



So You've Selected Your QEP Topic!! Now What?

Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation
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Standard 7.2

- The institution has a Quality Enhancement Plan that
- a) has a topic identified through its ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes;
 - b) has broad-based support of institutional constituencies;
 - c) focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success;
 - d) commits resources to initiate, implement and complete the QEP; and
 - e) includes a plan to assess achievement.

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What is a QEP?

- Integral component of the reaffirmation of accreditation process
- Derived from an institution's ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes
- Reflects and affirms a commitment to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue the institution considers important to improving student learning outcomes and/or student success

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What is a QEP?

- **Course of action specific to an institution and its mission and intended to be part of self-identified needs**
- **Opportunity to be creative in an area related to compliance with the *Principles***
- **Stand-alone document, not a narrative within the Compliance Certification**

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Broad-based support of institutional constituencies

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Broad-Based Support

- **Can be established by demonstrating that the comprehensive planning and evaluation process itself has this element**
- **If selecting a specific item from strategic plan, decision on the one to pick should have broad support of appropriate constituencies**

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Broad-Based Support

- Regardless of origin, the chosen QEP topic should have this characteristic
- Broad involvement should also be carried over into the implementation strategies as the QEP continues forward

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Broad-Based Support – Your Turn

Who are the constituencies at your institution that need to be involved in

- QEP Topic Selection
- QEP Implementation

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Focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success

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Student Learning

Defined broadly in the context of the QEP as enhancing student

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Behaviors
- Values

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Student Success

Defined broadly in the context of the QEP as improvements in key student outcomes such as

- Student retention
- Completion
- Time-to-degree
- Placement in field
- Performance in “gatekeeper” courses
- Levels of student debt

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Focus

While the potential topics cover a very broad range of topics, the chosen QEP should be specific as to

- Its goals
- Importance of goals to the institutional mission

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QEP Focus – Your Turn

What potential QEP topics have your institutions identified?

How can you make a case that they focus on improving

- Student learning outcomes and/or
- Student success

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Commits resources to initiate, implement and complete the QEP

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Resources

- Interpreted more broadly than direct monetary expenditures
- No obligation for a specific monetary commitment for the QEP
- Identify the realistic resources, including personnel, needed for successful initiation, implementation and completion

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Resources

- Explain how the institution will marshal these resources
- QEP is a demonstration of continuous improvement → need clarity as to future plans related to the chosen topic
- Timeline/Action Plan

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Resources

- In most cases, QEP efforts are not formally “completed.”
- Successful QEP → ingrained into institution’s activities and culture.
- Concept of “completion” refers to what will be reported to SACSCOC in fifth-year QEP impact report

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Resources – Your Turn

What types of resources have your institutions identified as needed to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP?

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Includes a plan to assess achievement

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Assessment

- **Process outcomes for past and present initiation of phases of the QEP are helpful but not required**
- **Focus on assessment of specific student learning and/or student success measures**
- **Expectation of meaningful data about achievements in fifth-year QEP impact report**

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Assessment – Your Turn

What types of assessments have your institutions identified (or might be appropriate) for your QEP?

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Other QEP Information

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QEP Lead Evaluator

- Selection and Role
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Quality%20Enhancement%20Plan.pdf>
- Content expert nominated by institution to serve on On-Site Committee
- Submit two names with pertinent information to your SACSCOC Vice President by April 1(Track A) or October 1 (Track B) before On-Site Visit

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Other QEP Information

- May want to study QEPs from other institutions, but should reflect needs of your institution and be specific to your comprehensive planning process
- <http://sacscoc.org/QEPsummaries.asp>
- QEP document due at same time as Focused Report – 6 weeks before visit

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QEP Timeline - Example

Begin approx 18 months before visit

Stage 1: Explore Data & Dialogue

- Months 1 - 8
- Explore institutional data & have broad-based discussion/input from diverse groups

Stage 2: Narrow Focus

- Months 9 - 10
- Explore 2-3 topics, review literature & best practices, develop white papers, decide on single focus as best fit for institution

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QEP Timeline - Example

Stage 3: Design

- Months 10 - 16
- Team of experts to expand review of best practices, map out major tasks & strategies, assign roles, identify resources, and design assessment

Stage 4: Finalize

- Months 16 - 18
- Finalize QEP document; prepare for visit; build energy among faculty, staff, and students; begin pilots

Stage 5: Implementation, Assessment and Reporting

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Summary: Questions to Consider

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- How does the QEP support the mission of the institution?
- What was the research-based process that led to this issue being within the institution's comprehensive planning and evaluation processes?

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Summary: Questions to Consider

- Who are the affected constituencies and how have they been involved in the development of the QEP?
- Has the institution identified and provided a clear and concise description of a significant topic directly related to student learning and/or student success?

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Summary: Questions to Consider

- What are the specific goals of the QEP for the institution and for its students?
- What resources (personnel, financial, physical, academic, etc.) are necessary for the successful implementation of the QEP? Look both backward and forward, depending on where the institution is in its implementation.

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Summary: Questions to Consider

- **How will the institution ensure adequate resources and sufficient expertise and experience to guide the implementation and continuation or completion of the project?**

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Summary: Questions to Consider

- **What assessment instruments or data is being/will be used to measure achievement of the QEP's goals?**
- **How is/will the progress of the QEP be monitored (timelines, administration and oversight of its implementation by qualified individuals, etc.)?**

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Your Questions?

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