



## *Global Awareness—"Connecting Cultures"* *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

*Global Awareness—"Connecting Cultures"* is the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Mid-Atlantic Christian University (MACU). The purpose of the plan is to provide every MACU student with curricular and co-curricular opportunities to learn the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate today's global world. The rise of globalization indubitably has spurred colleges and universities to promote global education.

Global awareness is linked to globalization, the increasing connectivity of all nations, cultures, and peoples around the world. Globalization refers to the trend toward countries joining together economically, through education, society, and politics and viewing themselves not only through their national identity but also as a part of the world as a whole. Globalization is said to bring people of all nations closer together, especially through a common medium like the economy or the Internet.

Global awareness is necessary because of the increasing interaction between peoples of differing cultures. It does not come naturally, though. "Global Awareness" consists of two components: cultural knowledge and cultural engagement. *Cultural knowledge* is basic understanding of cross-cultural issues and differences. It includes how we see the world and how others are likely to perceive us. It is an understanding of how culture shapes the ways we think and act. *Cultural engagement* is the ability to initiate interactions with culturally different others, to think and reflect on those interactions, and to learn to empathize with people from other cultures.

Again, MACU's QEP is designed to enhance students' capacity to be "globally aware" or "culturally intelligent." Because global awareness is not simply academic, but also experiential, it needs several types of assessment to determine whether the four student learning objectives have been achieved. Our definition of global awareness involves the ability to interact effectively with people of different backgrounds, whether people from other countries, or simply those from different generational, ethnic, religious, political, or organizational backgrounds. In our context, we are seeking to equip students for ministry to such diverse groups and individuals. Our motivation comes from the mandate of Jesus to make disciples of "all nations."

Professor David Livermore has suggested a Christian approach to the issue of global awareness, calling for cultural intelligence or CQ. MACU believes that ministry leaders should be trained to have cultural intelligence whether they live in the USA or in other countries. Most Americans want to be effective cross-culturally but there is still an "ugly American" image, and Christians have not proven to be better cross-culturally than non-Christians. Because cultural intelligence (CQ) is rooted in the incarnation of Christ, it should be most at home among Christians. The following student learning objectives have been adopted: (1) students will analyze their own and others' cultures (e.g. history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, and/or religious and philosophical beliefs and practices) in light of a Christian worldview [Knowledge]; (2) students will use their knowledge of cultural differences to navigate intercultural experiences [Skills]; (3) students will demonstrate active interest in other cultures, and (4) students will suspend premature value judgments when interacting cross-culturally [Attitudes].

MACU has dedicated the financial, human, and physical resources necessary to effectively develop, implement, and sustain its QEP. Since the majority of the different activities of the QEP are already in place and need only to be adapted to the specific goals of the QEP, the budget for the QEP is relatively small. MACU has allocated a budget of \$11,305.00 to implement the QEP. In terms of human resources for the QEP, the university has been intentional in trying to create a significant learning opportunity for students without creating a heavy burden for faculty and staff. One of the faculty members serves as the QEP Director being credited a three-credit hour course each semester toward his workload. The faculty of MACU bears the responsibility for the activities of the QEP that will occur in relation to specific courses. The activities created to support the QEP will be administered by personnel in the student life department. The Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (DIRE) is responsible to assist the QEP Director to collect and analyze assessment data.

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