



R.E.A.L. Inquiry:
Research Experience for Aspiring Leaders
Longwood University's Quality Enhancement Plan

R.E.A.L. Inquiry: Research Experience for Aspiring Leaders uses the development of research skills and the practice of research as a vehicle for improving students' critical thinking, information literacy, and communication skills.

Chosen as the QEP topic in an institution-wide process, student research is a key issue at Longwood University. It embodies the University's mission, advances institutional priorities reflected in the Academic Strategic Plan, responds to institutional assessment represented by the National Survey of Student Engagement and core competency testing, and corresponds to the competencies employers prize and our society needs.

The R.E.A.L. Inquiry initiative has three overarching goals; specific actions, consonant with the literature and sound practices in the field, will be implemented to promote each goal, as follows:

Goal 1. To improve students' learning by promoting their discovery of new knowledge through research.

- 1.1. Identify or develop courses to be enhanced for research skills development and prepare faculty through development grants and workshops to offer these courses
- 1.2. Make available a faculty-guided summer undergraduate research program in all disciplines

Goal 2. To improve students' learning by facilitating student-faculty collaboration in research.

- 2.1. Establish Office of Student Research (OSR)
- 2.2. Establish competitive funding for recognizing excellence in faculty mentoring of undergraduate research
- 2.3. Use electronic portal, the "student research portal," to draw attention to possibilities for student research and completed student research, to track students' research skills development, and to assess core competencies addressed in the QEP

Goal 3. To improve students' learning by advancing an understanding of the importance of disseminating the results of research in academic and civic communities.

- 3.1. Link undergraduate research and community engagement
- 3.2. Provide grants for undergraduate research and/or presentations at conferences
- 3.3. Organize annual student research showcase day for Longwood students
- 3.4. Highlight senior honors research program and other student research on the student research portal

The initiative identifies three student learning outcomes and six outcomes related to the environment for student learning that will be assessed over the course of the five-year plan.

Contact: For additional information, please contact Dr. Crystal Anderson, Director of Student Research at Longwood University, at osr@longwood.edu or visit our website at <http://www.longwood.edu/realinquiry/osr.htm>.