

STETSON UNIVERSITY

Bridging the G-A-P: Enhancing Information Literacy

Stetson University's QEP enhances existing critical skills and overall student success for undergraduate students by taking a broad, deep approach to Information Literacy to leverage student abilities at handling information. The primary learning outcome for the QEP is "Students can locate, engage with, and evaluate information relevant to a question, topic, or research need or to participate in scholarly, professional, civic, and/or personal conversations."

The QEP uses the definition of information literacy provided by the Association of College and Research Libraries: "information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning." Stetson's QEP maintains that students can be successful when they have exposure, experience, and practice within the context of information literacy. The focus on information literacy speaks directly to the current crisis of truth in local, civic, political, and governmental discourse, which has polarized groups by supplying and challenging an array of information sources. For students, the floods of information with which they are daily deluged seems like attempting to drink from a firehose of social media, broadcast news, claims and counterclaims that prevents clear and critical understanding. When students are able to discern a methodical, critical approach to verifying the truth of a statement, they are more likely to be engaged, informed citizens in a democracy, making decisions through the careful application of the skills and concepts of information literacy.

Students, faculty, staff, and administration were involved in the QEP review and decision-making process throughout. Leadership followed the preferences indicated by faculty and students, who preferred a focus on critical thinking with particular emphasis on information literacy as the transdisciplinary underpinning for all academic and public discourse.

The QEP will first identify 100- and 200-level courses that already tacitly target these skills and then enhance their development by supporting faculty through resources and training on best practices in course redesign and engaging, effective assignment-building. The Year One cohort of Stetson faculty (20 faculty in all) represent Health Sciences, Philosophy, Psychology, Music Theory, Music Education, Professional Communications, Economics, and Mathematics.

Stetson University intends to leverage approximately 40 faculty across all academic disciplines to teach "G-A-P" enhanced courses at introductory and developmental (100 and 200) levels. Participating faculty will engage in workshops and training presented by Stetson's in-house experts on Information Literacy at the duPont-Ball Library and the faculty-facing Brown Center for Faculty Innovation and Excellence.

Contact Information

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