

Institution University of South Carolina Upstate
Name of QEP Moving Up: Career Readiness
Contact Dr. Kim Purdy, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, kpurdy@uscupstate.edu

Executive Summary

One of the themes to emerge from our 2017 – 2018 strategic planning process was that career readiness was on the minds of people in every constituency group and, that as an institution, we were proud of engaging in that work. National data from employers suggest this is an important gap in the preparation of undergraduates; a sentiment echoed by local employers and our alumni. Our Quality Enhancement Plan is intended to leverage current work and broad-based interest to infuse career readiness throughout students' academic experience by developing career-ready core competencies.

As a result of the USC Upstate Moving UP QEP, students will be able to

1. Identify and articulate one's knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, and other characteristics as relevant to desired career goals; and explore, identify, and address areas necessary for professional growth and success.
2. Navigate and explore career options, including further educational and experiential options.
3. Articulate how one's academic program and co-curricular experiences have prepared them for their post-graduation life.
4. Develop a career plan that includes the steps that will facilitate achievement of one's career goals.

These outcomes will be achieved by supporting faculty as they revise curricula to incorporate career readiness learning experiences, and by providing professional development to advisors so they can be more effective in the work they do preparing students for life after graduation. Preparing career-ready students looks different across different majors. Rather than adopt a single formula, interested faculty from each major will be invited to participate in summer workshops to redesign their program to incorporate more intentional career preparation. In many programs, faculty have already created these types of experiences; the QEP is building space to formalize those experiences, create additional experiences, and develop more intentional processes to ensure all students have this opportunity for growth. A series of professional development workshops will provide advisors with the skills to better guide students through their exploration of skills and abilities, discovery of career options, and development of career maps. These career maps will help guide students' progress through the major and successful placement upon graduation. Individual faculty will be invited to revise syllabi to include a statement of NACE Competencies developed by each assignment and how the assignment contributes to career readiness – the career “why.” Finally, Student Affairs staff will be engaged to focus on co-curricular experiences that develop career readiness competencies.