

## **Enhance, Engage, Excel: Changing the Retention Paradigm at Life University** **Life University, Marietta, GA**

**Enhance, Engage, Excel: Changing the Retention Paradigm at Life University** is designed to engage students in co-curricular and academic services to increase retention. The institution will **enhance** the tools and strategies it uses to identify and meet students' unique academic and co-curricular expectations, needs, and interests. It will proactively seek to **engage** all students in opportunities and resources that foster a sense of belonging and connection to the University community. In doing so, the University will ensure current and future students **excel** in their journey at Life University.

Life University identified the topic for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) through an examination of institutional data and initiatives tied to student success, as well as an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data resulting from the institution's strategic planning process. From this review, LIFE established three goals for Enhance, Engage, Excel:

Goal 1: Foster a sense of belonging for all students

Goal 2: Encourage students' engagement with academic and co-curricular resources

Goal 3: Improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused efforts across the campus

To achieve these goals, the University will implement several broad activities aimed at promoting student belonging, including the development and promotion of campus-wide traditions and the establishment of a mentoring program. To increase student's engagement with academic and co-curricular resources, LIFE will use an early alert process designed to monitor students' progress and alert faculty and staff when a student is experiencing difficulty in a course or in the campus community. The University will also monitor student use of academic and co-curricular resources and implement strategies to engage non-involved and at-risk students. Lastly, the University will centralize these initiatives under a cross-functional team and implement processes, including a retention data governance program, designed to improve coordination and management of retention and engagement-focused initiatives.

To measure the success of Enhance, Engage, Excel, Life University developed a comprehensive assessment plan to monitor the overall progress of the project. Assessment will be ongoing throughout the implementation of the QEP, and the University will use the resulting data to continuously refine and improve the project. Direct measures, including participation in co-curricular events and percentage of students receiving early alerts, will be assessed along with indirect measures, such as student satisfaction and engagement in campus activities. Additionally, LIFE will use two key performance indicators, retention and student engagement, to monitor progress toward the overall goal of the plan.

For additional information on development or implementation of Enhance, Engage, Excel, contact Bill Watson ([william.watson@life.edu](mailto:william.watson@life.edu)), Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and QEP Director.