

University of Virginia Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary

"Enhancing Student-Faculty Engagement"

The University of Virginia has selected "Enhancing Student-Faculty Engagement" as the topic of its Quality Enhancement Plan. One of the hallmarks of the University of Virginia is its community of discovery, in which students are made partners in the learning process. At the core of this experience are meaningful student-faculty interactions that take place in a variety of settings. The goal of the University's QEP is to build on this foundation by creating new opportunities for student-faculty engagement to enhance student learning. The University specifically seeks to affect student learning profoundly in two specific areas: making research a fundamental part of the student experience, and incorporating thoughtful public service into the curriculum.

This plan provides the University the opportunity to build upon recent and important long-range strategic planning on the part of the Board of Visitors, senior administration, and faculty. Past U.Va. data from the National Survey of Student Engagement and from institutional surveys of alumni ground the QEP topic selection in the student learning experience. Furthermore, the data provide strong evidence that the level and quality of student interaction with faculty members could be improved.

Over the next five years, the University of Virginia will undertake seven QEP initiatives to enhance student-faculty engagement and to support its two fundamental student-learning objectives related to student research and public service.

Objective #1: Make research a fundamental part of the student experience

Objective #2: Incorporate thoughtful public service into the curriculum

Major Learning-Related Initiatives:

1. Increase Opportunities for Student-Faculty Research
2. Incorporate thoughtful public service into the curriculum

Supporting Management Requirement Initiatives:

3. Offer More Small Classes
4. Formalize and Expand Student-Faculty Lunch and Dinner Programs
5. Foster Engagement through Academic Advising
6. Expand Services of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence
7. Develop and Improve Mechanisms to Communicate Opportunities

For each learning-related initiative, the University has identified multiple learning outcomes, along with specific measures for assessing them. Further, specific action items that are central to the support of the QEP, e.g., offering more small classes and expanding the services of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence, are already underway. Incorporating thoughtful advice from the SACS Visiting Committee has strengthened the University's approach to its QEP initiatives.

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