



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The University of Georgia's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Active Learning at UGA, has an overarching aspiration: to create a culture of active learning for UGA undergraduates. Adoption of a QEP to increase and enhance the use of active learning practices in the undergraduate classroom is a natural progression in the University's history of student learning enhancements, including experiential learning opportunities and the First-Year Odyssey Seminars.

A significant body of literature documents that active learning practices are effective in increasing student acquisition and retention of course content and in developing higher-order intellectual skills associated with lifelong learning and long-term student success. Accordingly, UGA expects that as a result of the Active Learning QEP students will demonstrate enhanced learning dispositions in curiosity, initiative, reflection, and recognition of connections across learning environments. These goals for student learning align well with the University's mission and its "commitment to excellence in a teaching/learning environment dedicated to serving a diverse and well-prepared student body, to promoting high levels of academic achievement, and to providing appropriate academic support services."

Active learning as a topic for the QEP emerged as a next step in the institution's progression of emphases on student learning enhancements, propelled forward by two University-wide efforts: the 2017 Task Force on Student Learning and Development; and UGA's 2025 Strategic Plan, developed and launched with broad campus participation in early 2020. Successive committees of faculty, staff, and students identified and developed Active Learning as the QEP topic. The Active Learning QEP will build on and institutionalize nascent pilot programs that have documented impact on student learning and success. Its focus on the student experience *inside* the classroom is an important complement to UGA's previously established experiential learning requirement, through which all undergraduates practice hands-on learning mainly *outside* the classroom.

The overall aim of the QEP is to institutionalize active learning practice at UGA, thereby creating a vibrant culture of active learning across the undergraduate classroom experience. Within a culture of active learning, students are active participants in the classroom, learning is understood as the construction of knowledge rather than its absorption, and instructors guide students to construct knowledge while actively reflecting upon the process of learning.

To strengthen UGA's culture of active learning, the QEP will develop and implement programming in three distinct but interrelated areas:

- Instructor development programming that promotes active learning practices in the classroom;
- Initiatives that support students as active learners; and
- Classroom renovations that make learning spaces more flexible.

UGA's Active Learning QEP is unique in integrating significant attention and resources across all three areas. It includes a plan to assess the implementation of initiatives in each area, as well as a robust set of direct and indirect measures to assess outcomes for student learning and development across the breadth of the program.

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