

Pathways to Purpose: Living the Questions
Lenoir-Rhyne University



Lenoir-Rhyne University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), "Pathways to Purpose: Living the Questions," grew out of the university's planning processes, assessment, extensive review of the literature and significant feedback from institution stakeholders that suggested a need to forge a stronger connection between the education students received at LRU and preparation for living a purposeful life. To that end, the University's QEP Committee identified three pathways to incorporate activities related to vocational discernment throughout a student's undergraduate career. Two of the pathways are integrated into existing university Core Curriculum and Convocation programs. The third pathway, mentorship programs, is administered through the newly established Living Well Center for Vocation and Purpose under the leadership of its Director.

As a co-educational, private, comprehensive institution with a mission of "development of the whole person," LRU embraces the Lutheran understanding of vocation that recognizes that faith and service are integrally connected, and that all are gifted and called to serve the community and world. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) provides multiple learning opportunities that allow LRU graduates to integrate their learning into their emerging story of a life well-lived.

The overarching goal of LRU's QEP is to enhance curricular and co-curricular opportunities that empower undergraduate students to develop knowledge and skills for living a purposeful life at LRU and beyond. Four student learning outcomes support this goal. The student learning outcomes include the ability: to demonstrate an understanding of vocational discernment; to synthesize and articulate how their LRU experiences have helped to shape their life and career goals; to reflect confidence in their self-identity and capacity to contribute to society; and to imagine future career and personal opportunities based on their talents, abilities, interests, and career aspirations.

Academic activities including the iterative development and composition of a student "personal vocation statement" are integrated into the Core curriculum in order to demonstrate student growth over time in the areas of vocational discernment and identification of purpose. Additionally, all traditional full-time undergraduates participate in vocational related convocations across all four years.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment occurs throughout the students' four-year period at LRU and includes: (1) a pre/posttest to develop a baseline measure for vocational discernment (SLO 1); (2) an initial and final personal vocation statement scored with a rubric and a student self-assessment requiring reflection on the initial personal vocation statement (SLO 2, 3, and 4); and (3) assessment of convocations.

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