

College of The Albemarle

Quality Enhancement Plan: I Love Problem Solving

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The goal of College of The Albemarle's (COA) Quality Enhancement Plan, "I Love Problem Solving," is to improve our students' ability to solve problems. This goal is in line with COA's vision to inspire excellence, transform lives, and impact the region. Faculty, staff, local external constituents, and national employer surveys agree that problem solving is an essential skill that needs a more significant emphasis in higher education. COA will use this five-year plan as an opportunity to assess whether or not to include problem solving as a general education core competency and which courses should be used as points of assessment.

COA's QEP will develop students' abilities to solve problems, enhancing their success in college, career, and community. The QEP has three goals:

- Goal 1: To help our students value problem solving
- Goal 2: To improve our students' ability to solve problems
- Goal 3: To help our students feel empowered to solve problems

The problem solving initiative is designed to enable students to realize seven outcomes:

- Learning Outcome 1: Students will define problems
- Learning Outcome 2: Students will identify multiple strategies to solve problems
- Learning Outcome 3: Students will identify multiple solutions to problems
- Learning Outcome 4: Students will discern the best solution
- Learning Outcome 5: Students will implement solutions to problems
- Learning Outcome 6: Students will evaluate the effectiveness of solutions
- Learning Outcome 7: Students will reflect on their process to solve problems

The activities needed to carry out these seven student learning outcomes center on three general processes: faculty professional development, student orientation and registration, and course development. COA faculty and staff will be given opportunities to attend professional development sessions both here at COA and from outside sources. Orientation and registration will also implement a problem solving approach. Courses across the curriculum will promote problem solving to create a broad impact. Student problem solving will be assessed every semester using both a rubric modified by COA faculty and a nationally recognized problem solving test. These assessments will allow COA to make any adjustments to the plan and ensure that our students are meeting the learning outcomes stated above.