



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY

Learning by Doing: Discover, Engage, Reflect, Lead
Augusta University

Executive Summary:

Augusta University's inaugural quality enhancement plan, *Learning by Doing*, will enhance student learning and offer a leadership certificate for undergraduate students who will engage in new course work, be exposed to new experiential learning opportunities and achieve new learning outcomes. The plan will primarily focus on enhancing key learning outcomes, but it will also impact the undergraduate learning environment by providing AU faculty the opportunity to provide leadership in teaching innovations and to mentor future leaders within their respective disciplines.

Learning by Doing includes a certificate program that incorporates three stages of completion – an introductory leadership course, major-related (bridge) courses that apply key QEP learning outcomes and/or demonstrated leadership experiences, and completion of a capstone project. Students who successfully complete all of the requirements listed above will be awarded the Leadership Certificate in addition to their baccalaureate degree upon graduation.

Learning by Doing will broaden its impact on student learning through a comprehensive effort to develop faculty as innovative teachers who integrate experiential learning. While the Leadership Certificate serves as the central and most visible component of this quality enhancement plan, even students not pursuing the certificate will benefit.

The quality enhancement plan will be administratively housed under the Provost's organizational structure, with the Experiential Learning Director managing a staff of personnel who provides operational support for the day-to-day implementation of the plan. He/she will also lead a governance process that ensures ongoing input and collaboration with key stakeholders to provide support and assistance with actions and decisions identified throughout the implementation of the plan.

Augusta University has committed the financial resources needed to implement *Learning by Doing* over the next five years. A significant proportion of the resources will be applied to personnel and general operating expenses associated with the creation of a new unit. Additionally, funding has also been established to support faculty and students in their efforts related to experiential learning and leadership development.

Evaluating the impact of the quality enhancement plan will be a broad-based activity that continues to involve students, faculty, staff, and community members. The teams who have developed *Learning by Doing* have identified both program goals and student learning outcomes (SLOs). The SLOs describe the benefits to the individual students who participate in the Leadership Certificate, while the program goals describe the plan's overarching benefits to the University's mission. To assess the SLOs at each stage of the Leadership Certificate, rubrics have been designed to enable faculty to assess students' level of sophistication with specific criteria for each SLO.

Contact Dr. Kimberly Gray, Director of Experiential Learning, at kim.gray@augusta.edu or Beth Brigdon, VP of Institutional Effectiveness and SACSCOC Liaison, at bbrigdon@augusta.edu with questions.