



**Learning by Doing: Inquiry-Based Experiential Education**  
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The theme of the University's QEP, *Learning by Doing*, is Inquiry-Based Experiential Education. The QEP will focus on educating students using inquiry-based approaches and outcomes to problem solving through focused experiences and activities in first year (FY) course programming; enhanced discipline-skill based courses; and problem- and project-based undergraduate research, capstones, and internships for juniors and seniors.

**Program goals** are to transform the institution through:

- Enhancing the awareness, importance, and visibility of scholarship and inquiry at UT by actively promoting and supporting both faculty mentoring and student engagement in these key learning processes;
- Increasing opportunities for student scholarship and creative works by developing more opportunities for faculty-student engagement for intensive mentoring and creative relationships;
- Engaging more students in quality internship experiences through changes in curricular requirements, strengthening of the rigor of internship outcomes and improved relations with community partners; and
- Enhancing the University organizational structure to support these experiential processes.

**Student learning objectives** related to these overarching goals are:

- Improving critical thinking skills as determined by changes in student approaches and problem solving as measured by external and internal assessment instruments;
- Improving communication abilities as determined by improvements in writing styles and abilities as measured by qualitative scoring rubrics and national normed tests;
- Improving communication abilities in public speaking/presentation skills as measured by qualitative scoring rubrics and national normed tests;
- Attaining practical skills related to the field of inquiry, including information/reference searching, quantitative literacy, creative thinking, and problem solving relative to projects and performance standards.

The QEP will examine student gains in these learning and project outcomes. Students will be involved and engaged in scaffolded, faculty-mentored activities in the following areas: 1) authentic undergraduate research, 2) creative works/artistic productions, and 3) high impact practice internship experiences. The process begins in FY classes, is built upon in the second and third years within majors, and culminates in mentored senior year project work. The QEP also provides a commitment to increase internship involvement by 25% per year and will impact nearly 1,000 students in total per year when fully implemented. Students will benefit from involvement in these high impact practice activities through greater learning and focused experiences for post-graduate careers.

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SYMBOL OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

