
- Key issues from institutional assessment/evaluation were used in determining the topic.
- The QEP has a focus on specific student learning outcomes and/or student success.

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Common Issues in QEP Development

Standard 7.2

- Imposed by administrative or external fiat
- No discernible relationship to student learning or student success
- Not closely connected to institutional planning/evaluation

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Specific Considerations in QEP Topic Selection

REMEMBER the three essential considerations in selecting a QEP topic

- **Capability:** Does the institution have the capacity to implement, sustain, and complete the QEP?
- **Involvement:** Will the institution be able to ensure on-going involvement of all essential institutional constituents to successfully complete the QEP?
- **Assessment Plan:** Will the institution be able to ensure that measurement of student learning/success can be documented throughout and at the conclusion of the QEP?

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An appropriately developed QEP will have...

- A focused topic
- Clear goals
- Adequate resources
- Evidence of broad-based involvement
- Evaluation strategies for the QEP

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**Components of QEP Planning
(1) - Capacity**

Overall Capability

- Within means of the institution
- Reasonable scope
- Financial and HR budget reasonable

QEP Budget

- Detailed, clear and coherent, inclusive of all types of costs and allocations, reflective of/aligned with proposed activities, relevant and justifiable, sufficient, appropriate forecasting and contingency planning, not overly reliant on unsecured external funding (grants)

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**Components of QEP Planning
(1) - Capacity (cont.)**

QEP Human Resources

- Roles and responsibilities are clear
- Workloads are identified/release time allocations are appropriate

QEP Physical Infrastructure

QEP Operational Implementation Plans

- Specification of activities
- Comprehensive timeline for implementation and assessment
- Clear organizational structure and ensured accountability for the QEP

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Components of QEP Planning (2) – Broad-Based Involvement

- Who are the institution’s constituencies and how have they been involved in the development of the QEP?
- Are there any constituencies external to the institution that should play a part of development or implementation? If so, are they “in the plan”?
- Is there trustee and senior-level leadership buy-in and support?

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Components of QEP Planning (3) – Evaluation Plan

Targeted

- Allows for understanding of variation among the outcomes

Integrated

- Allows for review of the consistency of results across different measures

Flexible

- Accommodates, if necessary, subsequent changes made to implementation activities and timelines as a result of the on-going analysis of assessment results (formative as well as summative assessment)

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QEP Assessment and Data Collection Methods

Specification and Triangulation

- Specification
 - Names of assessment tools
 - Clear timelines and responsibilities for administrators of assessments
 - Articulated process for the review and use of the assessment results
- Triangulation
 - Use of multiple assessment strategies
 - Quantitative and qualitative
 - Internal and/or external

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Common Issues in QEP development

- Too broad in scope
- Too narrow in scope
- Assessment goals and outcomes are poorly stated
- Insufficient financial or human resources
- Insufficient assessment of the pre-QEP status
- Assessment instruments or tools are not appropriate

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The LMU QEP: Information Literacy

The LMU QEP aimed to make information literacy a fundamental aspect of the institution's academic culture. To that end, the five-year plan called for integration of information literacy instruction into classes in every discipline, at every level, University-wide.

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Goals for the LMU QEP

1. Student Learning
 - Student proficiency in all Information Literacy Standards of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)
 - Accurately recognizing an information need
 - Efficiently accessing the needed information
 - Critically evaluating information
 - Effectively using information
 - Understanding the economic, legal, and social uses of information

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Goals for the LMU QEP (cont.)

2. Curriculum Development and Integration
 - Information Literacy integrated into every program
3. Program Assessment and Evaluation
 - Supportive data on student Information Literacy skills
4. Collaboration and Outreach
 - Campus-wide involvement in Information Literacy instruction and assessment

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Examples of Changes in the QEP Post-Implementation

- Refocusing
 - Learning goals were condensed and mapped onto five Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards, in order to better align with the ACRL standards.
- Narrowing of Scope
 - As the plan unfolded, the scope of curriculum integration goals narrowed to focus primarily on undergraduate programs.
- Flexibility of Assessment
 - A modification to assessment tools was made after the test publisher redesigned the instrument and the revised design did not meet the needs of the QEP.

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Examples of Multimodal Assessment Evidence

Direct Assessment Data:

- The Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (Quantitative)
- Information Literacy Test (Quantitative)
- Sequential Enhancement of Writing Skills Rubric (Quantitative)

Indirect Assessment Data:

- NSSE (Quantitative)
- Student and Faculty Surveys (Quantitative & Qualitative)
- Focus Groups (Qualitative)

This provided the ability to demonstrate consistency in gathering data:

- Same time each year/semester
- Random, but similar cohorts
- Ensuring validity

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Formative assessment was used throughout the course of the QEP. Evaluation results were used to inform modifications aimed at producing improvement in student learning.

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LMU's QEP Title:

LINC – on
Learning is Now Connected

was selected as a result of an institution-wide naming contest.

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

Include multiple assessment measures and performance data from a variety of sources to assess the identified student learning outcomes.

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Identify existing assessments at the institution that support the need for improvement of student learning for the topic(s) addressed by the QEP.
- Existing LMU assessments of incoming and graduating students included:
 - Sequenced Enhancement of Writing Skills (SEWS) program data (Spring 2008)
 - Carnegie Vincent Library's 2001 Information Literacy Pre-Test
 - National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (Spring 2007)
 - LibQUAL+ Survey (Spring 2006 and 2008)
 - Institutional Effectiveness Zoomerang Survey (Summer 2007)

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

Pay close attention to topic-related literature to inform assessment decisions and expectations for student learning outcomes.

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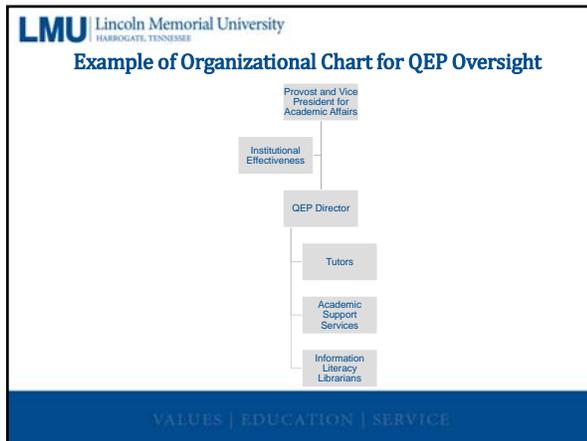
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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Create an adequate infrastructure to provide support and accountability for QEP Assessment Activities
 - For LMU
 1. QEP Director
 2. IE-IR Office Support
 3. QEP Support Personnel*
 4. Assessment Subcommittee
 5. Plan Effectiveness Subcommittee

*Peer Tutors, Student Support Services, Library Staff, Instructional Technologists

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Consider implementing a Pilot Project to pre-test the QEP Topic
 - For LMU
 - **KISSES (Knowledge is Source Selection Evaluation and Synthesis) Pilot Project**

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Identify a variety of assessment methods/instruments to measure student learning/success (and/or environment for student learning) and remember that changes may be necessary during QEP implementation.
 - LMU Examples:
 - iSkills (ETS product) to ILT (James Madison University)
 - SEWS - Institutionally Developed Rubric
 - LibQUAL+
 - NSSE
 - SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills)
 - Institutionally Developed Surveys
 - Embedded Course Assessments
 - Information Literacy Course Pre- and Post- Tests

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Establish and (to the extent possible) follow a carefully developed assessment timeline.
 - For LMU
 - Tiered and Sequenced Course and Course Level Integration
 - Faculty Development Program
 - Used Formative Assessment Results to Inform Future Actions

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Strategies for Ensuring Effective QEP Assessment

- Provide regularly scheduled opportunities to inform the institution's constituents of progress in QEP implementation
 - LMU Examples
 - Strategic Planning Meetings
 - Faculty Meetings
 - Faculty/Staff Conferences

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Information Literacy Data Synthesis and Presentation

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Table 10: SEWS Rubric Results by Undergraduate School

ACRL II Standard	Allied Health Sciences (n=99)	Arts & Humanities (n=220)	Business (n=231)	Education (n=150)	Math & Science (n=129)	Nursing (n=318)
S1 Need	3.3	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.3
S2 Access	3.9	4.3	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.4
S3 Evaluate	3.7	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.3
S4 Use	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.3
S5 Ethics	3.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.6	4.1
	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.3

Also for Element 3: Here LMU used the standardized assessment rubric (SEWS) to demonstrate accomplishment of ACRL II standards at different levels across the various undergraduate schools.

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QEP Impact Report Sections and LMU Page Count

- Element 1: Goals, Timeline, and Intended Outcomes of the QEP
 - 1 ½ Pages
- Element 2: Changes to the Original Plan
 - ½ Page
- Element 3: Impact on Student Learning
 - 7 Pages
- Element 4: Reflection and Unanticipated Outcomes
 - 1 Page

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Questions / Comments

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Contact Information

Dr. Clayton Hess
President
Lincoln Memorial University
Eugene.Hess@lmunet.edu

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