



Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary

Samford University has developed a broadly applicable Quality Enhancement Plan drawing on assessment data with the intent of strengthening its programs by using Powerful Assignments to create a transformative learning culture. This plan involves a bottom-up and relationally intensive project that invests in Samford University teaching faculty.

Level Up: Transformative Learning through Powerful Assignments, Samford University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), advances students' critical thinking and information literacy skills by exposing them to enriched assignments (i.e. Powerful Assignments) that enhance their thinking, learning and academic performance. Powerful assignments are developed through partnerships between librarians and faculty in a collaborative process that fosters faculty learning about placement and scaffolding of information literacy and critical thinking throughout a course and the curriculum.

Student learning is central to the development, delivery, and assessment of Powerful Assignments. Development of Powerful Assignments aligns with a shift from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach to education. The connection between student learning and faculty development is an important part of the QEP. This proposal is based on the idea that engaged, well-trained, and well-supported faculty are the key to enhanced student learning. Providing a coherent program of faculty development activities and support for professional growth can result in enhanced learning outcomes across the schools and departments of the University.

Additional training in intentional design and alignment with student learning outcomes will result in increased student engagement. The QEP focuses on developing these fundamental skills initially through the Core courses students take as part of the General Education curriculum in their first year, and later through predictive courses that extend across programs and schools. The QEP integrates powerful learning strategies and activities across the curriculum to develop students' analytical and evaluative skills for success at Samford University and beyond. The Powerful Assignments for the QEP will be developed using a charrette model, which brings together teaching faculty, librarians, and staff members when appropriate, to share, evaluate, and refine assignments.

The assessment plan for evaluating this plan is thorough and rigor. It involves direct assessment of student learning outcomes in the Core courses, predictive course, and capstone courses as well as indirect assessment of student perceptions. Faculty development assessments incorporate both direct and indirect measures; qualitative data are obtained through focus groups. The assessment plan collects both formative and summative data for evaluating the QEPs contribution to actualizing Samford's mission, vision and institutional learning outcomes.