



Knowledge @ Work:
Academic Enhancement
through
Experiential Learning

- Internships
- Undergraduate Research
- Service Learning



Quality Enhancement Plan

2015-2020

Prepared for Submission to the
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
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Section 1: Executive Summary

Middle Georgia State University (MGA) has developed a comprehensive Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that meets all requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges of Schools Commission on Colleges. The topic selected reflects the outcome of a broad based institutional process incorporating input from faculty, staff, and students in the context of a rapidly evolving institution, with particular reference to areas identified through institutional assessment. The QEP aligns with the institutional mission and reinforces the student-centered focus of the University's strategic plan. Entitled **Knowledge @ Work**, this QEP offers students an array of experiential learning (EL) opportunities reflecting the diversity of the students and communities we serve, the disciplines we teach, and the needs of our region. These opportunities include internships, undergraduate research, and service learning, all of which are identified by scholars of higher education as "high-impact practices" contributing to student success.

Knowledge @ Work engages students to think critically and creatively within an experiential learning environment, deepening learning and intensifying the educational impact of the experience. Courses and projects are intentionally designed to engage students in critical reflection, integrating the critical lenses of academic knowledge, personal growth, and civic engagement, and are vetted through a standing QEP Assessment and Review Board to guarantee compliance with carefully constructed parameters. Guided by measurable student learning outcomes, **Knowledge @ Work** encourages students to explore the broader implications of their educational experience beyond the classroom. Students are incentivized to go beyond the minimum requirements of their majors and earn bronze, silver, or gold levels of recognition based on their successful completion of additional experiential learning opportunities, as abundant scholarship attests to the cumulative value of multiple EL activities.

The success of **Knowledge @ Work** is measured through an assessment plan that addresses student learning outcomes and QEP goals, and is aligned with the institutional mission and strategic plan. Direct and indirect measures, which gather quantitative and qualitative data, assist in assessing both student learning outcomes and QEP goals.

The plan was developed with a realistic understanding of the limits of state university funding and existing human resources, with the goal of creating a sustainable infrastructure. The timetable for execution is realistic, pragmatic, and feasible, and reflects the consensus of multiple constituencies with regard to prioritization and implementation. The phased implementation of the QEP demonstrates an understanding and awareness of project management and the dynamic landscape of higher education, and contributes significantly to the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

As MGA's first QEP since elevation to university status, **Knowledge @ Work** plays a crucial role in the institution's evolving sense of identity. The resources committed to the QEP demonstrate the extent to which the University recognizes the value and potential impact of this unique opportunity. Experiential learning will provide an enhanced collegiate experience that enables MGA students to appreciate the relationship between classroom learning and professional success, in disciplines ranging from aviation and respiratory therapy to English, history, and biology. In submitting this QEP, the University is confident that **Knowledge @ Work** will strengthen the institution, its graduates, and the communities we serve.

Section 2: Middle Georgia State University: An Overview

In 2012, the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BoR) recommended the consolidation of Macon State College, which was founded in 1968, and Middle Georgia College, which was founded in 1884. The consolidation became official on January 8, 2013, creating Middle Georgia State College. In March of 2015, the USG BoR approved a sector change to state university, a name change to Middle Georgia State University (MGA), and a new institutional mission. These changes went into effect on July 1, 2015. In Spring of 2015, USG also approved new MGA master's degree programs in Information Technology (I.T.), and the institution will soon make application to SACSCOC for level change.

The new mission of Middle Georgia State University is to educate and graduate inspired lifelong learners whose scholarship and careers enhance the region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships and community engagement. MGA offers bachelor's degrees that are responsive to the economic and cultural needs of the region and state, and pending SACSCOC approval will begin offering graduate level programs in I.T. and Nursing in 2016. The College also offers associate degrees that prepare students for transfer to other institutions and career associate degrees that prepare students for immediate employment. The new institution, which has an enrollment of nearly 8000 students, has a far reach into the Middle Georgia region and beyond with campuses in Macon, Cochran Dublin, Eastman, and Warner Robins. MGA's Eastman facility is the only Aviation campus in the state of Georgia. With low tuition, robust financial aid, a commitment to the success of each student, and a vibrant residence life program on three of its five campuses, MGA offers an affordable and rewarding college experience leading to quality degrees.

As a state college, MGA was not an open enrollment institution but had admissions standards appropriate to a college committed to providing access to a diverse population. As MGA transitions to the state university sector, its admissions criteria will become more selective, following BoR policy. The student population of MGA is a rich mixture of traditional and non-traditional students; commuters and residents; and full and part-time learners. MGA students attend classes at our five campuses and online.

Section 3: QEP Topic Identification and Selection Process

The process of deriving a topic for MGA's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was managed by the QEP Topic Selection Team (Table 1). Formed in the Summer of 2014, the team was charged with overseeing the identification of a topic both creative and vital to the long term improvement of student learning at the institution through a deliberative process that would demonstrate both broad constituency participation and potential for sustainability. In recognition that a critical area of a QEP is its attention to student learning outcomes (SLOs), a team of faculty supervised the process of identifying and selecting a topic, seeking essential feedback from staff, students, and administration at key points along the way. (Appendix A)

Table 1 – QEP Topic Selection Team

| Member | Title | Area | Affiliation |
|------------------|--|---|--|
| Stephen Taylor* | Associate Professor | History | Faculty, Chair of the QEP Topic Selection Team |
| Donna Balding* | Associate Professor | Biology | Faculty |
| Stephen Fuller | Associate Professor | English | Faculty |
| Matthew Jennings | Associate Professor | History | Faculty |
| Chris Tsavatewa* | Department Chair and Assistant Professor | Health Services | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Ron Williams | Dean and Professor | College of Arts and Sciences, Chemistry | Administration, Faculty |
| Jonathan Yerby | Assistant Professor | Information Technology | Faculty, Alumni |

* Indicates membership in multiple QEP teams and committees

The QEP Topic Selection Team took its charge directly from SACSCOC's *Indicators of an Acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan* to:

- review the strategic plan, mission, and vision of the institution in search of directional strategies that would inform the work of the QEP;
- review institutional assessment documentation to identify potential areas of student learning and engagement that could have application to a QEP initiative;
- develop a QEP topic selection process consistent with best-practices that capture broad based constituency feedback;
- review the QEPs of peer institutions;
- identify QEP Best Practices;
- provide updates to the campus community and leadership; and
- select a topic for the QEP and recommend the topic to the Office of the Provost.

The institution was simultaneously pursuing a change of level from baccalaureate institution to university at the behest of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. Rather than writing to an existing mission statement and strategic plan, the team found itself in a constant and dynamic dialogue with the strategic planning committee and institutional leadership in order to make certain that the eventual QEP would align with the institutional directional strategies then under development. This final document reflects not only the QEP development process but also that larger institutional process.

Data Analysis and Planning

Beginning in July, the Topic Selection Team as a whole met six times, in addition to numerous meetings of sub-committees, workgroups, and presentation teams with the goal of reporting results and recommendations to the Office of the Provost by December 2014.

The topic selection planning and research process involved the following data streams and sources.

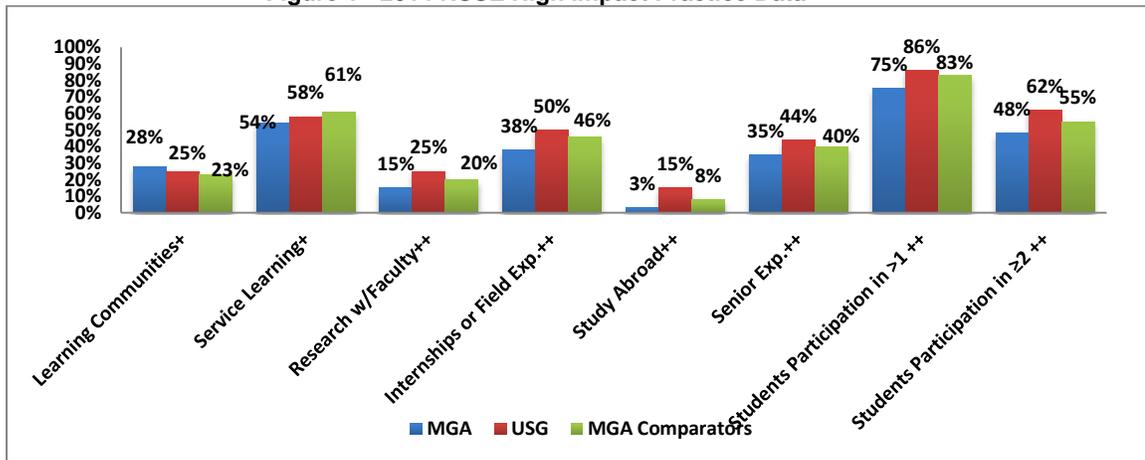
- An open-ended faculty survey
- Interviews with deans and chairs
- Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement
- Review of data collected by individual degree programs
- A survey of students enrolled in POLS 1101
- A poll of faculty
- Nineteen information/feedback sessions

Beginning in August of 2014, the Topic Selection Team sought faculty feedback by surveying the academy about “common obstacles to student success” (Appendix B). The data from this open-ended feedback instrument was then aggregated for review to inform the next phase of the research agenda. A review of the initial survey data revealed many issues for the institution’s faculty to address, but did not provide any action items suitable for an institution-wide QEP.

Concurrently, members of the QEP Topic Selection Team began interviewing School Deans and Department Chairs to capture programmatic feedback and data from external stakeholders (alumni, community partners, advisory committees, focus groups, etc.) that would be useful in the identification of a potential QEP topic.

The Topic Selection Team then analyzed the institutional results of the National Survey of Student Engagement conducted in the Spring of 2014. NSSE data on high impact practices (Figure 1) revealed MGA seniors reported lower participation in several high-impact practices, specifically service learning, research with faculty, internships and field experience, and study abroad, compared to students at peer institutions. (See Appendix C) Furthermore, MGA seniors were significantly less likely than their counterparts at peer institutions to report having participated in two or more high impact practices.

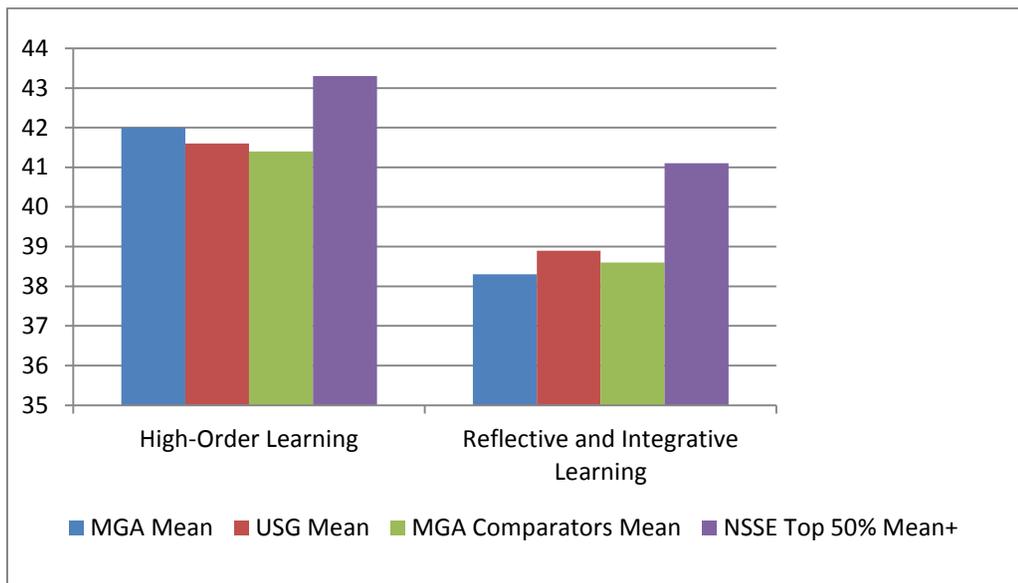
Figure 1 - 2014 NSSE High Impact Practice Data



(+ denote statistical significant differences to MGA competitors only, ++ denotes statistically significant difference to USG and MGA competitors, **)

Additional NSSE data revealed MGA seniors reported equivalent results for two engagement indicators (Figure 2), specifically high-order thinking and reflective and integrative learning, compared to peer institutions. However, a statistical difference between MGA's score and that of the top 50% of all 2013 and 2014 NSSE institutions revealed that MGA seniors were less likely than their counterparts at those institutions to report having participated in either of these engagement practices. (Appendix D)

Figure 2 - 2014 NSSE Engagement Indicators Data



(+ denotes statistically significant difference to NSSE Top 50% Institutions)

Following a review of the NSSE data and initial feedback sources, the Topic Selection Team engaged in organized brainstorming that resulted in the following themes for further research and discussion:

- Community Engagement
- Group Projects and Collaborative Learning
- Student - Faculty Research
- Field Experience
- Writing and Communication

By September each member of the team, upon review of the assessment data and initial survey feedback, presented a topic area and proposal for consideration and further examination within the team. The first round of topics for consideration included:

- Roundtable Learning
- Undergraduate Research
- Service Learning
- Communication and Collaboration
- Peer Interaction and Collaboration

After reviewing and discussing these proposals, the Topic Selection Team concluded that the most appropriate path was to focus their attention on three high-impact practices where MGA seniors reported significantly lower participation rates compared to their peers: undergraduate research, collaborative learning, and service learning.

With those three high-impact practices identified, the Topic Selection Team polled faculty in late September on surface impressions, asking them to rank the three presented topics in order of preference. The results revealed a preference for “research for the public good”, followed by “service learning,” then “roundtable learning.” (Appendix E)

That same month, the Department of History and Political Science surveyed students enrolled in all sections of POLS 1101—a course taken by students in all degree programs, typically during the freshman year. The 488 students who responded expressed strong support for varied experiential opportunities, with a particular interest in service learning.

The Topic Selection Team further refined the topic area proposals for presentation and began holding distinct faculty, staff, and student focus groups across the five campuses in early October. In these nineteen sessions, members of the Topic Selection Team presented information about the proposed topic areas, the associated literature, and strengths and weaknesses behind the proposal. In total, 218 individuals provided written feedback in these sessions. (Appendix F, G)

Undergraduate research attracted considerable enthusiasm across the board:

- *A research setting affords an opportunity to discover . . . real-world applications and perhaps garner some pre-career experience.* --Redel Flores, Information Technology major, “mostly online” student who attended a focus group at the Warner Robins campus
- *I am excited about the prospect of an undergraduate research center, the potential for hosting an undergraduate conference, the potential for hosting an undergraduate scholarly journal, and the possibility of embedding research activities into courses which are not being assessed for QEP.*—Lorraine Dubuisson, Associate Professor of English, Cochran campus
- *Students need the ability to perform research, which can only enhance further educational experiences and job possibilities.*--Kathy Adams, Asst. Director of Library Services & Reference/Instruction Librarian, Dublin campus
- *Undergraduate research is imperative in majors such as biology, psychology, education, etc. It is especially important in scientific majors. For students to fully comprehend they must apply their skills in a real life scenario.*--Lana Kempton, Academic Support Specialist, Macon campus
- *I think this opportunity to collaborate with expert faculty is invaluable. This topic helps develop more creative, critical thinkers and pairs well with Service Learning.*--Jeannie Ruggerio, Coordinator of the Student Success Center, Warner Robins campus
- *As MGA transitions to a university status change, the Undergraduate Research QEP is a high-potential choice. Early and mid-career faculty may be receptive to the collaboration with motivated students in upper-level classes in order to build resumes/CVs and portfolios. In addition, students in 1000 and 2000-level classes may be intrigued and recruited in view of the opportunity to be in collaboration with upperclassmen and notable professors.*—Vicki Luther, Associate Professor and Chair, Early Childhood Special Education program, Macon/Cochran campuses
- *This topic would allow lots of community involvement and the broadest application across all disciplines. Each academic area could determine what form undergraduate research would take within the context of their discipline. This option would work well for liberal arts majors as well as the non-liberal arts majors such as business, education, and health sciences.*--Ann Williams, Reference/Instruction Librarian, Warner Robins campus
- *As a graduating student, I am jealous of those who could potentially experience this. As a staff member, I am excited to aid these students any way I can to enhance their experience.* --Ryan Niedermaier, Business major and Student Life staff member, Cochran campus

Students and staff displayed considerable excitement about service learning:

- *This is the cornerstone of aviation degrees. The more hands on a subject is the more likely a student will be able to retain the knowledge needed for future careers.*--Janet McCartney, Aircraft Maintenance major, Eastman Campus
- *Service learning is a good choice if MGA becomes a university as the region will look to the institution for more influence.*—Paul Johnson, Director of the Student Success Center, Macon campus
- *To me, this is what education is all about—building a career ready foundation.*—Gil Calhoun, Assistant Director of Risk Management, Cochran campus
- *This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn ways in which to provide service to others, enhancing individual growth both personally and professionally.*--Sandy Callaway, Academic Resource Specialist, Warner Robins campus
- *Many of our students go to school here and remain to work in the region. So there is already a strong tie to the community, and having a service learning QEP would make it stronger.*--Felicia Haywood, Assistant Director of Library Services, Macon campus

Opinions on collaborative learning were mixed:

- *I understand that students do not always enjoy this type of learning, but I believe it is just as valuable as the other types, if not more so. In addition, collaborative learning can be made to be much more widely available than internships and more would be involved in it than with undergraduate research--* Dan Guerrant, Professor of Political Science, Cochran campus
- *This one [collaborative learning] fits the needs of the Aircraft Maintenance technician program, as I think all of us instructors are pretty much doing this now. We break our students up into teams and they have to solve problems in the company of others, and as they do, they sharpen their own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life (Maintenance) experiences. Everyone is an equal on the team. If the team chooses the wrong direction, the instructor will ask them why and if need be, guide them back to the right path.* –Paul Donnell, Lecturer, Aircraft Maintenance, Eastman campus
- *While schools and professors hope that each student in a collaborative learning group would bring their best to the group, there are many cases where this is not happening. One student does nothing and rides on other students, or maybe only one student does everything. While group work is suppose[d] to limit workload for the benefit of all, this could hamper students. Yes, reviews of peers can help reveal when this occurs, but this does not help the student(s) in the process. While the benefits of collaborative learning may outweigh the costs, it should be necessary to ensure that no cost of collaborative learning is imposed on one student.*--Frederick Baker, Psychology major, Macon campus
- *The Collaborative Learning option may not be easy to implement across five campuses and myriad program tracks. In my experience, the professional development demands are significant and MGA faculty may be slow to embrace this QEP. The critical thinking aspects are appealing; however, the phase-in will be daunting since some faculty and many of our students may be unfamiliar with the "PIGS FACE" strategies (Positive interdependence, Individual accountability, Group processing, Social skills, and Face-to-face interaction).*—Vicki Luther, Associate Professor and Chair, Early Childhood Special Education program, Macon/Cochran campuses
- *The ability to work effectively and efficiently in a group can depend heavily on the members of the group. It has the potential to positively affect student productivity.*--Mikaela Clark, Psychology major, Dublin campus
- *Group work never works for me because it seems like all work is always based on that one person.*--Jamecia Todd, Physical Therapy major, Cochran campus

In addition to the three enumerated topics, some respondents took the opportunity to suggest alternatives:

- *I would love to do an internship in the field of IT. I have no problem sitting in a class and learning but I feel like if I am able to go out in the real-world and perform the skills I've learned in class would benefit me more and make me more prepared for when I graduate.. . I like this proposal the best!--Kareem Conesthan, Information Technology major, Macon campus*
- *Internships and relationships with companies and industry related to aviation are golden: (1) it gives the student more real life experience, (2) it gives them the opportunity to get hired by these companies that they intern with which makes job placement high on the list--Jeffrey Bryan, Lead Aircraft Technician, Eastman campus*
- *The concept of community-focused research might combine strengths of [undergraduate research and service learning, and] be more adaptable to arts and sciences disciplines in a rigorous way, particularly if we define community broadly (i.e., not just our service area)—Chris Lawrence, assistant professor of Political Science, Macon/Warner Robins campuses*
- *Ideally I would love to see some research accompany service learning.--Felicia Haywood, Assistant Director of Library Services, Macon campus*

In December the Topic Selection Team submitted its final report to the Provost. Recognizing that there was considerable support for both, the team recommended the institution pursue a QEP in either Service Learning or Undergraduate Research. This report emphasized the strong support among the faculty, staff, and students for both topics, and noted the potential of either topic for the betterment of the institution, the students, and our communities. The team recognized that while redesigning curriculum around the concept of collaborative learning had the potential to be transformative, faculty would need a great deal of retraining in order to implement this properly, and previous efforts and experiences revealed both faculty and student resistance to the topic.

After the Provost presented the proposal to the Cabinet, feedback indicated additional support for internships, an area identified as a community need and institutional weakness as evident in the NSSE data and mentioned by students and faculty in the focus group sessions. With the work of the QEP Topic Selection Team concluded, the responsibility of harmonizing these recommendations fell to the newly established QEP Literature Review Team (Table 2) and QEP Steering Committee (Table 3) comprised of the chairs of the Literature Review Team, the Assessment committees, the incoming QEP Director, and the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives. This work began in the Spring of 2015 with a charge to review the efforts of the prior workgroup and evaluate the feasibility of incorporating internships into the QEP initiative. The workgroup quickly began an investigation of the literature around internships and their relationship to the other high impact practices previously recommended, along with the best practices and literature related to the umbrella of experiential learning. Following a review of peer QEP's focusing on experiential learning, the Literature Review Team endorsed the creation of a broad-based plan to support an experiential learning QEP at Middle Georgia State University, with a priority focus on internships, undergraduate research, and service learning.

Table 2 – QEP Literature Review Team

| Member | Title | Area | Affiliation |
|-------------------|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Stephen Taylor* | QEP Director and Professor | History | Faculty |
| Felicia Haywood * | Assistant Director | Library | Staff |
| Elise Langan | Associate Professor | Education | Faculty |
| John Girard | Professor | Information Technology | Faculty |
| Chris Tsavatewa* | Department Chair and Assistant Professor | Health Services | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Kim Pickens | Assistant Professor | Biology | Faculty |
| Tracie Provost | Associate Professor | History | Faculty |
| Terry Smith * | Associate Professor | Information Technology | Faculty |
| Carol Sargent | Associate Professor | Business | Faculty |

* Indicates membership in multiple QEP teams and committees

Table 3 – QEP Steering Committee

| Member | Title | Area | Affiliation |
|------------------|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Stephen Taylor* | QEP Director and Professor | History | Faculty |
| Chris Tsavatewa* | Department Chair and Assistant Professor | Health Services | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Terry Smith * | Associate Professor | Information Technology | Faculty |
| Pam Bedwell* | Academic Affairs | Administration | Vice Provost |

* Indicates membership in multiple QEP teams and committees

Following a March announcement to the campus community outlining a QEP focused on experiential learning (EL) to include internships, Dr. Martha Venn, Provost, formally announced the refined broad based approach to all campuses at the final Academic Assembly of the 2014/15 Academic Year. Prioritizing internships, undergraduate research, and service learning, **Knowledge @ Work** positions the institution for transformational change by strengthening and supporting student learning and engagement through an array of experiential learning opportunities.

Section 4: QEP Development Process

With the topic of Experiential Learning selected, the Provost charged the QEP Steering Committee and QEP Implementation Committee (Table 4) to develop an implementation plan for the administration of the QEP and to involve institutional and community constituencies in the design and implementation of the QEP.

Table 4 – QEP Implementation Committee

| Member | Title | Area | Affiliation |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pam Bedwell* | Vice Provost | Academic Affairs | Administration |
| Cheryl Carty | Director of Marketing and Communications | University Advancement | Staff |
| Jed Edge | Assistant Registrar | Enrollment Management | Staff |
| Brian Harrell | Director of Residence Life | Student Life | Staff |
| Felicia Haywood* | Assistant Director | Library | Staff |
| Joshua Maddox | SGA Vice President | History/Business | Student |
| Terry Smith* | Associate Professor | Information Technology | Faculty |
| Chris Tsavatewa* | QEP Director | Health Services | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Brian Stanley | Comptroller | Fiscal Affairs | Administration |
| Stephen Taylor* | Associate Professor | History | Faculty |
| Maria Wilson | Recruiter | Admissions | Staff |
| Francis Davis | Counsel to the President | Office of the President | Staff |
| Pella Murphy | Campus Director | Academic Affairs | Staff |
| Brian Harrell | Director Residence Life | Student Affairs | Staff |
| Natalie Rischbieter | Director of Alumni Relations | Institutional Advancement | Staff |
| Melinda Robinson-Moffet | Director of Career Services | Student Affairs | Staff |

* Indicates membership in multiple QEP teams and committees

QEP Staging

The QEP Steering Committee took initial responsibility for QEP project management through the Summer of 2015. Discussions across various institutional divisions, during the Spring semester, illuminated the planning process and timeline, including the identification of institutional representatives who would eventually become the Implementation Committee.

The QEP Steering Committee provided the QEP Implementation Committee, appointed Summer 2015, with an outline of tasks for review and further exploration. In anticipation of a new fiscal year and emerging program needs, a preliminary budget was developed with input from the QEP Steering Committee, Fiscal Affairs, and Academic Affairs. Upon approval of the budget, the QEP Implementation

Committee convened a subcommittee to review future fiscal needs and oversee outreach efforts of the initiative.

Recognizing the institution was in the midst of a significant rebranding effort that would communicate the quality of education and the distinctness of student experience at Middle Georgia State University, the QEP Steering Committee, upon the approval of the QEP Implementation Committee, proposed the formation of a subcommittee to lead the development of a comprehensive marketing campaign. This work would commence in the Summer, with the goal to have a campaign theme and awareness material by Fall Faculty and Staff Convocation.

Discussions with academic administrators, faculty, and fiscal affairs and a review of barriers to implementation associated with QEP's at other institutions led the QEP Steering Committee to recommend the development of a support structure for the QEP that would be attentive to faculty workload and compensation issues. To that end, attention was given to devise a model that dually provided faculty with financial compensation as well as professional development opportunities and resources. The QEP Implementation Committee impaneled several members to contribute to the drafting of a professional development and incentive framework. The following activities represent initial professional development commitments that informed the QEP process and are the foundation from which more nuanced and specialized learning will take place throughout the life-cycle of the QEP.

July 2014—SACSCOC Summer Institute (New Orleans, LA)

- Deepa Arora
- Eric Sun
- Stephen Taylor
- Mary Wearn

December 2014—SACSCOC Annual Meeting (Nashville, TN)

- Mary Wearn

April 2015 - Regents Administrative Committee on Effectiveness and Accreditation (RACEA)

- Mary Wearn
- Terry Smith

May 2015 – ABET Program Evaluator Training (Baltimore, MD)

- Terry Smith

July 2015—SACSCOC Summer Institute (Orlando, FL)

- Pamela Bedwell
- Terry Smith
- Chris Tsavatewa

In an effort to develop a foundational philosophy by which the Office of Experiential Learning and the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative would operate, the QEP Steering Committee, along with the QEP Implementation Committee, reviewed national standards and best practices in an effort to ensure that **Knowledge @ Work** was designed around accepted principles and approaches to ensure alignment and sustainability. The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) has codified best practices for experiential learning. The NSEE's approach is holistic, opting for a statement of general principles rather than specific assignments or rubrics. **Knowledge @ Work** is designed around these principles, promulgated by NSEE in 1998.

1. **Intention:** All parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from it. Intention represents the purposefulness that enables experience to become knowledge and, as such, is deeper than the goals, objectives, and activities that define the experience.
2. **Preparedness and Planning:** Participants must ensure that they enter the experience with sufficient foundation to support a successful experience. They must also focus from the earliest stages of the experience/program on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals, objectives and activities are defined. The resulting plan should include those intentions and be referred to on a regular basis by all parties. At the same time, it should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as the experience unfolds.
3. **Authenticity:** The experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation.
4. **Reflection:** Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. For knowledge to be discovered and internalized, the learner must test assumptions and hypotheses about the outcomes of decisions and actions taken, then weigh the outcomes against past learning and future implications. This reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential learning, from identifying intention and choosing the experience, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experience unfolds. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.
5. **Orientation and Training:** For the full value of the experience to be accessible to both the learner and the learning facilitator(s) and to any involved organizational partners, it is essential that they be prepared with important background information about each other and about the context and environment in which the experience will operate. Once that baseline of knowledge is addressed, ongoing structured development opportunities should also be included to expand the learner's appreciation of the context and skill requirements of her/his work.
6. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:** Any learning activity will be dynamic and changing, and the parties involved all bear responsibility for ensuring that the experience, as it is in process, continues to provide the richest learning possible, while affirming the learner. It is important that there be a feedback loop related to learning intentions and quality objectives and that the structure of the experience be sufficiently flexible to permit change in response to what that feedback suggests. While reflection provides input for new hypotheses and knowledge based in documented experience, other strategies for observing progress against intentions and objectives should also be in place. Monitoring and continuous improvement represent the formative evaluation tools.
7. **Assessment and Evaluation:** Outcomes and processes should be systematically documented with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes. Assessment is a means to develop and refine the specific learning goals and quality objectives identified during the planning stages of the experience, while evaluation provides comprehensive data about the experiential process as a whole and whether it has met the intentions which suggested it.
8. **Acknowledgment:** Recognition of learning and impact occur throughout the experience by way of the reflective and monitoring processes and through reporting, documentation and sharing of accomplishments. All parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of progress and accomplishment. Culminating documentation and celebration of learning and impact help provide closure and sustainability to the experience.

In addition to these best practices, which can be applied to all experiential learning modes, standards from the Council on Undergraduate Research, the AAC&U, and the National Association of Colleges and Employers will be incorporated where appropriate.

In consideration of these best practices, the QEP Steering Committee undertook the charge to review the landscape of higher education and identify peer institutions conducting similar EL endeavors. Over forty general QEP's and a dozen specific to the EL domain were reviewed and their appropriate personnel contacted for follow-up questions. These institutions, ranging from small private colleges to large public research universities, provided a breadth of information used to influence program development and implementation, including insights into assessment, administrative support, student engagement, budget, faculty participation, and sustainability.

Final QEP staging efforts recognized the need to coordinate the development and implementation of general programmatic and logistical activities related to the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative. A subcommittee of the QEP Implementation Committee was tasked to review and recommend steps to ensure operational efficiencies across the committee's efforts and coordinate specific actions related to technology, recognition, and general operations.

Alignment with Institutional Planning

Parallel to the work of the QEP Steering Committee and Implementation Committee, the QEP Assessment Committee (Table 5) was formed and charged to develop the appropriate mission, goals, and student learning outcomes for the QEP and to devise a mechanism for assessing them.

Table 5 – QEP Assessment Committee

| Member | Title | Area | Affiliation |
|------------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Stephen Taylor* | Professor | History | Faculty |
| Donna Balding* | Associate Professor | Biology | Faculty |
| Michael Gibbons | Assistant Professor | Sociology | Faculty |
| Terry Smith * | Associate Professor | Information Technology | Faculty |
| Chris Tsavatewa* | Department Chair and Assistant Professor | Health Services | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Pamela Bedwell* | Vice Provost | Academic Affairs | Administration |
| Troy Sullivan | Professor | Accounting and Business | Faculty |
| Benita Muth | Associate Professor | English | Faculty |
| Teri Miller | Department Chair and Associate Professor | Respiratory Therapy | Administration, Faculty, Alumni |
| Charles Smith | Director | Academic Technology Services | Staff |
| Art Recesso | Assistant Provost Innovation & Outreach | Academic Affairs | Administration |

* Indicates membership in multiple QEP teams and committees

QEP Mission and Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

The QEP Assessment Committee met weekly during the Summer of 2015 for this purpose and generated QEP mission statement, goals, and student learning outcomes that are specific, focused,

and measurable. Simultaneously, the institution’s new mission and strategic plan were finalized as it prepared to become a university on July 1, 2015. The team focused on aligning the QEP’s mission, goals, and student learning outcomes to directly support the institution’s new mission and strategic plan (see Appendix H). Together, the QEP’s mission, goals, and student learning outcomes provide support for compliance with CR 2.12 by “accomplishing the mission of the institution” and for compliance with CS 3.3.2 by identifying “goals and a plan to assess their achievement”.

Middle Georgia State University’s mission statement is “*Middle Georgia State University educates and graduates inspired, lifelong learners whose scholarship and careers enhance the region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships and community engagement.*” The strategic plan, which supports the mission, has five Pillars of Greatness listed as Strategic Directions.

1. Quality and Distinctiveness of Student Success.
2. Academic Reputation, Flagship Programs and Community Outreach.
3. Harnessing the Power of Technology.
4. Fiscal and Campus Sustainability.
5. The MGA Faculty and Staff Community.

The QEP is aligned with the institution’s Mission and its Strategic Plan through its emphasis on professional development and community based partnerships. The QEP mission statement is:

The mission of the QEP is to support the mission and strategic priorities of the institution by engaging students in experiential learning opportunities that allow them to enhance and apply academic and professional knowledge and skills beyond the classroom.

The associated QEP goals are:

1. *Focus resources to provide opportunities and support for experiential learning.*
2. *Enhance the branding of the institution in the region.*
3. *Develop partnerships that facilitate student, faculty, staff and community engagement through experiential learning.*
4. *Build evidence of student learning through direct and indirect measures.*
5. *Engage students, faculty, and staff in the QEP.*

Table 6 shows the relationship between three of the institution’s Strategic Directions and the QEP Goals. Data from various QEP assessment processes, direct and indirect, will be used to measure attainment of the QEP Goals and as input to measure achievement of three of the institution’s Strategic Directions.

Table 6 – Relationship of QEP Goals to Strategic Plan

| Strategic Direction and Institutional Priorities | QEP Goal |
|--|--|
| 1. Quality and Distinctiveness of Student Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional Priorities A, B, & D | 2. <i>Enhance the branding of the institution in the region.</i> 3. <i>Develop partnerships that facilitate student, faculty, staff and community engagement through experiential learning.</i> 4. <i>Build evidence of student learning through direct and indirect measures.</i> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. Academic Reputation, Flagship Programs and Community Outreach a. Institutional Priorities E & F</p> | <p>2. <i>Enhance the branding of the institution in the region.</i> 3. <i>Develop partnerships that facilitate student, faculty, staff and community engagement through experiential learning.</i></p> |
| <p>5. The MGA Faculty and Staff Community a. Institutional Priorities K</p> | <p>1. <i>Focus resources to provide opportunities and support for experiential learning.</i> 5. <i>Engage students, faculty, and staff in the QEP.</i></p> |

The QEP's Student Learning Outcomes, further detailed in section 9 of this QEP, are as follows:

- Students will explain the values and behaviors of professionalism.
- Students will explain the values and behaviors of social awareness.
- Students will explain the values and behaviors of civic responsibility.
- Students will utilize classroom knowledge and professional experiences together to prepare them for their chosen career.
- Students will analyze the relationship between academic knowledge and professional application in their chosen field.
- Students will test academic and professional knowledge and skills in a professional setting.

The first three Student Learning Outcomes focus on values and behaviors students should convey when pursuing the high-impact practices, including internships, undergraduate research, and service learning. Professionalism is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person." It encompasses various values and behaviors which include ethics, reliability, dependability, the ability to work with others, and a commitment to lifelong learning. The institution defines social awareness as the ability to understand and effectively interact with people with different backgrounds and from different cultures. The institution defines civic responsibility as a commitment to learning about and being involved in contributing to the betterment of our communities, our region, and our institution.

The QEP is focused on building an environment that supports the key processes that will be implemented to offer experiential learning opportunities to our students and to assess the success of the QEP Goals and achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes. Direct and Indirect assessment of student learning will occur in approved EL courses. Through these experiential learning opportunities, students will be able to "*enhance and apply academic and professional knowledge and skills beyond the classroom.*"

Baseline Assessment

While drafting the framework for the assessment mechanisms, the QEP Steering Committee and QEP Assessment Committee determined that there was a need for more information about the structure and prevalence of existing internships, service learning, and undergraduate research activities at the University in order to develop a comprehensive strategy for planning and implementation.

A report developed in the University's College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) noted that while seven of the nine baccalaureate programs offered in COAS required at least one course in research

methodology, only four of those programs followed up by requiring a capstone project or other research application. In addition, while faculty and students have been active in research individually, there appears to be little or no consensus about how this work is to be assessed or acknowledged, as these research activities have evolved ad hoc.

A comprehensive survey of MGA faculty across all campuses and disciplines, developed by Dr. Michael Gibbons for the QEP Assessment Committee, bears this out. The survey (Appendix I) included both quantitative and qualitative measures and was created using existing models from previous QEPs at other institutions, most notably at the University of Alabama. The survey was open for responses in the middle of the Summer semester, and even though only half of the full-time faculty (roughly 125 of 250) were on contract over the Summer, the survey generated a respectable 80 responses (a 64% response rate for Summer faculty and a 32% response rate for the total faculty). This response rate was generated with one initial email and one follow-up email distributed to the faculty list.

Results of this survey (Appendix J) indicate that MGA faculty members already participate in a variety of experiential learning activities. Undergraduate research is the experiential learning activity most utilized by MGA faculty, with 40% of respondents already participating. Service learning and internships are also in use, but with less frequency. Faculty reported 19% and 14% utilization respectively.

In the survey, most faculty indicated an openness to learning about and providing more opportunities in undergraduate research. In response to "I am interested in offering learning opportunities in [undergraduate research]," 49% of faculty responded "Agree Completely." Similarly, internships and service learning activities garnered interest, at 35% and 34% respectively. But the most consistently strong response in the faculty development section was in learning more about how to evaluate experiential learning activities effectively. 45% of respondents were "Very Interested" in learning about evaluation for undergraduate research, 35% for internships, and 33% for service learning.

Examining responses to questions about service learning and internships shows an interesting trend. Across the responses, these two were reported to be less utilized. However, respondents' answers to student learning questions indicate that existing service learning and internship opportunities may be more formalized and more clearly evaluated than undergraduate research.

The survey data revealed some faculty concerns and disinterest in providing experiential learning opportunities. Most concerns revolve around fitting more responsibilities into an already busy schedule. Some worried if experiential learning will add more work to the classes and responsibilities they already have. Others showed concern for the toll it might take on scholarship. To that end, several faculty members suggested counting EL towards their scholarship requirement. Others suggested course release or a stipend to offset the work involved in learning for, setting up, and managing experiential learning courses. Finally, the interest and willingness expressed by the responses may indicate an opportunity to involve non-terminal degreed faculty, if experiential learning can be incorporated into their professional development plans for promotion and tenure and strategically align with their career plans

The QEP Model: Knowledge @ Work

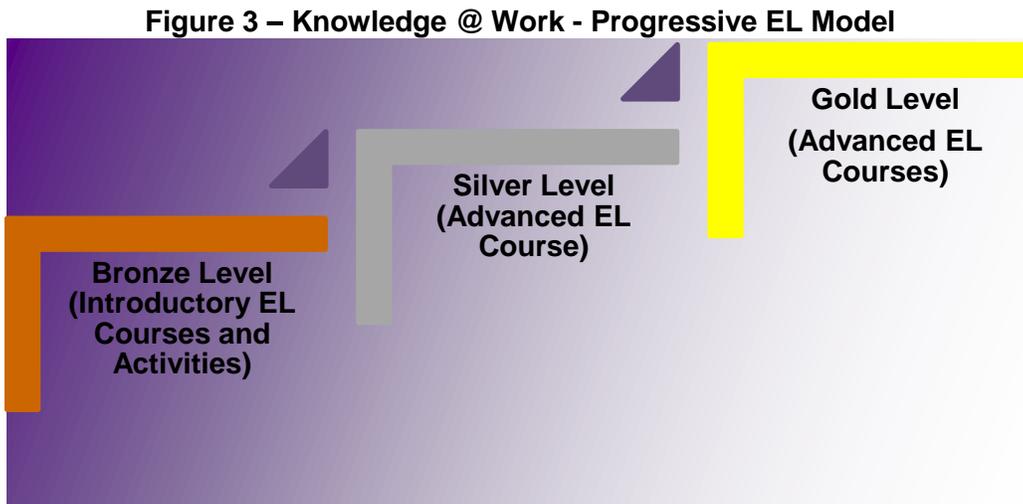
Through experiential learning, students and the institution will, as MGA's mission states, "enhance the region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships and community engagement." Students can apply classroom knowledge to work situations; enhance personal, professional, and

technical skills; collaborate with others; improve communication skills; and possibly work in teams – in person and virtually.

The QEP Steering Committee, with input from future members of the QEP Implementation Committee, devised a three-level structure for experiential learning. This structure informs both the implementation strategy for the QEP and the mechanism for acknowledging student work in experiential learning.

The model is built around Bloom’s Taxonomy as revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2009). The three-tiered structure allows a student to be introduced to foundational knowledge about experiential learning in the bronze level, First Year Experience (FYES 1001) courses. Students then have the opportunity to advance to silver and gold levels by successfully completing courses and activities designed specifically to support experiential learning in the context of higher-order knowledge and thinking. The cumulative nature of these experiences reflects the strengthening effects noted by Kuh (2008, 2010). The courses include offerings that incorporate internships, undergraduate research and service learning.

Over the implementation period, the institution will expand opportunities for experiential learning by identifying programs that can incorporate such courses to provide these benefits to all students and continue the development of qualified experiential learning activities. One crucial advantage of this model is that it permits a staged implementation over a number of years, an important consideration in the context of a rapidly evolving institution.



Section 5: Literature Review

Definition and Theory of Experiential Learning

Knowledge @ Work is deeply grounded in existing scholarship on experiential learning (Appendix N). From the early work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget to the present, scholars have recognized the essential link between learning and doing.

The Association for Experiential Education (n.d.) summarizes the scholarship as follows:

Experiential education is a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities' LEAP program (Liberal Education and America's Promise) was outlined in *The LEAP Vision for Learning: Outcomes, Practices, Impact, and Employers' Views* (AAC&U, 2011). The report identifies service learning, study abroad, student-faculty research, and a senior culminating (capstone) experience as high-impact practices effective in increasing student-faculty interaction, critical thinking, and hands-on collaborative learning. These practices strengthen two of the essential LEAP outcomes--*Intellectual and Practical Skills* (including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and problem-solving) and *Integrative and Applied Learning* (including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies).

Experiential learning is increasingly valued in higher education at all levels, from community colleges to research universities. Hensel and Cejda (2009, 2014) and Karukstis and Hensel (2011) have argued forcefully in favor of the application of student-faculty joint research at the community college and undergraduate level, while Kolb (1984), Hatcher and Bringle (1999), and Kuh (2008) have emphasized the role of experiential learning in improving retention at all levels. Moreover, in *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities* (Kenney, 1998), the Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University recommends that universities emphasize inquiry-based education, undergraduate research, and faculty-to-student mentoring as pillars of undergraduate education.

Models and Best Practices of Experiential Learning

The NSEE's *Eight Principles of Good Practice for All Experiential Learning Activities* (1998) has provided guidance for educators at all levels in designing and evaluating their experiential learning activities. The eight principles are as follows:

1. Intention
2. Preparedness and planning
3. Authenticity
4. Reflection
5. Orientation and training
6. Monitoring and continuous improvement

7. Assessment and evaluation
8. Acknowledgment

Kuh's seminal work *High-impact Education Practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter* (Kuh, 2008) highlights 10 teaching and learning practices that have been successfully adopted on campuses. Of these, at least five—undergraduate research, internships, capstone projects, service learning, and collaborative assignments/projects – fit the definition of experiential learning found at the beginning of this section.

The most important aspect of Kuh's work has been the impact of these activities on student success. Kuh contends that they improve the quality of the educational experience in at least six ways—increased time commitment, extended faculty-student and student-student interaction, a more diverse environment, “frequent high-fidelity feedback,” more sophisticated application of knowledge, and the potential for life-altering experience (Kuh, 2008).

A number of different models for experiential learning exist. Kolb, synthesizing the work of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget in his 1984 work, proposed a four-stage cycle of “concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation”(p. 40). Joplin (1981) begins her five-stage model with focus, a stage in which the task is defined and the student is prepared. This stage is followed by the action stage, in which the student confronts a problem or unfamiliar situation. Concurrent with these stages are stages three and four, support and feedback, which serve to keep the student on track. The fifth stage is debriefing, in which “learning is recognized, articulated and evaluated” (p. 19).

Best Practices: Critical Reflection

The integration and use of reflection is central to experiential learning in all its forms. Joplin (1981) notes that “experience alone is insufficient to be called experiential education, and it is the reflection process which turns experience into experiential education” (p. 17). Eyler (2009) insists that “the most critical factor for achieving powerful learning outcomes from experiential-learning programs is the inclusion of opportunities for feedback and reflection” (p. 30). Wurdinger (2005) describes experiential learning as “a reactive process in which learning occurs by reflecting on previous experiences”(p. 8), while Clements (1995) defines it as “immersing students in an activity (ideally, closely related to course material) and then asking for their reflection on the experience” (p. 116).

Inherent in these definitions is an examination of the assumptions underlying how one frames problems and acts in relation to those problems. Bringle and Hatcher (1999), in their discussion of service learning, reiterate Dewey's definition of reflection: “an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supported form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it” (p. 180). Stein (2000) argues that critical reflection occurs when individuals “identify the assumptions governing their actions, locate the historical and cultural origins of the assumptions, question the meaning of the assumptions, and develop alternative ways of acting” (para. 1). Reflection, therefore, helps students integrate knowledge gained through experience with prior knowledge, allowing them to act on their insights (Stein, 2000).

Bringle and Hatcher (1999) insist that effective reflection activities should “(a) clearly link the service experience to the course content and learning objectives; (b) be structured in terms of description, expectations, and the criteria for assessing the activity; (c) occur regularly during the semester so that students can practice reflection and develop the capacity to engage in deeper and broader reflection; (d) provide feedback from the instructor about at least some of the reflection activities so that students

learn how to improve their critical analysis and develop from reflective practice, and (e) include the opportunity for students to explore, clarify, and alter their values” (p. 183). Intentional reflection assists students in generalizing about learning, thus creating a pathway toward “powerful new perspectives” (Ash & Clayton, 2009, p. 139).

In keeping with best practice as outlined above, all EL activities associated with **Knowledge @ Work** will require a reflective writing assignment as a key assessment.

Best Practices: Multiple Modes

Institutions can induce students to use resources that promote learning by providing clear pathways for student success, aligning institutional practices and policies (including promotion and tenure policies) to support student success, and adopting a “living mission” focused on student learning and talent development (Kuh et al., 2010). No single action is sufficient to effectively challenge and support students to learn; thus Kuh et al. (2010) recommend that institutions “do many different things *better* and more *frequently* so that one or more initiatives touch *substantial numbers* of students in meaningful ways, rather than invest vast amounts of resources, time, and energy, in one large, complicated initiative” (p. 297).

In an effort to identify institutional practices that effectively promote student success, Kuh et al. (2010) initiated The Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) project. As part of this project, they identified twenty institutions that exhibited higher-than-expected graduation rates and higher-than-expected scores on the NSSE. Kuh’s list of high impact practices (2008) formed the basis for the DEEP analysis. Among those high impact practices, Middle Georgia State University has identified three as most readily applicable to the institutional context: Internships, Undergraduate Research, and Service Learning.

Internships

The Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) indicates that internships are a partnership between the student, the student’s institution, and the internship site that facilitates “learning by doing” (as cited in O’Neill, 2010). Common elements to most institutional definitions of internships include onsite supervision and guidance of the student, a link to career aspirations or goals, and opportunities for reflection (O’Neill, 2010).

Fall (2006) surveyed public relations students who participated in internships over a three-year period, finding it crucial to tie course content to the internship activity. Eyler’s (1993) study of students in a human and organizational development program who participated in internships also covered a three-year period. Eyler devised a method for testing how the internships affected the students’ ability to transfer knowledge to real-world situations. Eyler found that this ability was much increased when the internship contained “extensive opportunities for guided analysis and reflection” (Eyler, 1993, p. 50).

As reported in a synthesis of research on the value of internships, “employers... would like colleges and universities to emphasize more the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings through internships or other hands on experiences” (Carey 2010, p. 30). Similarly, the study of DEEP schools reports that internships “are venues for applying knowledge and gaining real-world experience” (Kuh et al., 2010, p. 236). The DEEP report goes on to indicate that internships “enrich [the] campus learning environment when students reflect on and share what they’ve learned from class presentations and informal conversations beyond class” (p. 236).

O'Neill (2010) argues that internships assist students as they build substantial relationships, engage across differences, receive rich feedback on their work, apply and test what they are learning in new situations, and reflect on the people they are becoming. Effective internships embrace an experiential learning model that insures students are provided a structure to make sense of new territory, respond positively to unexpected challenges and integrate academic knowledge to real life experiences (Parrilla & Hesser, 1998). Knouse and Fontenot (2008) indicate that internships are beneficial in enhancing student employability and that interns experience both work-related and organizational learning. Additionally, internships can provide an essential curricular pathway for students to “synthesize” academic knowledge and professional knowledge (Pierson & Troppe, 2010). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) report evidence linking an internship experience to immediate employment after graduation. Pierson and Troppe (2010) highlight the need for internships to be embedded in a student’s curricular design.

O'Neill (2010) recommends four actions colleges should take to ensure that internships are effective. First, colleges should clearly define the parameters of internships and create a process where students reflect on the experience. Second, they should include both academic learning goals and career development goals in internships, but distinguish between them so that students understand how their internship contributes to learning in college, as well as how the experience can help them clarify career aspirations. Third, colleges should address concerns from academic departments that internships are too “vocational” by emphasizing how the discipline can be relevant for “making sense of complex, contemporary issues” (p. 8). Finally, they should promote collaboration between faculty and career services professionals.

Unlike other EL opportunities, internships impose significant burdens on outside partners with regard to planning content. O'Neill (2010) pointed out that “everyone—faculty, advisors, career development professionals, and employers—must agree to help students set and fulfill explicit learning *and* career development goals for internships.” Donnelly-Smith (2010) identifies four “best practices” for partnering agencies to adopt when hosting an intern. First, sites should consider structured internship experiences with all interns starting as a cohort. Second, sites should provide assignments with clear goals, ideally linked to the student’s area of study and with opportunities for collaboration. Third, sites should provide interns with opportunities to demonstrate and share their learning, perhaps with other interns or employees at the end of the experience. Finally, internship sites, perhaps in collaboration with the sponsoring college or university, can and should assist interns in describing their experiences and reflecting on what they have learned.

Undergraduate Research

The Council on Undergraduate Research defines undergraduate research as “an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline” (as cited in Elrod et al., 2010, p. 4). Central to undergraduate research is the opportunity for students to examine real problems relevant to their interests and concerns (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Terenzini, 1999).

The purpose of undergraduate research programs is to involve students in a collaborative investigative or creative activity with a faculty member. “It is hard to imagine a richer educational setting for student-faculty interaction than working side by side with a faculty member on a research project,” wrote Kuh et al. (2010, p. 214) in their discussion of DEEP schools. They continued, “Students not only observe an expert at work, but they also contribute to that work by applying in-class learning to the research project” (p. 214). Similarly, Kinkead (2003) notes that a “hallmark of undergraduate research is the role

of the mentor, a faculty member who guides the novice researcher and initiates the student into the methods of a discipline” (p. 6).

Directed study courses too often result in a student doing most of the work in the final week or days of the course, thereby negating the reflective and revisionist aspects of true inquiry. Heylings and Tariq (2001) note that time management is a major issue for successful student completion of research projects and recommend assisting students through 1) using interim reports that outline action plans and provide reflective comments; 2) offering timely feedback to students; 3) requiring a daily journal of work accomplished; and 4) using a rubric with both personal and research-specific items measured for evaluation.

Based on analysis of NSSE data, Elrod, Husic, and Kinzie (2010) identified a positive correlation with “gains in deep approaches to learning” and “overall engagement.” Evidently, as students develop skills in data research, they benefit from consistent faculty feedback and support, and gain a more comprehensive understanding of academic research. Ultimately, empirical research on the impact of student-faculty collaborative research suggests that such work correlates with improved presentation and communication skills, reading and comprehension skills, collaborative working skills, and an increased confidence in the ability to do research (Seymour, Hunter, Laursen, & Deantoni, 2004), as well as clarification of career goals (Lopatto, 2007).

Considerable empirical evidence suggests that undergraduate research plays an important role in the retention of diverse students, as well as the overall increase in degree aspirations, specifically the decision to pursue post-graduate study (Elrod et al., 2010; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Similarly, studies suggest that students, when controlling for background factors, are more likely to persist in earning a degree when they have participated in undergraduate research (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) and that undergraduate research opportunities support equity in making opportunities available to historically underserved students (Elrod et al., 2010).

Service Learning

Bringle and Hatcher (1995) define service learning as a “course-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility” (as cited in Bringle & Hatcher, 2009, p. 38). Braxton, Luckey, and Helland (2002) describe service learning as “a form of engaged learning that uses community issues for accomplishing educational goals” (p. 31). Similarly, Clayton (2013) defines service learning as “a collaborative and democratic teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, personal growth, and civic learning and to advance public purposes” (p. 1). Eyler and Giles (1999) report that continuous reflection and integration of service experience with course content are central to effective service learning experiences.

Eyler and Giles (1999) recommend a balance between the service component and the academic learning component, with reflection serving a central role. Their study of service learning participants from 45 colleges and universities analyzed characteristics of successful programs and demonstrated student outcomes such as understanding and applying knowledge, critical thinking, and personal and interpersonal development. Ash and Clayton (2004) described the development of the service learning program at North Carolina State University, which emphasized the incorporation of an effective reflection component. They found that their approach enhanced critical thinking, mastery of academic material, and personal growth.

Synthesizing best practices, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) discuss the elements of a well-designed service-learning course that promotes student learning. In particular, an effective service-learning course includes more time spent on service learning activities (Mabry, 1998), high frequency of reflection (Eyler & Giles, 1999), alignment of service experiences with course learning objectives (Rhoads, 1998), and a quality site placement providing a variety of work, a sense of appreciation for participation, and a high level of responsibility (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997). Service learning differs from other forms of experiential education, such as internships or field experiences, in that an explicit goal of service learning is to develop civic skills (Bringle & Hatcher, 2009). Likewise, service learning differs from other types of community work in that the experience includes “academic work in which the community service activities are used as a ‘text’ that is interpreted, analyzed, and related to the content of a course in ways that permit a formal evaluation of the academic learning outcomes” (Bringle & Hatcher, 2009, p. 38).

A significant body of research demonstrates the impact of service learning on student learning, including cognitive skills development, career development, career preparedness, and moral development (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Astin et al (2000) outlines the many positive effects of service learning on students, including improved academic performance, values clarification, increased self-efficacy, and leadership skills. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) conclude that “the greater the extent to which service learning courses met the criteria for being highly integrative and reflective, the stronger the positive effects of service learning on such outcomes as reflective judgment and the use of complex and multiple perspectives in identifying the causes of and formulating the solutions to specific social problems” (p. 191). They additionally report on the positive impact community service and service learning have on students’ sociopolitical attitudes, noting that graduates who participated in service learning are more likely to choose a service career and to plan to participate in service after college.

Potential Benefits

The Association of American Colleges and Universities’ publication, *New Research on Internships and Experiential Learning* (Carey, 2010), reports that 73% of employers surveyed would like colleges and universities to provide more emphasis on developing the student’s ability to apply knowledge and skills in a real-world setting. More than 80% indicate that completing an internship or community-based project would be effective in ensuring the ability of college graduates to acquire the skills needed to be successful after graduation, and 79% want schools to place more emphasis on internships.

Research has demonstrated that students who participate in experiential learning opportunities can improve their problem-solving skills (Eyler, 2009; Hmelo-Silver, 2004); improve critical thinking skills (Ash & Clayton, 2004; Eyler, 2009); gain deeper understanding of subject matter (Eyler, 2009; Eyler & Halteman, 1981) and gain the ability to apply that knowledge in situations in their own lives (Eyler, 1993; Marini & Tillman, 1998). This prepares students for lifelong learning when their classroom days have ended (Eyler, 2009; Garvin & Ramsier, 2003; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Sibthorp et al., 2011). Additionally, experiential learning opportunities can affect students’ ability to interact with people around them. They may become more effective communicators (Clements & Cord, 2013; Marini & Tillman, 1998) and may acquire skills in teamwork (Clements & Cord, 2013; Humes & Reilly, 2008; Kayes, Kayes & Kolb, 2005; Marini & Tillman, 1998). They may also develop cultural competence (Boyle et al., 1999). Experiential learning opportunities can produce students who are “informed, innovative, and flexible” (Clements & Cord, 2013, p. 123). ELOs can lead to intellectual growth (Eyler, 2009; Kaul & Pratt, 2010) and can build confidence in students (Gillin et al., 1984; Kaul & Pratt, 2010; Lisko & O’Dell,

2010; Marini & Tillman, 1998). Research also supports the positive impact of professional development on faculty beliefs and practices (Camblin & Steger, 2000; Light, Calkins, Luna, and Drane, 2009; Persellin and Goodrick, 2010).

Experiential learning is applicable across the curriculum. Examples that have informed **Knowledge @ Work** come from the literature from science and engineering (Garvin & Ramsier, 2003), the humanities (Bailey, DeVinny, Gordon, & Schadewald, 2000), the social sciences (Boyle, Nackerud, & Kilpatrick, 1999; Kaiser-Drobney, 1997; McLeod, 2013), business (Clements & Cord, 2013), and medical fields (Lisko & O'Dell, 2010).

Section 6: Actions to be Implemented

The principal mission of Middle Georgia State University's QEP is to support the institution's mission and strategic priorities by engaging students in experiential learning opportunities that allow them to enhance and apply academic and professional knowledge and skills beyond the classroom.

The following action areas of the **Knowledge @ Work** QEP relate directly to the previously articulated program goals and student learning outcomes to be assessed. The timeline for a staged implementation with associated milestones and deliverables is articulated in more detail in Section 7 and narrated here:

Classification & Development of Qualified Experiential Learning Opportunities

Validated experiential learning opportunities (ELO) are the cornerstone of the **Knowledge @ Work** QEP. Supported by professional development (see below), faculty and staff will present courses and activities through a recognition and qualification process to be coordinated by the QEP Assessment and Review Board. The purpose of the review process is to ensure consistency in rubric application, ensure evaluation quality of experiential learning activity, and maintain continuity and communication of the **Knowledge @ Work** program goals and objectives. Following qualification as an ELO, each course or activity will be designated with an appropriate attribute to distinguish it as applicable to the experiential learning pathway and highlighted on the institution's website, online schedule, and relevant marketing material in an effort to enhance awareness.

The QEP Assessment and Review Board will begin the work to develop specific evaluative criteria during the Fall Semester of 2015, and will begin reviewing proposals by Spring Semester 2016. In drafting these criteria the Board will consider the best practices and principles of experiential education including, by not limited to. the following:

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
- Experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others and learner to the world at large.
- The educator and learner may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty, because the outcomes of experience cannot totally be predicted.
- Opportunities are nurtured for learners and educators to explore and examine their own values.
- The educator's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.

- The educator recognizes and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning.
- Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and pre-conceptions, and how these influence the learner.
- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes.

(Association for Experiential Education, 2007-2014)

Implementation of Student Activities and Experiences

Student Activities and Experiences Year 1

During the year of the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative, several experiential learning options (ranging from experiential learning exposure and/or foundational content to higher level internship opportunities) will be piloted under the supervision of the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL), a newly created unit within the Office of Academic Affairs, with the intention to expand and enhance the availability of entry level experiential learning pathways in the years to come. Utilizing an existing academic, student affairs, and enrollment management resource framework, dedicated freshman year experience courses, living-learning communities, and orientations will be targeted for experiential learning introduction and on-boarding.

Student Activities and Experiences Years 2-5

Activities for years two through five will focus on increased participation in experiential learning designated courses and activities across a programmatic and campus landscape. Student will have the opportunity to participate in a new, annual Undergraduate Showcase to highlight relevant experiential learning activities and recognize exemplary experiential learning achievement. An institutional marketing campaign will provide awareness of the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative and engage student participation in the development of a framework and interest area inventory to facilitate the prioritization of community engagement efforts to be considered by faculty, staff, and students. In furtherance of the QEP's Student Learning Outcomes, the OEL will collaborate with the Office of Career Services (OCS), as they play an integral role in the professional development and career orientation and support students in work readiness. At the direction of the OEL and Departmental EL Liaisons (described in more detail in section 8), students pursuing experiential learning opportunities will purposefully utilize the resources of the OCS to develop effective job search skills and strategies through exploration, preparation, and experience within the college, community, and workplace.

Implementation of Faculty and Staff Development Actions

As illustrated by the institutional data (Appendix J) faculty have indicated significant interest in learning more about experiential learning and in potentially incorporating appropriate activities into their course offerings. In the context of the QEP, faculty will need support and information about best practices and approaches in order to develop qualifying courses. Given that the first goal of the QEP is to "focus resources to provide opportunities and support for experiential learning," a faculty development and implementation strategy will be essential in achieving associated outcomes. Thus, over the next five years, the following activities are prioritized.

Online Webinars, Traditional Workshops, and Guest Speakers

In partnership with the Office of the Provost, Deans, Department Chairs, the Center for Teaching and Innovation, and the University System of Georgia Faculty Development Office, the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) will develop a professional development strategy and schedule with a priority focus on

offerings that focus on experiential learning best practices and implementation solutions. Online webinars will increase accessibility to OEL-developed introductory material across campuses, while rotating workshops and seminars will provide more robust opportunities for engagement and development. While the opportunity to participate will be open to all faculty, the five-year goal is 50% faculty participation. Faculty who attend these events will be provided enough information to prepare them to apply for course redesign grants and pursue course qualification as an experiential learning opportunity. It is expected that exposure to these initial activities will motivate faculty to seek further professional development opportunities related to experiential learning facilitated by the OEL. First- and second-year topics may include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

1. Defining Experiential Learning
2. Best Practices in Experiential Learning
3. Critical Reflection in High Education
4. Service Learning Essentials
5. Documenting and Assessing Experiential Learning
6. Internship PitFalls and Best Practices
7. Making Liberal Arts relevant for employment-driven students
8. Making experiential learning count
9. Improving access to experiential learning for all students:
10. Skills that employers are looking for, and how to help students develop them
11. Engaging students intellectually beyond the classroom

Conference Attendance

The Office of Experiential Learning's budget allocates travel funds for faculty and staff to attend and present at professional development conferences focused on experiential learning. Matching currently available travel and development dollars at the departmental level, the OEL plans to leverage institutional resources and extend opportunities to a broader campus pool. An application process is currently under development.

Designated Professional Development Cohort

Identified Experiential Learning Liaisons and interested junior faculty will collaborate in a strategically crafted professional learning cohort to maximize the strength of experience, expertise, and focus interest. Experiential Learning Liaisons, representing each of the 17 academic units, will receive annual stipends of \$1000 to oversee, coordinate, and assist with assessment of experiential learning in their area. These recipients, along with others who receive professional development funds and QEP grants will meet at least once a semester to share experiences and issues pertaining to the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative.

Implementation of University Actions

Resources

Grants

Experiential Learning mini-grants will incentivize development or improvement of experiential learning opportunities. Funds will be made available annually to support course redesign, student-faculty conference travel, undergraduate research proposals, and service learning proposals. Criteria and an application process will be developed in consultation with the QEP Assessment and Review Board in the Fall of 2015 for the first cycle awards to distributed Spring 2016.

Website

Working in partnership with the Office of Technology Resources and the Offices of Marketing and Communications, the Office of Experiential Learning will develop and maintain web pages to be accessible thru the MGA website that function as the repository and information portal for all material related to experiential learning opportunities and the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative. Faculty and staff will find resources for course development and evaluation, professional learning opportunities, and funding resources. Similarly, students will have access to general EL resources including, but not limited to, information, course schedules, and experiential learning transcripts. Alumni and community partners will be able to access information about the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative, view highlights and success stories, and find an access point to recruit and develop partnerships for future EL opportunities.

Experiential Learning Database and Portal

Working in partnership with the Office of Technology Resources, the Offices of Marketing and Communications, and the School of Information Technology, the Office of Experiential Learning will develop and maintain an experiential learning database of parties, partnerships, networks, and other opportunities along with appropriate partnership agreements. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the general public will have access to the portal for the purposes of submission of ideas for new EL opportunities and communication between entities.

Foundation Capital Campaign

The Office of Experiential Learning will work in partnership with Middle Georgia State University Foundation and Alumni Affairs Office to facilitate engagement and develop opportunities from alumni to support and enhance the experiential learning environment of the institution. Whether through direct funding, matched funding, or a direct experiential opportunity, the OEL is committed to demonstrating the value of experiential learning externally while nurturing engaged students who will mature into involved alumni.

Recognition

Undergraduate Showcase

In the late Spring of each of the first five years of the QEP, the Office of Experiential Learning will host an undergraduate showcase, to include demonstrations of experiential learning from the academic year. The event, to take place over several days and across multiple campuses, will highlight the breadth of experiential learning activities and accomplishments as well as co-curricular opportunities.

Proposed participants and activities include, but are not limited to:

- International Food Festival
- Study Abroad Presentation
- Honors Colloquium
- Undergraduate Research Conference
- Honors Convocation
- Service Learning
- Internship Review
- Student Leadership Awards Ceremony

Experiential Learning Transcript

Collaborating with the Registrar's Office and the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Experiential Learning will develop and manage the experiential learning transcript and process. The experiential transcript reflects a student's total learning experience at Middle Georgia State University by

documenting the wide range of experiential educational opportunities in which the student participated both inside and outside the classroom. Faculty and staff providing oversight for the quality of these experiences validate the documentation through identified assessment channels. In addition to capturing experiences related to the focus area of the QEP such as service learning, undergraduate research, and internships, the experiential learning transcript is positioned to recognize student achievement in student leadership, academic honors and awards, study abroad, and community service.

Graduation Distinction

In addition to the undergraduate showcase and the experiential learning transcript, students completing an Experiential Learning level will be recognized at graduation, as honors graduates and dean's list/president's list scholars are already acknowledged. Current plans call for these students to be permitted to wear an Experiential Learning cord or sash in the color corresponding to their highest completed level and for the level to be announced with their name.

Activities

Marketing and Awareness

Under the guidance of the Office of Experiential Learning, the Offices of Marketing and Communication will develop and implement a marketing and awareness campaign for the **Knowledge @ Work** QEP initiative. The campaign will run for five years include, but not limited to, the following activities.

- Social media campaign
- Traditional print campaign
- Email campaign (Faculty, Staff, and Students)
- Engagement activities
- Forums and presentations
- Website resources

Section 7: Timeline

The following tables outline the actions steps set forth within the QEP to satisfy the associated goals and objectives. The year-by-year timeline proposes categorical milestones and expectations to fully implemented and completed within five years. Associated action details, budgets, and responsibilities have been described elsewhere in this document.

Table 7. Year 1 Activities (2015-2016)

| Year 1 Activities (2015-2016) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Institutional Milestones | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Hire QEP Director (Provost) | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Establish Office of Experiential Learning | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| • Submit QEP | | X | | | | | | | | | |
| • Appoint EL Advisory Board | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |
| • SACSCOC Site Visit | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Marketing/Awareness | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Awareness Campaign | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| ◦ Develop marketing materials | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| • Web site development/updates | | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| • Meetings with campus groups | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Foundation/Capital Campaign | | | X | X | | | | | | | |
| Programming | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Workshops/Webinars/conferences | | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | |
| • Develop EL Module in Brightspace/D2L | | X | X | X | | | | | | | |
| • Develop Onboarding Module | | | | X | X | X | | | | | |
| • EL Seminar | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Designated Professional Development Cohort (EL Liaisons) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Annual Undergraduate Showcase | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Develop EL course and activity criteria, review EL proposals & award grants | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Classification and development of qualified ELOs | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Development of EL database and portal | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |
| • EL Transcripts—develop and test | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X |
| Assessment Actions | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Build assessments & rubrics: EL Internship Course | X | X | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Pilot EL Internship Courses | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| • EL Internship Courses – Live | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Build assessments & rubrics: EL FYE 1001 Course | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| • Pilot EL FYE 1001 Courses | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| ○ Student Work Scoring (Faculty) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Build assessments & rubrics: EL Undergraduate Research Courses | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities provided | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Compilation of direct assessments of student learning | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Compilation of indirect assessment of student learning | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities utilized | | | | | | | | | | | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • QEP Initiative Assessment Plan Review | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Institutional Oversight and Endorsement | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Appoint committees | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Review reports | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • VP/Provost & SACSCOC Liaison | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Table 8. Year 2 Activities (2016-2017)

| Year 2 Activities (2016-2017) | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
|--|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Marketing/Awareness | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| • Continue Awareness Campaign | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Web site maintenance | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Meetings with campus groups | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Foundation/Capital Campaign | | | X | X | | | | | | | |
| Programming | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| • Workshops/Webinars/conferences | | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | |
| • EL Seminar | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Designated Professional Development Cohort (EL Liaisons) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Annual Undergraduate Showcase | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Review EL proposals and award grants | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Classification and development of qualified ELOs | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • EL Transcripts—Pilot | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Assessment Actions | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| • EL FYE 1001 Courses - Live | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Pilot EL Undergraduate Research Courses | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • EL Undergraduate Research Courses - Live | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Build assessments & rubrics: EL Service Learning Course | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| • Pilot EL Service Learning Courses | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement (Dir) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities provided | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Compilation of direct assessments of student learning | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Compilation of indirect assessment of student learning | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities utilized | | | | | | | | | | | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • QEP Initiative Assessment Plan Review (ISSR) | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Institutional Oversight | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | |
| • EI Advisory Board – Appoint committees | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Review reports | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • VP/Provost & SACSCOC Liaison | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Table 9. Year 3 Activities (2017-2018)

| Year 3 Activities (2017-2018) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Marketing/Awareness | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Continue Awareness Campaign | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Web site maintenance | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Meetings with campus groups | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Foundation/Capital Campaign | | | X | X | | | | | | | |
| Programming | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Workshops/Webinars/conferences | | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | |
| • EL Seminar | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Designated Professional Development Cohort (EL Liaisons) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Annual Undergraduate Showcase | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Review EL proposals and award grants | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Classification and development of qualified ELOs | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • EI Transcript Live | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Assessment Actions | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • ALL EL Courses – Live | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| ○ Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities provided | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Compilation of direct assessments of student learning | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Compilation of indirect assessment of student learning | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities utilized | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • QEP Initiative Assessment Plan Review (ISSR) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Institutional Oversight | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| • EL Advisory Board – Appoint committees | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Review reports | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • VP/Provost & SACSCOC Liaison | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Table 10. Year 4 Activities (2018-2019) and Year 5 Activities (2019-2020)

| Year 4 Activities (2018-2019) and Year 5 Activities (2019-2020) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Marketing/Awareness | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Continue Awareness Campaign | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Web site maintenance | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Meetings with campus groups | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Foundation/Capital Campaign | | | X | X | | | | | | | |
| Programming | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Workshops/Webinars/conferences | | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | |
| • EL Seminar | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Designated Professional Development Cohort (EL Liaisons) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Annual Undergraduate Showcase | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| • Review EL proposals and award grants | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • Classification and development of qualified ELOs | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| • EI Transcript Live | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Assessment Actions | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • ALL EL Courses – Live | | X | | | | | X | | | | |
| o Student Work Assessment (Faculty) | | | | | | X | X | | | | X |
| o Overall Assessment Evaluations – Continuous Improvement (Dir) | | | | | | X | X | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| o Determine number of professional development opportunities provided | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| o Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| o Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | X |
| o Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | X | | | | | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of partnership agreements | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Compilation of direct assessments of student learning | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| ○ Compilation of indirect assessment of student learning | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| • Measure Success Toward QEP Goal 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ NSSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ○ Determine number of EL courses offered | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students enrolled in EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of students completing EL courses | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of professional development opportunities utilized | | | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| ○ Determine number of bronze, silver and gold designations | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • QEP Initiative Assessment Plan Review (ISSR) | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Institutional Oversight | Jun - July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Appoint committees | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| • EL Advisory Board – Review reports | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| • VP/Provost & SACSCOC Liaison | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Section 8: Demonstration of Institutional Capability

Overview of Institutional Capability and Commitment

The **Knowledge @ Work** QEP initiative is the cornerstone of Middle Georgia State University’s reaffirmation efforts. The aforementioned goals and student learning outcomes will be achieved through a broad-based network of invested faculty, staff, students, and administration over the next five years. In recognition of its strategic value the institution commits to an investment of approximately \$1.6 million dollars over five years to ensure the implementation, sustainability, and institutionalization of the QEP goals. All budgetary responsibility will reside within the Office of Experiential Learning and under the oversight of the QEP Director.

Financial and Physical Resources

Budget

The following budget represents the substantial financial commitment of the University to the **Knowledge @ Work** QEP initiative. Table 11 provides a summary of the five-year budget, figure 4 shows budget proportions, while table 12 provides categorical details of both direct and indirect supports.

Table 11 – Five Year Budget Summary

| Academic Year | Year 1 (AY 15/16) | Year 2 (AY 16/17) | Year 3 (AY 17/18) | Year 4 (AY 18/19) | Year 5 (AY 19/20) | Total |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Category | | | | | | |
| • Direct Supports | \$139,850 | \$141,249 | \$142,661 | \$145,514 | \$149,152 | \$718,427 |
| • Indirect Supports | \$113,698 | \$114,835 | \$115,983 | \$118,303 | \$121,260 | \$584,079 |
| • Faculty Compensation | \$25,500 | \$25,500 | \$25,500 | \$25,500 | \$25,500 | \$127,500 |
| • Travel | \$12,000 | \$12,500 | \$13,000 | \$13,500 | \$14,000 | \$65,000 |
| • Operating | \$23,530 | \$32,030 | \$27,030 | \$25,530 | \$26,530 | \$134,650 |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | \$314,578 | \$326,113 | \$324,174 | \$328,347 | \$336,443 | \$1,629,655 |

Figure 4 – Proportion of Budget Summary (2nd Year - Less Direct and Indirect Salary Budgets)

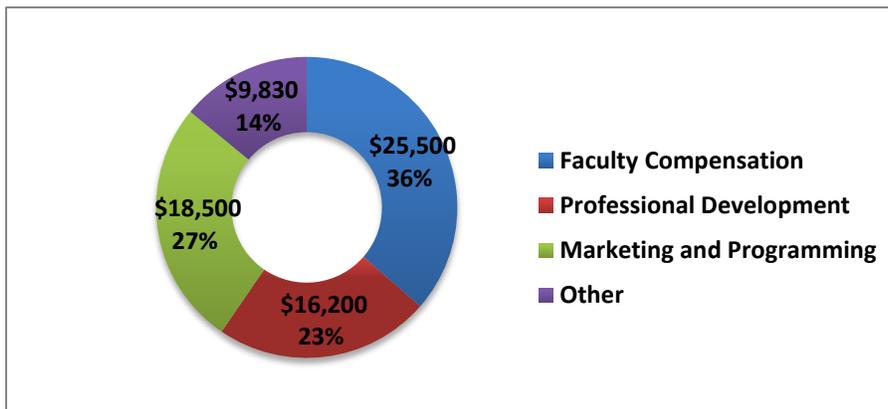


Table 12 - Office of Experiential Learning Budget Proposal

*denotes categories seeking matching funds from the Middle Georgia State University Foundation

| | Year 1 (AY 15/16) | Year 2 (AY 16/17) | Year 3 (AY 17/18) | Year 4 (AY 18/19) | Year 5 (AY 19/20) | Total |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Salary and Benefits (500000) | 279,048 | 281,583 | 284,144 | 289,317 | 295,913 | 1,430,005 |
| - Direct Supports | 139,850 | 141,249 | 142,661 | 145,514 | 149,152 | 718,427 |
| o Program Administration - QEP Director | 102,688 | 103,715 | 104,752 | 106,847 | 109,518 | |
| o Administrative Assistant | 37,162 | 37,534 | 37,909 | 38,667 | 39,634 | |
| - Indirect Supports | 113,698 | 114,835 | 115,983 | 118,303 | 121,260 | 584,079 |
| o Academic Affairs Assessment Fellow (25%) | 20,030 | 20,231 | 20,433 | 20,842 | 21,363 | |
| o Undergraduate Research Coordinator (25%) | 18,321 | 18,504 | 18,689 | 19,063 | 19,539 | |
| o Career Services Director (40%) | 28,315 | 28,598 | 28,884 | 29,462 | 30,199 | |
| o Director of International Education (20%) | 18,853 | 19,041 | 19,232 | 19,616 | 20,107 | |
| o Campus Director - C/E (10%) | 10,075 | 10,176 | 10,278 | 10,483 | 10,746 | |
| o Campus Director - D (10%) | 8,939 | 9,028 | 9,118 | 9,301 | 9,533 | |
| o Campus Director - WR (10%) | 9,164 | 9,256 | 9,349 | 9,536 | 9,774 | |
| - Faculty Compensation | 25,500 | 25,500 | 25,500 | 25,500 | 25,500 | 127,500 |
| o Experiential Learning Liaison Stipends* | 17,000 | 17,000 | 17,000 | 17,000 | 17,000 | |
| o Course Redesign Stipends* | 8,500 | 8,500 | 8,500 | 8,500 | 8,500 | |
| Travel (600000) | 12,000 | 12,500 | 13,000 | 13,500 | 14,000 | 65,000 |
| o Conferences (Travel and Registration)* | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | |
| o Intercampus Travel | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | |
| o Student/Faculty Conference Travel * | 2,000 | 2,500 | 3,000 | 3,500 | 4,000 | |
| Operating (700000) | 23,530 | 32,030 | 27,030 | 25,530 | 26,530 | 134,650 |
| - Supplies & Materials (714XXX) | 8,000 | 11,500 | 13,000 | 14,000 | 15,000 | 61,500 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| o Equipment and Supplies | 3,500 | 3,500 | 3,500 | 3,500 | 3,500 | |
| o Miscellaneous | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | |
| o Undergraduate Showcase* | 2,000 | 2,500 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 | |
| o Research Grants* | 2,000 | 2,500 | 3,000 | 3,500 | 4,000 | |
| o Service Learning Grants* | - | 2,500 | 3,000 | 3,500 | 4,000 | |
| - Repairs & Maintenance (715XXX) | 168 | 168 | 168 | 168 | 168 | 840 |
| o Copier | 168 | 168 | 168 | 168 | 168 | |
| - Rents (719XXX) | 762 | 762 | 762 | 762 | 762 | 3,810 |
| o Copier | 762 | 762 | 762 | 762 | 762 | |
| - Other Operating Expenses (727XXX) | 8,700 | 11,700 | 5,700 | 5,700 | 5,700 | 37,500 |
| o Marketing and Promotion | 5,000 | 8,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | |
| o Workshops* | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 | |
| o Professional Membership | 1,200 | 1,200 | 1,200 | 1,200 | 1,200 | |
| o Library Resources | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | |
| - Per Diem (751XXX) | 5,000 | 7,000 | 6,500 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 26,500 |
| o Speakers* | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | |
| o Experiential Transcripts | - | 1,000 | - | - | - | |
| o EL Management/Database | - | 1,000 | - | - | - | |
| o Website Development | 1,000 | 1,000 | | | | |
| o E-portfolio | - | - | 2,500 | - | - | |
| - Telecommunications (771XX) | 900 | 900 | 900 | 900 | 900 | 4,500 |
| o Phones | 900 | 900 | 900 | 900 | 900 | |
| | 314,578 | 326,113 | 324,174 | 328,347 | 336,443 | 1,629,655 |
| | Year 1 (AY 15/16) | Year 2 (AY 16/17) | Year 3 (AY 17/18) | Year 4 (AY 18/19) | Year 5 (AY 19/20) | Total |

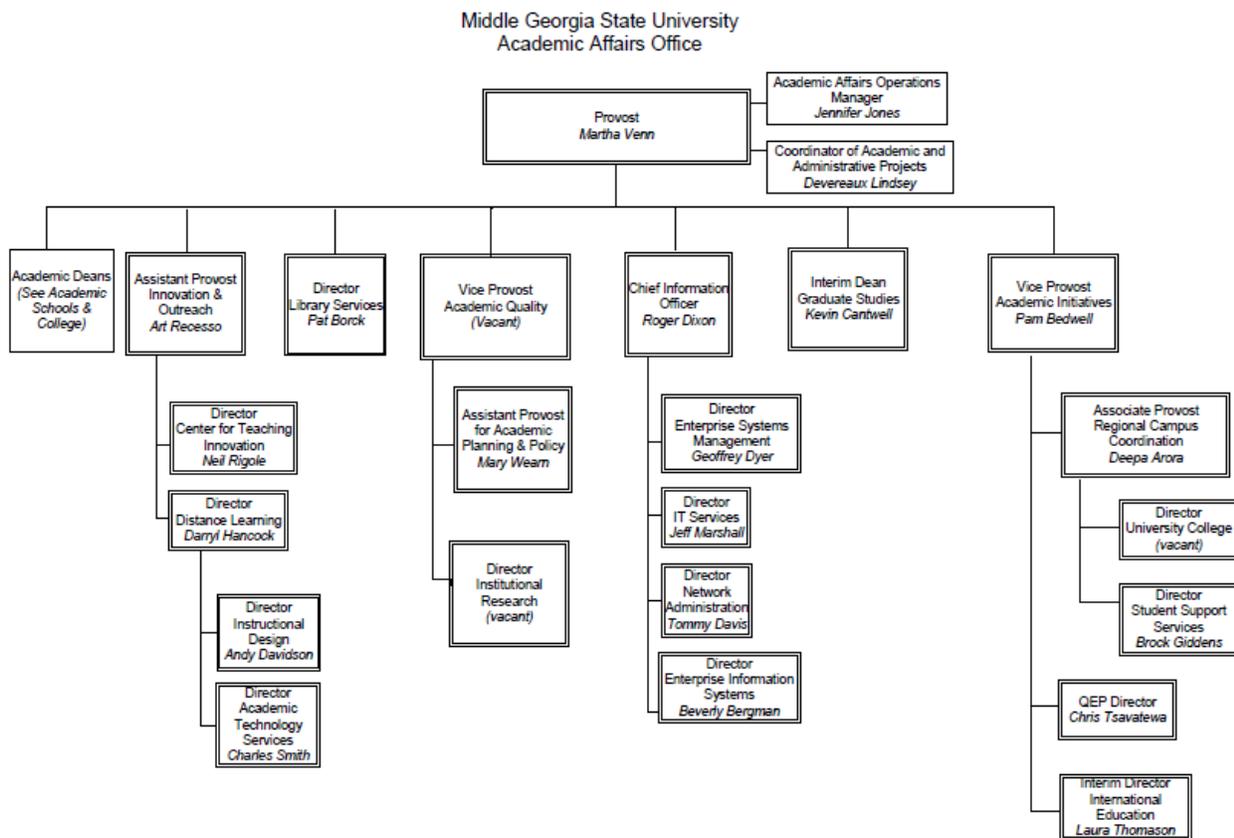
Physical Resources

The Office of Experiential Learning will be primarily housed in Suite 252 of the Student Life Center on the Macon campus. The office of the QEP Director and the Coordinator of Undergraduate Research will be jointly located in the suite. The space is organized to promote student access and accommodate meetings related to the office. The Career Services Center and the Office of Student Affairs are located in the same building, along with cafeteria, bookstore, and Enrollment Management, thus facilitating interaction with crucial support services. Professional Development space, with telepresence capabilities for trainings and workshops, is also conveniently accessible to the Office of Experiential Learning within the same and neighboring building complexes. The office suite is adequately equipped with technological and physical resources for the department. As a unit of the Office of Academic Affairs, the OEL will maintain a presence on all four satellite campuses and have access to appropriate resources when required.

Organizational Structure

The QEP Director will also serve as the Director of the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL), a new office of the institution, and report directly to the Vice Provost of Academic Initiatives. As a unit of the Office of the Provost, the OEL and the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative will be strategically integrated into the academic fabric and culture of the institution, and be afforded access and support from appropriate academic and non-academic offices as necessary to execute the goals and objectives of the QEP.

Figure 5 - Organizational Chart



Human Resources

Director of the Office of Experiential Learning (QEP Director): The Director will be responsible for implementation of the QEP and its strategic elements, including the management of the Office of Experiential Learning, development and execution of faculty professional development plan, and coordination of the assessment and evaluation of all goals and learning outcomes related to the **Knowledge @ Work** initiative. The QEP Director will also serve as Chair of the QEP Advisory Committee and serve on the QEP Assessment and Review Board. (Appendix K)

Administrative Assistant: The administrative assistant will support the programmatic and organizational efforts of the Office of Experiential Learning.

The QEP Advisory Committee: The QEP Advisory Committee will function in a consultative capacity to the QEP Director and the Office of Experiential Learning. The QEP Director will provide, on an annual basis, updates on the implementation of the QEP and an assessment of initiative goals, student learning outcomes, and administrative deliverables. This assembly is an integral and central component of the assessment process to ensure plan compliance and continuous process improvement. Acting as both a resources and an accountability panel, the Committee helps lay the foundation for a framework of institutional oversight.

The following appointments will comprise the QEP Advisory Committee:

- One experiential learning liaison representing each academic department of the institution
- Two Student Representatives appointed by the Office of Student Affairs
- One staff member appointed by the QEP Director
- Director of the University College
- Five campus community stakeholders (*Appointed by Campus Directors*)
- QEP Director (*Chair*)
- QEP Assessment Board Chair (*Ex Officio*)
- Coordinator of Undergraduate Research (*Ex Officio*)
- Director of Career Services (*Ex Officio*)
- Director of Center for Teaching Innovation (*Ex Officio*)
- Director of Institutional Research (*Ex Officio*)

The QEP Assessment and Review Board: This board will be comprised of a cross-section of faculty with experience and expertise in academic program assessment and reporting. Membership will be determined by recommendation of the Office of the Provost and confirmation of the Faculty Senate. In addition to functioning as the design and Topic Selection Team for all experiential learning rubrics, the board will evaluate and approve all experiential learning course proposals, and coordinate the data collection and assessment cycle of the QEP. The board will also have final discretion and approval on the budgeted experiential learning grant allocations, recommended and presented by the QEP Director.

MGA Campus Directors: Under the leadership of Dr. Deepa Arora, Associate Provost for Regional Campus Coordination, the Campus Directors serve as liaisons between the institution and the respective communities MGA serves, helping to ensure equitable access to campus services, programs, and opportunities. In that capacity, they will assist the Experiential Learning Office in disseminating information about **Knowledge @ Work**. Campus directors will also assist the ELO in identifying potential opportunities for service learning, research opportunities, and internships in their respective communities.

Relationship Network

The execution of the QEP is dependent on collaboration from the following offices (see Figure 5) as identified below:

Office of Undergraduate Research: The mission of the newly developed Office of Undergraduate Research is to enhance the public profile of undergraduate research as an integral part of our identity as a university. In collaboration with the Office of Experiential Learning, it will identify opportunities for undergraduates to be recognized by professional organizations, pursue opportunities for undergraduate research grants both through MGA Foundation and outside the university, and facilitate student recognition of academic achievement in experiential education.

Office of Career Services: The Office of Career Services works to engage students in career-related activities as they progress through the educational process so they have the tools needed to make well-informed decisions regarding academic programs and career development. The office provides solutions-focused services that enable students to develop effective job search skills and strategies through exploration, preparation, and experience within the college, community and workplace. Finally, the office educates local and regional employers about the college, its programs, and ways they can fill open positions by hiring MGA students and graduates. The Office of Career Services will play an integral role in the professional services onboarding and experiential learning orientation to occur in the first semesters of a student's enrollment as part of the QEP.

Center for Teaching Innovation: Middle Georgia State University's Center for Teaching Innovation (CTI) was founded in the Fall of 2013 with the help of priority funding from the University System of Georgia (USG). The USG supported the Center's role for being an institutional catalyst for delivering instruction via pioneering technologies and techniques. While the CTI focuses on focus on alternative and innovative approaches to delivering instruction, it also functions in a traditional capacity as an instrument for professional development within the academy, through alternative learning approaches for faculty. The OEL and the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives will develop and coordinate appropriate EL Professional Development, in alignment with other institutional instructive priorities.

Office of Experiential Learning: The Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) is poised to serve as the principal office for the administration and coordination of institutional experiential learning efforts. Through the OEL, students will find information and support to assist them in securing EL opportunities during their matriculation. Through professional development channels, the OEL will coordinate with Academic Affairs leadership to provide faculty and staff with resources and assistance to ensure course work and designated activities are consistent with best practices in experiential education.

Professional Science Conference Center: The Professional Science Conference Center is located in the Professional Sciences Center on the Macon campus and hosts hundreds of national, regional, and local meetings annually. The conference center staff and leadership will coordinate with the OEL to facilitate networking and educational activities at their facilities free or at a discount, consistent with institutional and QEP objectives.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness: The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) collects, analyzes, warehouses, and disseminates institutional data to support strategic and operational planning, policy formation, and effective decision making. The OIE will serve as a resource and partner in the planning, data collection, assessment, and evaluation of the QEP.

Office of International Education: The mission of the Office of International Education (OIE) is to expand study abroad opportunities for students and establish faculty and student exchange programs. OIE will collaborate with the Office of Experiential Learning to showcase the breadth of possible

transformational educational opportunities available at the institution. In partnership with OEL, study abroad students will be targeted to continue their EL on campus. Additionally, OEL and OIE will evaluate a mechanism for integrating transformational study abroad and study away experiences into the Experiential Learning framework of **Knowledge @ Work**.

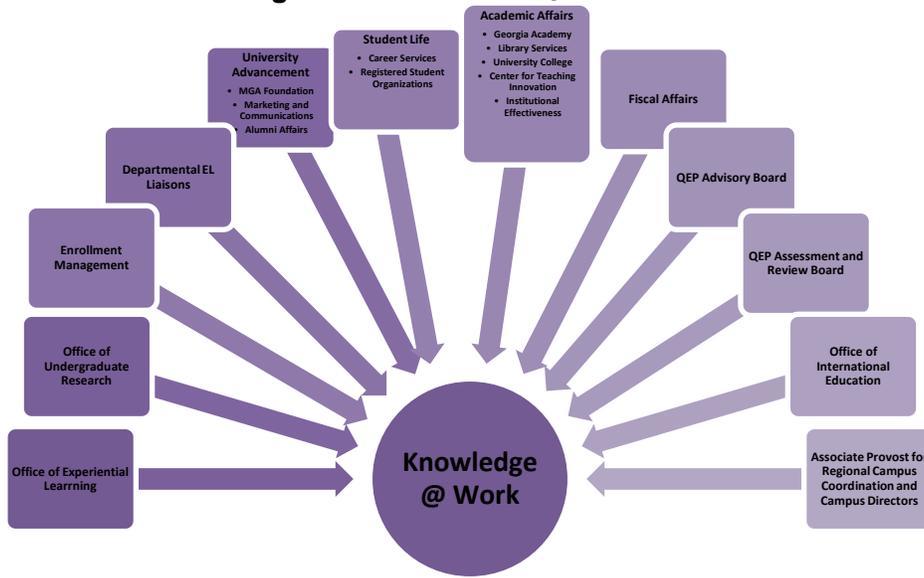
Middle Georgia State University Foundation: Middle Georgia State College Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit corporation committed to stewardship, integrity, excellence, philanthropy, education and advocacy on behalf of Middle Georgia State College. With diligent and thoughtful direction from the community leaders that embody its volunteer Board of Trustees, the Foundation supports Middle Georgia State's mission by raising, investing and distributing private dollars through a defined and rigorous process to help fund scholarships, classroom and campus enhancements (such as the QEP), faculty programs, staff initiatives, capital needs and collaborative community projects.

Office of Alumni Affairs: The Office of Alumni Affairs (OAA) missions is to involve alumni in the work of the institution and provide them an opportunity to network, means of perpetuating friendships among alumni, to initiate and support a variety of programs and activities of direct and indirect benefit to alumni, and expand their career opportunities after graduation. The OEL and the OAA will work collaboratively to expand MGA's access to alumni and support alumni engagement back to the campus community.

The Georgia Academy: The Georgia Academy of Arts, Mathematics, Engineering and Sciences, located on the Cochran campus, was established in Fall 1997 in response to national and state concerns about anticipated shortages of students sufficiently prepared in areas of mathematics and science. The purpose of the Academy is to provide an academically enriched residential environment for top-performing high school juniors and seniors seeking to enhance and accelerate their education by simultaneously earning their high school diploma and associate degree. The OEL will seek opportunities to engage this unique student population in the Knowledge @ Work initiative and promote access to experiential learning opportunities in an effort to retain these students as they pursue their next degree.

The University College: The University College (UC) at Middle Georgia State University has been designed for traditional students not meeting current admission standards and placing in Learning Support. UC students will have access to academic and student support services to remediate and develop the foundation for successfully completing collegiate course work. Admission is based on selected criteria and the UC is housed on the Cochran campus. In partnership with the OEL, the UC will work to integrate the objectives of the QEP, where appropriate to enhance student success and student engagement.

Figure 6 - Relationship Network



Section 9: Assessment and Evaluation

All QEP Student Learning Outcomes and QEP Goals will be periodically assessed using both direct and indirect assessment methods. Annual reports will be provided which detail the results of the assessments administered in a given year. A formal evaluation of the report will be used to identify areas needing improvement.

QEP Student Learning Outcomes

As noted earlier, the model is built around Bloom's Taxonomy as revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2009). The three-tiered structure allows a student to be introduced to foundational knowledge about experiential learning in the bronze level, in First Year Experience (FYES 1001) courses. Students then have the opportunity to advance to silver and gold levels by successfully completing courses designed specifically to support experiential learning in the context of higher-order knowledge and thinking. The courses include internships, undergraduate research, and service-learning.

Each of the QEP's six Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) has been aligned with one of the three-tiered structures (bronze, silver, and gold) and with Bloom's levels of knowledge.

- SLO1: Students will explain the values and behaviors of professionalism. (Bronze; Application: Bloom II - Understanding)
- SLO2: Students will explain the values and behaviors of social awareness. (Bronze; Application: Bloom II – Understanding)
- SLO3: Students will explain the values and behaviors of civic responsibility. (Bronze; Application: Bloom II - Understanding)
- SLO4: Students will utilize classroom knowledge and professional experiences together to prepare them for their chosen career. (Silver; Application: Bloom III - Apply)
- SLO5: Students will analyze the relationship between academic knowledge and professional application in their chosen field. (Silver; Application: Bloom IV – Analyze)
- SLO6: Students will test academic and professional knowledge and skills in a professional setting. (Gold; Synthesis: Bloom V - Evaluate)

Direct and indirect assessment of student learning will occur in approved experiential learning FYE courses (FYES 1001), in approved experiential learning internships, and in undergraduate research and service-learning courses offered within designated programs. Direct assessment will be conducted by two methods. Instructors of approved experiential learning courses will use assessments scored by using a rubric developed specifically for the experiential learning experience. The rubrics used to score student work will be adapted from the VALUE rubrics available from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). Supervisor evaluations from internships, undergraduate research, and service learning courses will also be used as a direct assessment. Indirect assessment of student learning will be done using student self-evaluations. The scores of the assessments will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives. Table 13 lists the QEP's Student Learning Outcomes, the types of assessments that will be used, the assessment methods, the source of assessment, the measure of success, the frequency of assessment, and the dates for the first assessment cycle.

FYES 1001 course sections and the designated experiential learning courses within the degree programs will align course learning outcomes with the applicable QEP Student Learning Outcomes.

This establishes a direct relationship and ensures continuity between the QEP and program curriculum. All instructors teaching approved experiential learning courses will administer common assessments and utilize standard rubrics to evaluate the student work.

Internships

The first experiential learning opportunity to be offered in Fall 2015 is the internship. The institution has adopted the following definition of an internship:

Internships are defined as "supervised work experiences involving an intentional experiential learning strategy, an emphasis on professional development, a performance assessment, and a reflection." Internships are three-way partnerships among: (1) Students; (2) Middle Georgia State University; and (3) an internship site. (adapted from Birmingham Southern College QEP)

One of the goals of the internship is for students to acquire information about career paths and to evaluate them using attained academic knowledge, skills and abilities. When students interact more deeply within their chosen field of study, it is essential that they reflect on and analyze their reactions to the out-of-classroom learning experience. Perspectives about their field of study may change during and/or after the internship and an awareness of this perspective change may help shape and define future decisions about academic and professional life.

For approved experiential learning internship courses, the institution proposes an approach to assessing achievement of the student learning outcomes by four methods: a reflective journal, a reflective essay, a student evaluation by the student's supervisor and a student's self-evaluation of the experiential learning opportunity. Combined, these assessments can be used to measure student achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes.

- The reflective journal: In order to help assess course and student learning outcomes, students are required to keep a daily journal throughout their internship. The purpose of the journal is not meant to capture "what was done". Instead it is a formal means of documenting the internship experience and assists students in reflecting on their work as interns and integrating their experiences with other learning in and out of the classroom.
- The reflective essay: At the end of the internship, students are required to submit a reflective essay (approximately 1500 words in length). The reflective essay is a direct assessment of student achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes and will be scored using the Internship Reflection Essay Rubric.
- The supervisor evaluation: An Internship Supervisor's Evaluation form will be submitted by the supervisor and used as a direct assessment of the student's achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes.
- The student's self-evaluation: Submitted by the student, the self-evaluation allows students to assess knowledge and skills and progress with respect to the professional world work experience. It is an indirect assessment of perceived learning and progress toward career goals.

A select number of Internship courses will be used in the Fall semester to pilot the assessments used to measure achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes. Instructors assigned to the courses will meet to review the proposed assessments and the reflection essay rubric and to provide feedback for possible modification of the assessments. The instructors will also design the supervisor evaluation and the student's self-evaluation. At the beginning of the semester, copies of course syllabi will be provided

to the Office of Experiential Learning and will remain on file. A sample of the instructions for the reflective journal and reflective essay is in Appendix L. The reflective essay will be scored using the Internship Reflection Essay Rubric (see Appendix M). At the end of the semester, copies of the assessments and rubrics will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives.

The First Year Experience Course - FYES 1001

According to the institution's web site, the purpose of the FYES 1001 course is to help first-time students "develop meaningful academic skills and introduce you to crucial campus resources, help develop your understanding of different disciplines and professions, and help you make the best academic and professional decisions for your talents and interests" and to foster "self-awareness and understanding of others".

One of the FYES 1001 course learning outcomes is that "*students will be able to describe their understanding of how the acquisition of an education program rooted in the liberal arts impacts their academic, professional, ethical, social and holistic life's decisions.*" This learning outcome is directly related to all QEP Student Learning Outcomes.

During the Fall 2015 semester, instructors assigned to select FYES 1001 sections will meet to review the course content and enhance or add topics that address professionalism, social awareness, and civic responsibility, in support of Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3. These elements, in addition to foundational principles in experiential learning, will form the nucleus of a freestanding experiential learning module that will be available for future onboarding pathways at the bronze level. Instructors will also work together to create the common direct assessment and the rubric that will be used to score the assessment. The assessment and rubric will be piloted in select FYES 1001 sections offered in the Spring 2016 semester. Copies of course syllabi will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning and will remain on file. At the end of the semester, copies of the assessments and rubrics will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives.

Undergraduate Research

The institution has adopted the following definition of undergraduate research:

The primary mission of Undergraduate Research is to engage students in investigative and creative activity to experience firsthand the processes of scholarly exploration and discovery. (from Birmingham Southern College's QEP & Council for the Advancement of Standards Professional Standards for Higher Education, p. 384)

During the Spring 2016 semester, instructors assigned to approved experiential learning undergraduate research courses will meet to review all of the QEP's student learning outcomes. Necessary changes will be made to the course content in support of these outcomes.

Instructors in approved experiential learning undergraduate research courses will work together to create the common direct assessments for Student Learning Outcomes 4, 5, and 6 and the rubric that will be used to score the reflective assessment. The instructors will also design the indirect assessment used to measure all of the Student Learning Outcomes.

The assessments and rubric will be piloted in approved experiential learning undergraduate research courses offered in the Fall 2016 semester. Copies of course syllabi will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning and will remain on file.

Instructions for the reflective journal and reflective essay and the associated rubric for Undergraduate Research will be developed according to the timeline in Section 7. At the end of the semester, copies of the assessments and rubrics will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives.

Service-Learning

The institution has adopted the following definition of service-learning:

Service-Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. (from Birmingham Southern College's QEP & National Service Learning Clearinghouse)

During the Fall 2016 semester, instructors assigned to approved experiential learning service-learning courses will meet to review all of the QEP's Student Learning Outcomes. Necessary and approved changes will be made to the course content in support of these outcomes. Instructors in approved experiential learning undergraduate research courses will work together to create the common direct assessments for Student Learning Outcomes 4, 5, and 6 and the rubric that will be used to score the reflective assessment. The instructors will also design the indirect assessment used to measure all of the Student Learning Outcomes.

The assessments and rubric will be piloted in approved experiential learning service-learning courses offered in the Spring 2017 semester. Copies of course syllabi will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning and will remain on file.

Instructions for the reflective journal and reflective essay and the associated rubric for Service Learning will be developed according to the timeline in Section 7. At the end of the semester, copies of the assessments and rubrics will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives.

Table 13: Student Learning Outcome Assessment Targets by Year 4 of the QEP

| Student Learning Outcome | Type of Assessment | Assessment Method(s) | Source(s) of Assessment | Measure of Success | Frequency of Assessment | First Assessment Cycle |
|--|--------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 1. Students will explain the values and behaviors of professionalism. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | FYES 1001 Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Spring 2016 – Select FYES 1001 Sections |
| | | Supervisor Evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| 2. Students will explain the values and behaviors of social awareness. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | FYES 1001 Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Spring 2016 – Select FYES 1001 Sections |
| | | Supervisor Evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |

| Student Learning Outcome | Type of Assessment | Assessment Method(s) | Source(s) of Assessment | Measure of Success | Frequency of Assessment | First Assessment Cycle |
|---|--------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 3. Students will explain the values and behaviors of civic responsibility. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | FYES 1001 Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Spring 2016 – Select FYES 1001 Sections |
| | | Supervisor Evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| 4. Students will utilize classroom knowledge and professional experiences together to prepare them for their chosen career. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Direct | Supervisor Evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Service Learning or Undergraduate Research Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |

| Student Learning Outcome | Type of Assessment | Assessment Method(s) | Source(s) of Assessment | Measure of Success | Frequency of Assessment | First Assessment Cycle |
|--|--------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 5. Students will analyze the relationship between academic knowledge and professional application in their chosen field. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | Internship or Service Learning or Undergraduate Research Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Service Learning or Undergraduate Research Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| 6. Students will test academic and professional knowledge and skills in a professional setting. | Direct | Student Work Scored with Appropriate QEP Rubric | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Direct | Supervisor Evaluation | Internship or Undergraduate Research or Service Learning Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |
| | Indirect | Student self-evaluation | Internship or Service Learning or Undergraduate Research Course | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses Pilot Fall 2016 – Undergraduate Research Pilot Spring 2017 – Service Learning |

Partnership Agreements

Partnership agreements, detailing the responsibilities of students, faculty, staff, and any external entities, will be in place for all qualified experiential learning opportunities, where applicable. Indeed, both internship and service-learning opportunities cannot be offered without the support of external organizations and partners in our region – including for-profit and non-profit organizations, various governmental agencies, and the military. The number of partnership agreements indicates the commitment of the institution and its external partners to the QEP and supports achievement of two goals, Goal 2 (“*Enhance the branding of the institution in the region*”) and Goal 3 (“*Develop partnerships that facilitate student, faculty, staff and community engagement through experiential learning*”).

The baseline will be established in Spring 2016 when the first approved internship courses are “live”. The Office of Experiential Learning will track all approved and signed partnership agreements. The goal is to increase the number of partnership agreements.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data reported by *Seniors* will be used as an indirect method to measure achievement of two QEP goals, Goal 2 (“*Enhance the branding of the institution in the region*”) and Goal 5 (“*Engage students, faculty, and staff in the QEP*”). Two sections of the report will be used to measure the extent to which students are engaged in experiential learning practices.

The first section of the NSSE data to be used, High-Impact Practices, provides data about our students participation in the three experiential learning opportunities used in this QEP. The three practices captured in the survey are: Internship or Field Experience, Research with a Faculty Member, and Service-Learning. Using the 2014 NSSE results as the baseline, the goal is to increase the number of seniors who report that they have completed or plan to participate in an experiential learning high-impact practice.

The second section to be used from the NSSE report, Engagement Indicators, provides data about the students’ perceived extent to which they participate in experiential learning practices. The engagement indicators (categories) that are relevant to this plan are the High-Order Learning and Reflective and Integrative Learning. Using the 2014 NSSE results as the baseline, the goal is to equal or exceed the Mean reported for the NSSE Top 50% of all institutions for each indicator. The next NSSE survey will be conducted in Spring 2017. Copies of the survey results will be provided to the Office of Experiential Learning for evaluation and for continuous improvement initiatives.

Compilation of Direct and Indirect QEP SLO Assessments

As discussed in the above section “QEP Student Learning Outcomes”, the results of the assessments in all EL approved courses will be evaluated and acted upon by the Office of Experiential Learning. A compilation of the results of all direct and indirect assessments will be used to measure the success of Goal 4 “*Build evidence of student learning through direct and indirect measures*”.

Table 14: QEP Goal Assessment Targets by Year 4 of the QEP

| QEP Goal | Type of Assessment | Assessment Method(s) | Baseline | Measure of Success | Frequency of Assessment | First Assessment Cycle |
|--|--------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| 1. Focus resources to provide opportunities and support for experiential learning. | Direct | The number of EL courses offered | To be established in the first semester the EL course is considered "live" | 50% increase against the baseline of total EL courses | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |
| | | The number of professional development opportunities <u>provided</u> to the faculty and staff | To be established in Fall 2015 | 100% increase against the baseline | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Fall 2015 |
| 2. Enhance the branding of the institution in the region. | Direct | The number of students earning bronze, silver, and gold designations | To be established in the first semester of QEP | 300 graduates/ year at bronze or higher | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |
| | | The number of partnership agreements | To be established in Spring 2016 when the first approved internship courses are "live" | 100% increase in the number of partnership agreements | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | |
| | Indirect | NSSE Survey – High-Impact Practices and Engagement Indicators results | To be established using 2014 survey as baseline. | <u>High-Impact Practices</u> The % of seniors reporting participation in two or more high-impact | Every three years | 2017 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----------|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | | | practices will increase by 10 percentage points | | |
| | | | | <u>Engagement Indicator:</u> <u>High-Order Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be \geq NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> <u>Reflective and Integrative Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be \geq NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> | Every three years | 2017 |
| 3. Develop partnerships that facilitate student, faculty, staff and community engagement through experiential learning. | Direct | The number of partnership agreements | To be established in Spring 2016 when the first approved internship courses are "live" | 100% increase in the number of partnership agreements | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | |
| 4. Build evidence of student learning through direct and indirect measures. | Direct | Compilation of direct assessments of student learning outcomes | QEP rubrics from experiential learning courses offered during Fall and Spring semesters | 75% of the students will score a 75% or better on the identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses |
| | Indirect | Compilation of indirect assessments of student learning outcomes | Supervisor Evaluations and Student Self-evaluations from Experiential Learning courses offered during Fall and Spring semesters | Average rating of 5.0 or higher (agree that overall performance was satisfactory) on identified assessment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Pilot Fall 2015 – Internship Courses |
| | | | | <u>Engagement Indicator:</u> <u>High-Order Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be \geq NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> | Every three years | 2017 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | <u>Reflective and Integrative Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be \geq NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> | | |
| 5. Engage students, faculty, and staff in the QEP. | Direct | The number of EL courses Offered | Established in the first semester the EL course is considered "live | 50% increase against the baseline of total EL courses | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |
| | | The number of students enrolled in EL courses | To be established in the first semester the EL course is considered "live | 50% increase against the baseline of total student enrollment | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |
| | | The number of students completing EL courses | To be established in the first semester the EL course is considered "live | 50% increase against the baseline of total students completing EL courses | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---|--|---|--|---|
| | | The number of students earning bronze, silver, and gold designations | To be established in the first semester of QEP | 300 graduates/ year at bronze or higher | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Internships Spring 2016 FYE 1001 Fall 2016 Undergraduate Research Spring 2017 Service-Learning Fall 2017 |
| | | The number of professional development opportunities <u>utilized</u> by faculty and staff | To be established in Fall 2015 | 100% increase against the baseline | End of each semester and reported end of academic year | Fall 2015 |
| | Indirect | NSSE Survey – High-Impact Practices and Engagement Indicators results | Established using 2014 survey as baseline | <u>High-Impact Practices</u> The % of seniors reporting participation in two or more high-impact practices will increase by 10 percentage points | Every three years | 2017 |
| <u>Engagement Indicator:</u> <u>High-Order Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be >= NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> <u>Reflective and Integrative Learning</u> the institution <i>Mean</i> will be >= NSSE Top 50% <i>Mean</i> | | | | Every three years | 2017 | |

Section 10: Conclusion

The preceding document demonstrates that Middle Georgia State University has crafted a comprehensive Quality Enhancement Plan that meets all requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges of Schools Commission on Colleges. The topic selected reflects the outcome of a broad based institutional process which prioritized input from faculty, staff, and students in the context of a rapidly evolving institutional mission and with particular reference to areas in which the institution Falls behind aspirational peers. The QEP was developed with constituency input and mindfully crafted to maximize Student Learning Outcomes that support the mission and reflect the strategic priorities of the institution.

While the QEP was developed within the budgetary constraints of an emerging state university in uncertain economic times, the associated funding speaks volumes about the institution's commitment to making the educational environment more meaningful and nurturing for faculty, staff, and students alike.

The phased implementation of the QEP demonstrates an understanding and awareness of project management and the dynamic landscape of higher education. The time-table for execution is realistic, pragmatic, and feasible, given existing resources and projections.

Not only was the plan developed with input from a variety of stakeholders, its implementation is dependent on continued dialogue among those invested through the mechanisms identified herein. Lastly, the QEP goals are clearly articulated, measurable, and seamlessly aligned with the directional strategies of institution.

In sum, **Knowledge @ Work** strengthens student learning and engagement by increasing participation in an array of experiential learning opportunities. These high-impact practices, including internships, undergraduate research, service learning, and others yet to be developed, engage students in practical application of their learning in academic and non-academic settings and have the potential to transform students' perspective, their career trajectories, and our shared communities.

Appendix A: QEP Topic Selection Team Calendar

| | | |
|------------------|---|---------------|
| Spring 2014 | National Survey of Student Engagement administered | All campuses |
| July 8 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| July 24-27 | SACS Summer Institute | New Orleans |
| August 5 | Meeting-Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences | Macon |
| August 6 | Meeting - Chair of the Department of English | Macon |
| August 7 | Meeting -Chair of the Department of Natural Science and Engineering | Macon |
| August 7 | Meeting -Chair of the Department of Mathematics | Macon |
| August 7 | Meeting -Chair of the Department of Media, Culture and the Arts | Macon |
| August 12 | Meeting with Interim Dean of the School of Aviation | Macon |
| August 12 | Meeting with Dean of the School of Health Sciences | Macon |
| August 13 | Meeting- Dean of the School of Information Technology | Macon |
| August 14 | Meeting with Dean of the School of Business | Macon |
| August 10 | Open Ended Faculty Survey | All campuses |
| August 26 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| August 29 | Meeting - Chair of the Department of History and Political Science | Macon |
| September 9 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| Sept 30 - Oct 3 | Online faculty poll conducted | All campuses |
| Sept 30 - Oct 14 | Online student survey (POLs 1101) | All campuses |
| October 6 | Student focus group | Dublin |
| October 7 | Student focus group | Macon |
| October 7 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| October 8 | Student focus group | Cochran |
| October 9 | Student focus group | Warner Robins |
| October 13 | Student focus group | Eastman |
| October 14 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| October 30 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| November 11 | Meeting with faculty in the School of Business | Macon |
| November 17 | Meeting with faculty - College of Arts and Sciences | Cochran |
| November 18 | Meeting with faculty - College of Arts and Sciences | Macon |
| November 19 | Meeting with faculty-School of Information Technology | Macon |
| November 20 | Meeting with faculty - School of Education | Macon |
| November 21 | Meeting with faculty - School of Health Sciences | Macon |
| December 4 | Meeting with Staff | Warner Robins |
| December 8 | Meeting with Staff | Dublin |
| December 9 | Meeting with Staff (morning and afternoon sessions) | Macon |
| December 10 | Meeting with faculty and staff - School of Aviation | Eastman |
| December 10 | Meeting with staff | Cochran |
| December 11 | Meeting with Staff (morning and afternoon sessions) | Macon |
| December 16 | QEP Topic Selection Team meeting | Macon |
| December 19 | Recommendations of QEP Topic Selection Team submitted to Office of Academic Affairs | Macon |

Appendix B: Faculty Open Ended Survey

Please share your thoughts regards to “common obstacles to student success”

| | Student behaviors and characteristics that cause students to perform at a lower than optimum level | What individual instructors can do to address these behaviors before they impact student performance | What programs, departments, and schools can do to address these behaviors before they impact student performance | What the institution as a whole can do to address these behaviors before they impact student performance |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |

Appendix C: NSSE 2014 – High Impact Practices



NSSE 2014 High-Impact Practices
Response Detail
Middle Georgia State College

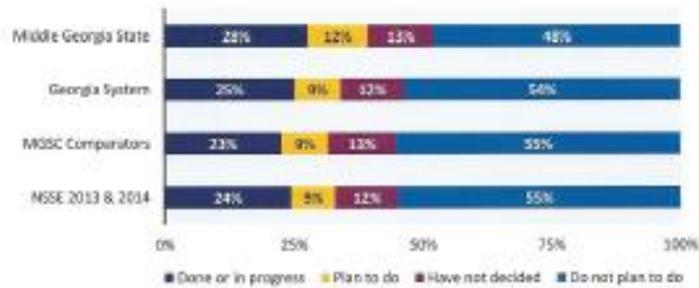
Seniors

The figures below display further details about each High-Impact Practice for your seniors and those of your comparison groups.

Learning Community

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together.



Service-Learning

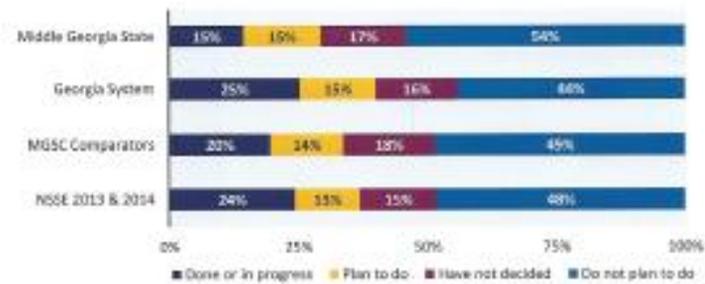
About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?



Research with a Faculty Member

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

Work with a faculty member on a research project.



Note: Results weighted by institution-reported size and enrollment status (and institutional size for comparison groups).



NSSE 2014 High-Impact Practices Response Detail Middle Georgia State College

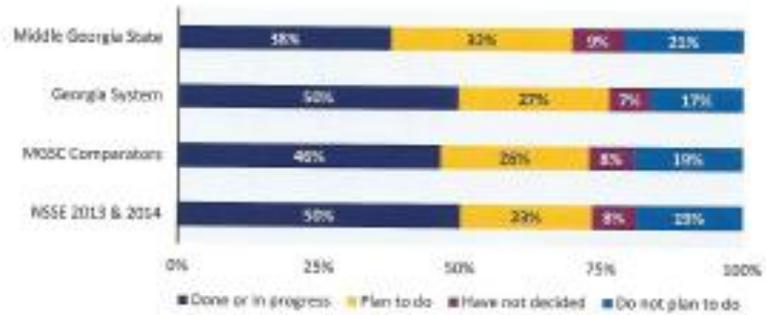
Seniors (continued)

The figures below display further details about each High-Impact Practice for your seniors and those of your comparison groups.

Internship or Field Experience

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

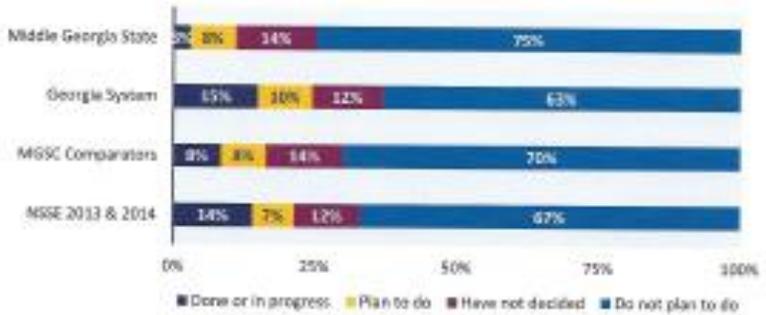
Participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement.



Study Abroad

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

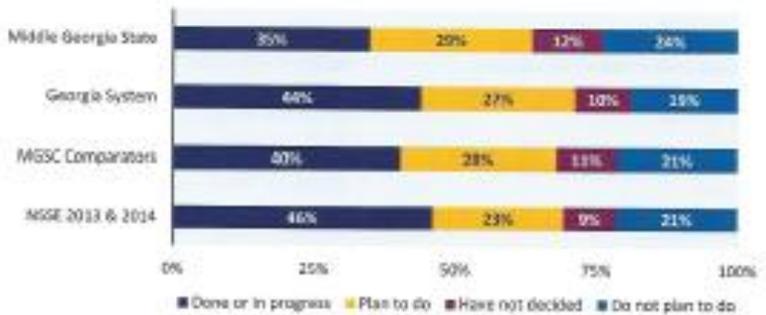
Participate in a study abroad program.



Culminating Senior Experience

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

Complete a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.).



Note: Results weighted by institutions reported scores and enrollment status (and institutional size for comparison groups).

Appendix D: NSSE – 2014 Engagement Indicators



NSSE 2014 Engagement Indicators Academic Challenge Middle Georgia State College

Academic Challenge: Seniors (continued)

Summary of Indicator Items

| | Middle Georgia State | Georgia System | MGSC Comparators | NSSE 2013 & 2014 |
|---|----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Higher-Order Learning | | | | |
| <i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very much" or "Quite a bit" when the small comment capitalized...</i> | | | | |
| 4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations | 78 | 81 | 81 | 80 |
| 4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts | 79 | 78 | 77 | 79 |
| 4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source | 74 | 71 | 72 | 72 |
| 4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information | 74 | 72 | 72 | 72 |
| Reflective & Integrative Learning | | | | |
| <i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i> | | | | |
| 2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments | 71 | 73 | 70 | 72 |
| 2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues | 82 | 64 | 63 | 64 |
| 2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments | 51 | 54 | 55 | 55 |
| 2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue | 67 | 65 | 65 | 66 |
| 2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective | 71 | 70 | 71 | 70 |
| 2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept | 67 | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| 2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge | 80 | 84 | 81 | 84 |
| Learning Strategies | | | | |
| <i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i> | | | | |
| 9a. Identified key information from reading assignments | 88 | 84 | 86 | 85 |
| 9b. Reviewed your notes after class | 73 | 68 | 71 | 65 |
| 9c. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials | 75 | 70 | 71 | 66 |
| Quantitative Reasoning | | | | |
| <i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i> | | | | |
| 6a. Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.) | 54 | 56 | 55 | 55 |
| 6b. Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.) | 41 | 45 | 44 | 45 |
| 6c. Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information | 42 | 46 | 44 | 44 |

Notes: Refer to your Progression and Statistical Comparisons report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey booklet included in your Institutional Report and available on the NSSE Web site.

Appendix E: Faculty Rank Survey and Results (N=72)

Dear Colleagues,

In August the QEP Topic Selection Team asked for your input regarding obstacles to student success. We have considered your comments and suggestions carefully along with institutional data and have arrived at three potential QEP topics. They are:

1. Undergraduate research
2. Collaborative learning
3. Service learning

A synopsis of each topic is attached.

At this point we are asking for your input on each of these three topics. We are also asking you to rank the three topics, with the “best” rank being the one that your experience suggests would have the greatest positive impact on our students.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey no later than the deadline

Undergraduate Research – “Research for the Public Good”

| Rank | Rank | Votes | % |
|------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | 1 st | 36 | 50 |
| 2 | 2 nd | 22 | 30.56 |
| 3 | 3 rd | 14 | 19.44 |

Roundtable Learning

| Rank | Rank | Votes | % |
|------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | 3 rd | 36 | 50 |
| 2 | 2 nd | 20 | 27.78 |
| 3 | 1 st | 16 | 22.22 |

Service Learning

| Rank | Rank | Votes | % |
|------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | 2 nd | 31 | 43.06 |
| 2 | 1 st | 21 | 29.17 |
| 3 | 3 rd | 20 | 27.78 |

Appendix H: Middle Georgia State University Strategic Plan (2015-2018)

Mission: Middle Georgia State University educates and graduates inspired, lifelong learners whose scholarship and careers enhance the region through professional leadership, innovative partnerships and community engagement.

Vision: We transform individuals and their communities through extraordinary higher learning

Values: Stewardship, Engagement, Adaptability, Learning

Five Pillars of Greatness:

| Strategic Direction | Institutional Priority |
|---|---|
| 1) Quality and Distinctiveness of Student Success | <u>Institutional Priority A:</u> Provide 21 st century undergraduate experiences for all MGA students that support recruitment, retention, progression and graduation. |
| | <u>Institutional Priority B:</u> Become a leader in providing and supporting multiple degree pathways for all MGA students, focusing on professionally empowering bachelor's and graduate programs. |
| | <u>Institutional Priority C:</u> Develop a culture of shared excellence with innovative systems that champion student success and align with MGA's values of stewardship, engagement, adaptability and learning |
| | <u>Institutional Priority D:</u> Strengthen the academic quality and preparedness of MGA students |
| 2) Academic Reputation, Flagship Programs and Community Outreach | <u>Institutional Priority E:</u> Distinguish MGA through the accomplishments of the faculty, the reputation of the academic colleges/schools/programs, and the preparation of students for careers |
| | <u>Institutional Priority F:</u> Adopt national models of co-curricular excellence in student learning, student engagement and career preparedness. |
| 3) Harnessing the Power of Technology | <u>Institutional Priority G:</u> Identify national trends and strategic directions for a 21 st century multi-campus environment |
| | <u>Institutional Priority H:</u> Be data-driven change agents for benchmarking and advancing the organization |
| 4) Fiscal and Campus Sustainability | <u>Institutional Priority I:</u> Develop strategies for sustainable and expanding revenue streams |
| | <u>Institutional Priority J:</u> Integrate effective and efficient usage of campus facilities and operations |
| 5) The MGA Faculty and Staff Community | <u>Institutional Priority K:</u> Recruit, hire, retain and invest in faculty and staff long-term excellence |

Appendix I: QEP Assessment Benchmark /EL Inventory Survey

MGA QEP Baseline

Middle Georgia State University's "**Knowledge @ Work**" Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) initiative strengthens student learning and engagement by increasing participation in an array of experiential learning practices.

These high-impact practices, including internships, undergraduate research, service learning, and others yet to be developed, engage students in practical application of their learning in non-academic settings and have the potential to transform student perspective, their career trajectories, and our shared communities.

For our purposes, experiential learning consists of three components:

Undergraduate Research - defined as "to engage students in investigative and creative activity to experience firsthand the process of scholarly exploration and discovery."

Internships - defined as "supervised work experiences involving an intentional experiential learning strategy, an emphasis on professional development, a performance assessment, and a reflection."

Service Learning - defined as "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

This survey is designed to identify and characterize current experiential learning opportunities that are being offered at Middle Georgia State University, whether in class or out. The information you provide will be used as a baseline for the QEP. Please complete the survey even if you don't teach undergraduate courses or offer undergraduate experiential learning opportunities

The survey has three main sections and could take up to 10-15 minutes. Any information you give will be confidential and aggregated in such a way that individuals will not be identifiable.

What is your rank?

Professor
Associate Professor
Assistant Professor
Lecturer
Instructor

Demographic Questions

1. What college/division/school are you in?
College of Arts and Sciences
School of Aviation
School of Business
School of Education
School of Health Sciences
School of Information Technology
2. How many years have you been at Middle Georgia State University and its predecessors?

Qualitative Response

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses are very important to us as we plan for and implement our QEP over the coming years.

Appendix J: QEP Assessment Benchmark /EL Inventory Results

QEP Assessment Benchmark Results
Data pulled July 9, 2015



Middle Georgia State University



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Faculty do have concerns, mostly focusing on fitting EL into an already busy workload

- Qualitative results revealed those concerns to revolve around **workload, recognition, and compensation.**
 - Faculty expressed some hope that this would count for scholarly activity – as EL activities may squeeze out more traditional scholarship
- EL courses may also cut into their time allotted for pedagogy – making these courses more burdensome than others
- Faculty mentioned that the compensation for doing EL would be motivating
 - And if not monetary, then recognition, or a reduction of other responsibilities



Introduction

- Middle Georgia State University (MGA) is embarking on a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) beginning Fall of 2015
- The QEP Assessment Team is charged with measuring the impact of the QEP as it is implemented over the next few years.
- Using existing models as starting points, the assessment team engineered a survey that will provide the necessary metrics.
- The assessment team ran the survey from June 29th through July 9th of 2015 to provide a benchmark against which AEP progress may be measured.



Respondents at MGA are already engaged in some EL activity

- Most of the EL activity faculty do at the moment is **undergraduate research** with 40% of respondents already participating
- Service learning and internships are also currently used, but at a lower rate
 - 19% of respondents are already involved in service learning
 - 14% of respondents are already running internships
- Although their utilization is lower, service learning and internships appear to be more structured and more often formally evaluated than undergraduate learning



Faculty need assurance that EL benefits them, and some remain disinterested

- Many faculty's concerns are pragmatic, recognizing their current workload
- Others revolved around recognition: will this help their career within the University?
 - It may behoove MGA to find a way to engage non-terminal degree faculty
- And some faculty are not interested in doing or pursuing EL
 - Throughout the faculty development section, the "Not at all interested" consistently scored second, directly behind the "Very Interested"



Methodology

- Timing:** June 29th, through July 9th, 2015
- Method:** Google Forms, linked through Inside MGA and solicitation emails from the Chair of the QEP
- Sample:** 80 responses
- Qualifiers:** Respondents were MGA faculty from Instructors through Full Professors
- Considerations:** The summer faculty numbers 125, half of the full faculty of 250

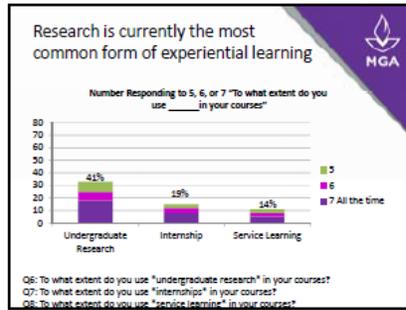
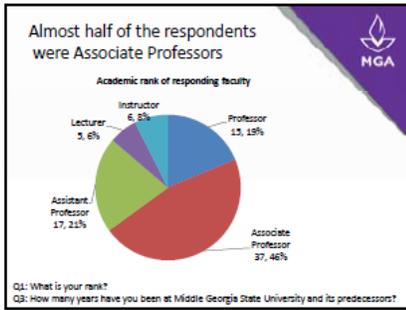


Respondents are open to offering, and learning more about EL opportunities

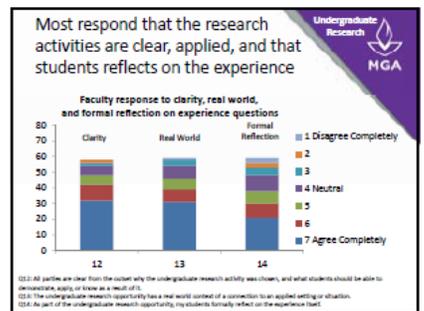
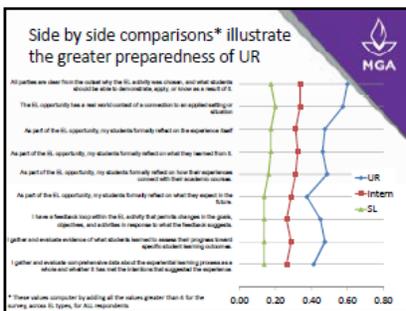
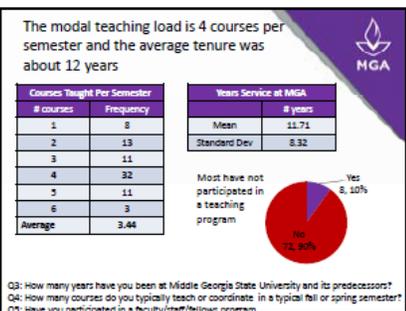
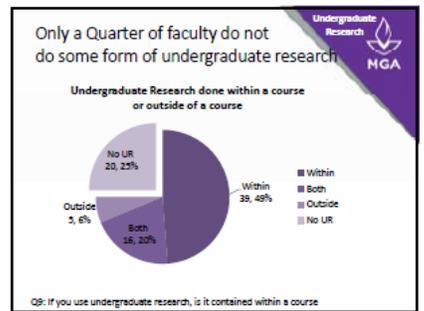
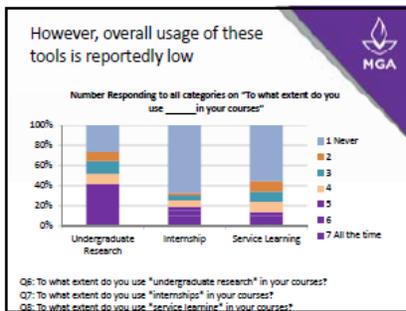
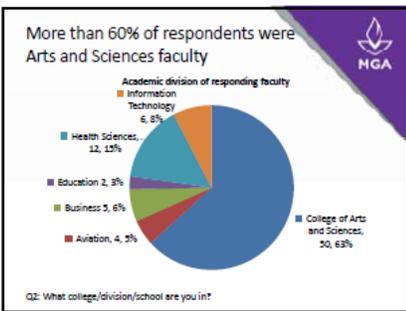
- "Very Interested" was consistently the highest response for every faculty development question
- Interest across the questions is slightly stronger for **undergraduate research**, which echoes faculties' reportedly greater experience with undergraduate research
- Faculty responded most strongly to **learning about how to evaluate EL activities**
 - 45% "Very Interested" for Undergraduate Research
 - 35% "Very Interested" for Internships
 - 33% "Very Interested" for Service Learning

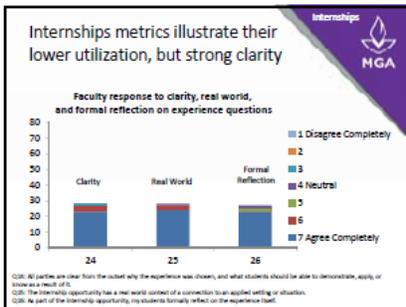
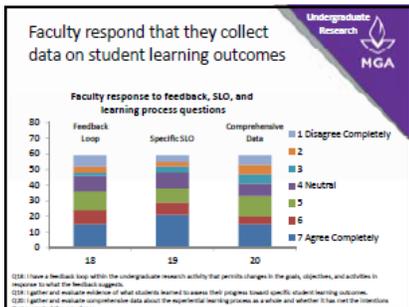
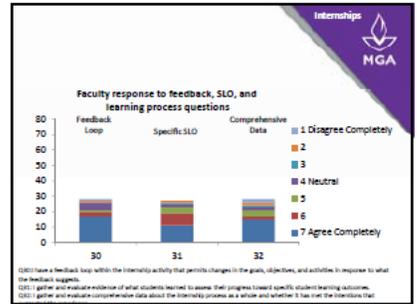
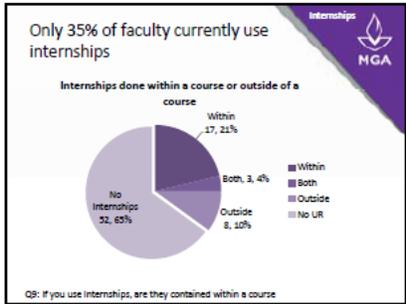
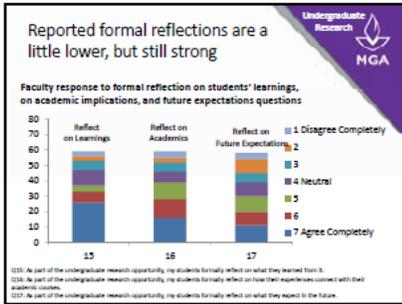


DETAILED FINDINGS



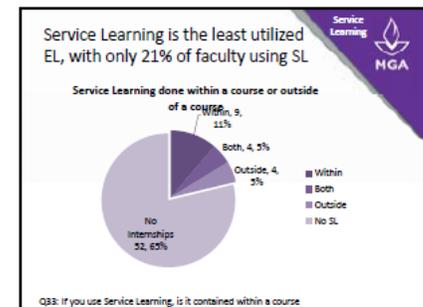
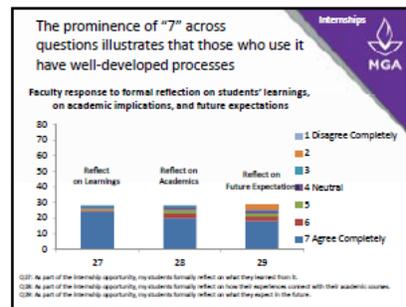
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

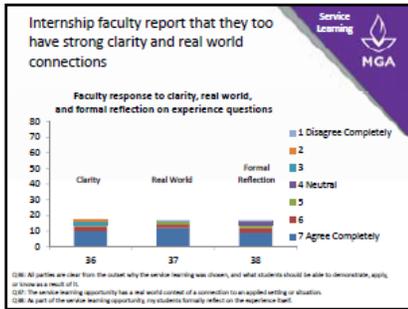




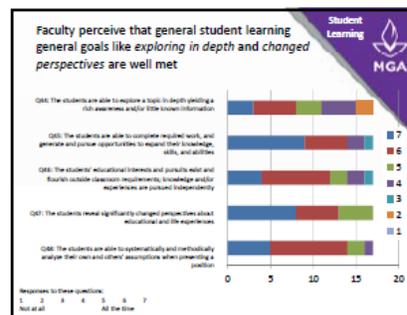
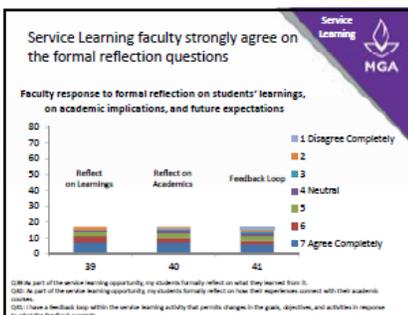
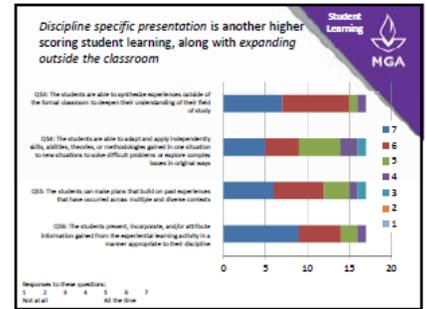
SERVICE LEARNING

INTERNSHIPS

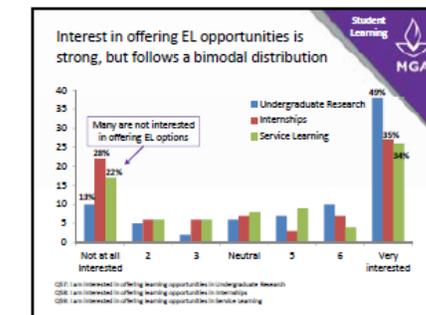
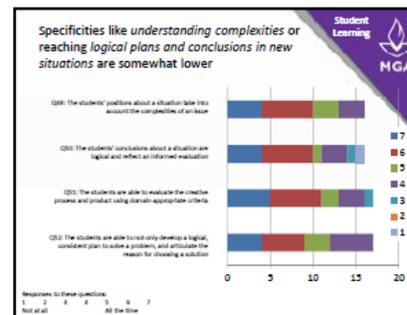
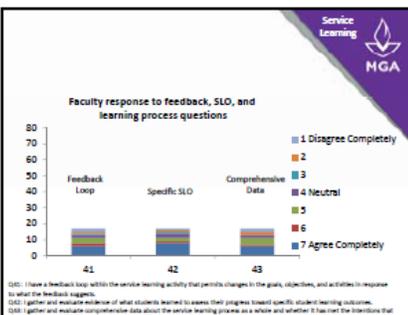


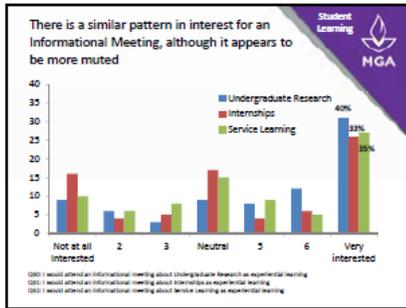


STUDENT LEARNING



FACULTY DEVELOPMENT





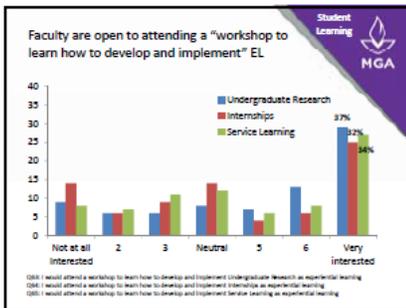
In qualitative responses, faculty are excited, but show apprehensive anticipation

- I would like to see the university engage the community collectively, really impacting our city.*
- I'm ready, I'm really interested in enhancing my classes with more experiential learning

- Resources and compensation matter
 - Many are feeling already squeezed
 - It is difficult to make these experiences successful and meaningful if it is just another task piled on top of everything else that a person is doing.
 - If it could not add to my current workload and/or if pedagogical benefit was clear
 - I don't want to work in isolation
 - Next year I am Really Busy

Q88 What would make it more likely that you would participate in the QEP in any way?
 * Inactive provided without demographic information to ensure confidentiality

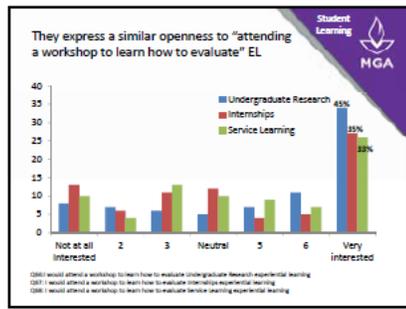
- Not sure the students understand the value of UR, and underclass faculty not sure they can handle it
 - I teach freshman and sophomore level **** classes. I am fighting to get them to learn the basics, and I am not sure that my classes would be able to do these things.
- Not applicable for some faculty – Learning support, Aviston's strict FAA requirements, and so on.



There are logistical needs

- They also foresee several logistical needs to making the time to learn and offer EL activities, especially in light of the aforementioned squeeze
 - Find a way to help faculty write grants and obtain funding for the research activity
 - Assistance finding real-world environments for students to complete their service in
 - Better understanding of the QEP process at MGA
- Meeting times need to be accessible to all faculty across all campuses
 - However, there were differing ideas of what times would be most accessible, with some suggesting daytime and others evening times
 - Traveling between campuses for informational meetings was mentioned as well

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Faculty have professional and logistical concerns

- How do lecturers and instructors move forward – why should they do this?
 - As a [instructor/lecturer] I feel that my future is limited and I have no way to progress as a professional. There is little incentive to work harder. This makes it difficult to see myself going through the VAST amount of work required to set up EL activities
- How do faculty know they will positively benefit from participating in EL?
 - If it is an expressed expectation by leadership, and I will be evaluated positively for its implementation
 - If the work would count as an alternative to scholarly activity.

Appendix K: QEP Director Job Description

Director QEP; Director of the Office of Experiential Learning
Office of Academic Affairs

JOB SUMMARY

The Director administers the development and implementation of MGA's Quality Enhancement Plan. The director provides leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating an experiential learning program organized out of the Office of Experiential Learning. The program will provide purposeful education to undergraduate students through real-world experiences such as service learning, internships, and undergraduate research. Work is performed independently under limited supervision and performance is based upon completion of assignments and results obtained. The performance evaluation is conducted through the performance evaluation system and in accordance with University Policy & Procedures

MAJOR DUTIES

- Administers the development and implementation of MGA's Quality Enhancement Plan.
- Manages the QEP budget, provides status reports, and participates in budget planning.
- Directs and pursues acquisitions of resources to support experiential learning and the QEP.
- Manages and oversees QEP assessment in collaboration with Institutional Improvement.
- Supervises staff and oversees the logistical needs of the program.
- Creates, sustains, and increases cooperative experiential learning (EL) relationships and opportunities with staff, faculty, campus organizations, and community partners.
- Collaborates with internal and external groups to develop and promote EL opportunities.
- Develops and coordinates workshops and presentations promoting experiential learning.
- Administers professional development for students, faculty, and staff.
- Promotes the QEP throughout the university and to the community.
- Oversees the student recognition related to the QEP.
- Coordinates the QEP marketing and awareness campaign
- Performs related duties as assigned.
 - Activities include: Program Assessment, Strategic Planning, Marketing, Program Development, Project Development

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

- Knowledge and experience with SACSCOC principles and standards.
- Knowledge and understanding of experiential learning and SACSCOC requirements for Quality Enhancement Plans.
- Ability and experience to write reports.
- Experience in developing and assessing student learning outcomes.
- Knowledge of institutional effectiveness planning.
- Ability to apply appropriate research methodologies, analyze data, and use data to improve processes and procedures.
- Ability to manage and lead work teams and facilitate cooperation among diverse groups.
- Ability to plan and develop university initiatives.
- Ability to create and manage unit budgets and lead projects.
- Ability to develop internal and external partnerships.

- Experience in strategic plan development and evaluation.
- Ability to assess and recommend personnel needs.
- Ability to supervise personnel.
- Ability to facilitate collaboration among university units.
- Ability to market and promote QEP initiatives.
- Ability to create and disseminate annual QEP reports.
- Ability to administer professional development programs related to QEP.
- Ability to communicate promptly, strategically, and effectively, orally and in writing.
- Ability to use initiative and resourcefulness in work assignments and in implementing long-range improvements.
- Ability to organize work effectively, conceptualize and prioritize objectives and exercise independent judgment based on an understanding of organizational policies and activities.
- Ability to represent the academic unit and University in a friendly, courteous, and professional manner.
- Ability to use a personal computer and other office equipment.

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

The Associate Provost, Academic Initiatives assigns work in terms of the QEP and OEL goals and objectives. The work is reviewed thru reports and conferences with direct report.

GUIDELINES

Guidelines include college policies and procedures; University System of Georgia policies and procedures; SACS and other accreditation standards and requirements; faculty, staff and student handbooks; and relevant state and federal regulations. These guidelines require judgment, selection and interpretation in application.

COMPLEXITY/SCOPE OF WORK

The work consists of varied management, supervisory and instructional duties. The variety of tasks to be managed combined with frequent interruptions contributes to the complexity of the position.

CONTACTS

Contacts are typically with co-workers, other college personnel, faculty, staff, students, representatives of other colleges and universities, alumni, representatives of accrediting bodies, professional bodies, governmental organizations, community groups, organizations, and the general public. Contacts are typically to give or exchange information, to resolve problems, to motivate or influence persons, or to provide services.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS/ WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work is typically performed while sitting at a desk or table or while intermittently sitting, standing or stooping. The work is typically performed in an office. The work requires interstate and intrastate travel.

SUPERVISORY AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

This position has direct supervision over department staff.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum five years' experience as a faculty member, with experience in accreditation standards, assessment, and academic administration in higher education. Experience sufficient to thoroughly understand the diverse objectives and functions of the subunits in the division/department in order to direct and coordinate work within the division/department, usually interpreted to require two years of related experience. Possession of or ability to readily obtain a valid driver's license issued by the State of Georgia for the type of vehicle or equipment operated. At least 2 years' experience working collaboratively with partners from business, government, and non-profit entities.

Knowledge and level of competency commonly associated with the completion of a Master's degree.

Appendix L: Reflection Journal and Essay Instructions - Internships

The assessment process for all Experiential Learning (EL) Internship activities will include the following two parts: a **Reflective Journal** and a **Reflective Essay**. The Reflective Journal is a formative assessment, while the Reflective Essay is summative in nature.

The Reflective Journal: The journal performs several distinct functions.

1. It serves as a vehicle for conversation between you and your instructor(s) concerning the nature of the learning experience.
2. It encourages you to reflect on the knowledge you have acquired and ruminate on the ideas generated through the EL process.
3. It helps you sharpen essential skills of communication and reasoning.
4. It helps you identify areas of interest, opportunities for personal and professional growth, and questions or issues to be resolved.
5. It forms the raw material from which you will construct your final Reflective Essay.

What goes into your reflective journal?

In general, you should expect to complete one journal entry per week. Each entry in your reflective journal should begin with a brief summary of the activities associated with the week's work. Then reflect on these activities—record your own thoughts, ideas, responses and reactions. Your entry should address such questions as:

- What did you learn during this activity? Did you have an “a-ha” moment?
- What did you contribute? Did you try something new? Did it succeed or fail?
- What decisions did you face during the week, and how did you make those decisions? Were the results satisfactory?
- How did this week's activities relate to those of the previous week, or to the EL process as a whole?
- What do you hope to learn next?
- Style and format are dictated by your own academic discipline. There is no set word count, because not every week will provide equally fruitful activities. Instead, the journal should reflect your own ideas and thoughts as completely as possible. Be as original, as constructive, and as professional as you can.

The Reflective Essay

For your Reflective Essay, you will want to address the EL experience as a whole. What did you apply to the EL setting from your coursework? Are there certain skills whose importance now seems greater as a result of the EL activity? How will your EL experience shape what you do next, academically and professionally? The Reflective Essay is a minimum of 1500 words or more at the direction of your program and will be graded according to an the associated rubric.

Appendix M: Internship Reflection Essay Rubric

Internships are defined as "supervised work experiences involving an intentional experiential learning strategy, an emphasis on professional development, a performance assessment, and a reflection." Internships are three-way partnerships among: (1) Middle Georgia State University; (2) an internship site; and (3) a student. (from Birmingham Southern College QEP. ⁽¹⁾ Adapted from AACU Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric)(² Adapted from AACU Lifelong Learning VALUE Rubric) Rev: 6/18/2015

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

| Performance Indicators | SLO | Capstone 4 | 3 | Milestones 2 | Benchmark 1 | Score |
|--|--------------------|--|---|---|---|-------|
| Connections to Experience¹ <i>Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge</i> | SLO2, SLO3, & SLO4 | Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden own points of view. | Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to illuminate concepts / theories / frameworks of fields of study. | Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than own. | Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to own interests. | |
| Connections to Discipline¹ <i>Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives</i> | SLO2, SLO3, & SLO4 | Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | When prompted, presents examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | |
| Transfer¹ <i>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations</i> | SLO2 & SLO4 | Adapts and applies, independently, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways. | Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues. | Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues. | Uses, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation. | |
| Initiative² | SLO4 | Completes required work, generates and pursues opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities. | Completes required work, identifies and pursues opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities. | Completes required work and identifies opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities. | Completes required work. | |
| Reflection and Self-Assessment¹ <i>Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflective, or creative work)</i> | SLO3 | Envisions a future self (and possibly makes plans that build on past experiences that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts). | Evaluates changes in own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity and risk, deals with frustration, considers ethical frameworks). | Articulates strengths and challenges (within specific performances or events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness). | Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure. | |

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