



**The University of Texas at Arlington ([UTA](#))**

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Teamwork, as a marketable skill and high impact practice, aligns with AAC&U's essential learning outcomes; the strategic plan for the state of Texas, [60X30TX](#) Higher Education Plan; and the general education curriculum. Employer surveys indicate that the ability to collaborate, or work in teams, is one of the most important marketable career and life skills students can acquire in college, and bring to an internship or a job. Collaboration is one of UTA's core values as reflected in UTA's Strategic Plan, [2020 Bold Solutions, Global Impact](#). To help prepare our students for a 21st century economy requiring higher order thinking skills, *Collaborate UTA's* Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) focuses on teamwork. The QEP engages students in problem solving, connects students with others who may have different life experiences or worldviews, and helps students integrate others' views to achieve a common goal.

The QEP is one element of a broader effort to weave a number of existing high impact practices into a cohesive student success effort. A cornerstone of this broader effort is the Maverick Advantage, a campus-wide initiative that seeks to educate our students beyond the classroom by engaging them in five Distinguishing Activities: Global Connections, Community Engagement, Career Development, Leadership and Undergraduate Research. These Distinguishing Activities provide a context for UTA's QEP. Students engage in collaborative endeavors within the context of each of the five Distinguishing Activities, and *Collaborate UTA*, through a narrow focus on teamwork, provides a focused platform for assessing and enhancing the quality of those experiences through the student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

The National Survey of Student Engagement shows that our students' teamwork skill level is behind that of other institutions in The University of Texas System, baseline peers and aspirational peers. Although faculty often assert that they use team-based assignments in their courses, research across the country indicates that the quality of teamwork skills taught by instructors varies, that the roles of individuals in the team are not always adequately assessed, and that faculty/student interaction, including giving feedback during the process, is uneven.

UTA's QEP will use Professional Learning Communities to engage faculty in developing innovative, teamwork-oriented and collaborative activities in their courses. The QEP will assess students' skills and abilities through various assessment methods as part of their course assignments. The goal of *Collaborate UTA* is that students will develop competency in teamwork and be able to describe the value of the experience as evidenced in the following student learning outcomes (SLO):

SLO 1a: Students will recognize effective teamwork.

SLO 1b: Students will practice effective teamwork.

SLO 1c: Students will value effective teamwork.

SLO 2: Students will connect teamwork experiences to the classroom.

*Collaborate UTA* will be piloted in the College of Liberal Arts, and after analysis of assessment data and adjustments to the plan, as needed, it will be implemented in other colleges/schools across campus.

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