

**QEP Title:** Partnering Academics with Community Engagement (PACE)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Partnering Academics with Community Engagement (PACE)** focuses on student engagement through community projects that enhance learning. This Plan is aligned with our institutional Mission of cultivating an "...environment of engaged, experienced- based learning, enriched by active community service, that prepares students of diverse ages and backgrounds to succeed in their lives and careers" and Strategic Plan emphasis on providing students with an "engaged, experienced-based learning, enriched by active community service."

**PACE** will employ academic community engagement, defined as intentional efforts within courses to engage students in planned and purposeful learning related to service experiences within the community to impact student learning outcomes including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. Additional program-level outcomes include increases in community engagement pedagogies, increased student course completion rates, and increased student engagement with the community. As noted in the literature, community engagement and service-learning have been shown to be beneficial to student and faculty engagement in the learning process. Service-learning is defined as a credit-bearing educational experience that is course-based, in which students participate in an organized service activity that both meets the needs of a community partner and allows students to reflect on the experience in order to gain deeper understanding of course objectives, knowledge, and /or skills.

Multiple assessments such as the ETS Proficiency Profile, the National Survey of Student Engagement, course-embedded assessments, and measures of student perceptions of community service, as well as additional tracking of both student and faculty academic community engagement activities will be utilized during the project to gauge achievement of both student and program outcomes and to guide project development.