

“Learning That Matters: Building a Culture of Generalizable Education”

Virginia Commonwealth University Executive Summary

Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) aspires to provide our students with pathways to *learning that matters* by means of a commitment to generalizable education. A generalizable education has a substantial and lasting impact beyond any particular course, major, or degree. A truly *generalizable education* crosses domains and expands the boundaries of what the learner considers possible.

As the scope and reach of human knowledge expand, creative inter- and transdisciplinary connections are more important than ever. Further, our rapidly changing, globally connected world demands that our students be prepared for full and effective participation in digitally mediated environments. With these imperatives in mind, VCU's QEP has one institutional goal and two student learning goals for “Learning That Matters”:

Institutional Goal

- Establish a redesigned university-wide general education program that incorporates emergent 21st century connected learning experiences

Student Learning Goals

- Students are integrative thinkers
- Students are digitally fluent

These goals will be achieved through three key implementation strategies: Curricular Innovation, Pathways to Participation, and Digital Engagement. *Curricular Innovation* by faculty will yield a revitalized general education curriculum, with new or redesigned courses that stimulate students' integrative thinking and incorporate digital technologies within a paradigm of connected learning. *Pathways to Participation* will expand participation in the general education program to all undergraduate academic units. Through *Digital Engagement* activities in the VCU Academic Learning Transformation Lab (ALT Lab), general education faculty will develop web-enabled, openly networked affordances for learner-initiated connections among general education courses. Within these strategies are incentives and development opportunities to encourage faculty engagement and creativity. Our General Education Task Force will provide leadership in the redesign of the general education program and in opening up participation to all undergraduate academic units.

An evaluation team will provide formative and summative feedback. The team will monitor the implementation of the QEP, providing constructive feedback on progress toward the institutional goal. The team will assess student learning goals as the new and/or redesigned courses are offered.

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