

Knowledge@Work - Academic Enhancement through Experiential Learning

Middle Georgia State University (MGA) has developed a comprehensive Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that meets all requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The topic selected reflects the outcome of a broad based institutional process, incorporating input from faculty, staff, and students in the context of a rapidly evolving institution, with particular reference to areas identified through institutional assessment. The QEP aligns with the institutional mission and reinforces the institutional values of Stewardship, Engagement, Adaptability, and Learning that are embodied in the University's strategic plan. Entitled ***Knowledge@Work***, this QEP offers students an array of experiential learning (EL) opportunities reflecting the diversity of the students and communities we serve, the disciplines we teach, and the needs of our region.



Opportunities afforded the students through ***Knowledge@Work*** include internships, undergraduate research, and service learning, all of which are identified by scholars of higher education as “high-impact practices” contributing to student success. ***Knowledge@Work*** engages students to think critically and creatively within an experiential learning environment, deepening learning and intensifying the educational impact of the experience. Courses and projects are intentionally designed to engage students in critical reflection, integrating the critical lenses of academic knowledge, personal growth, and civic engagement, and are vetted through a standing QEP Assessment and Review Board to guarantee compliance with carefully constructed parameters. Guided by the following six measurable student learning outcomes, ***Knowledge@Work*** encourages students to explore the broader implications of their educational experience beyond the classroom.

1. Students will explain the values and behaviors of professionalism
2. Students will explain the values and behaviors of social awareness
3. Students will explain the values and behaviors of social responsibility.
4. Students will utilize classroom knowledge and professional experiences together to prepare them for their chosen career field.
5. Students will analyze the relationship between academic knowledge and professional application in their chosen field.
6. Students will test academic and professional knowledge and skills in a professional setting.

Students are incentivized to go beyond the minimum requirements of their majors and earn bronze, silver, or gold levels of recognition based on their successful completion of additional experiential learning opportunities, as abundant scholarship attests to the cumulative value of multiple EL activities.

The success of ***Knowledge@Work*** is measured through an embedded assessment protocol of summative and reflective assignments, internally and externally scored instruments, and additional direct and indirect evaluation. The University is confident that ***Knowledge@Work*** will strengthen the institution, its graduates, and the communities we serve and resolute that it will achieve our goals of:

1. Enhancing student learning through experiential learning opportunities
2. Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the QEP and with each other through experiential opportunities.

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