



Title: STudent Engagement ProgramS (STEPS)

Institution: Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

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Executive Summary: Members of the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) community are committed to the College's mission "To engage, teach, coach, mentor, and provide relevant experiences that prepare the Graduate for life" (*Destination ABAC*, 2014-2019, p. 4). ABAC's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), **ST**udent **E**ngagement **P**rogram**S** (**STEPS**), will assist the College in achieving its mission and in implementing its strategic plan, *Destination ABAC*, by focusing on the development and enhancement of engaged learning opportunities. Specifically, "ABAC will teach students essential life skills through internships, research experiences, course work, study abroad opportunities, service learning, and mentoring by faculty, staff, alumni, and other partners" (*Destination ABAC*, 2014-2019, p.1). Through creation, implementation, and promotion of programs that engage students, ABAC will offer students "the opportunity for a life-changing educational experience" (*Destination ABAC*, 2014-2019, p. 12). Through engaged learning opportunities, STEPS will enable students to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities critical to career and post-graduate success.

The STEPS student learning outcomes are as follows:

- Students will demonstrate the skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies applied in new situations to solve problems or explore issues.
- Students will communicate discipline content using conventions appropriate to a specific audience and purpose.
- Students will synthesize disciplinary knowledge applied in new, complex situations.

The goals of STEPS are the following:

- STEPS will provide adequate resources, tools, support, and guidance to its students and faculty to facilitate engaged learning experiences;
- STEPS will increase the number of students doing internships, completing mentored research projects, and studying abroad.

Strategies for achieving the STEPS goals and student learning outcomes are

- Creating and maintaining defined administrative and funding structures;
- Developing and improving definitions, guidelines, and procedures for delivering these opportunities;
- Establishing and sustaining strategic methods for informing faculty and students about them;
- Preparing and incentivizing faculty and students to participate in the engaged learning opportunities;
- Integrating a systematic approach for faculty and students to share their experiences.
- Evaluating the internships, mentored research, and study abroad experiences and
- Assessing student learning within these areas.