



CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE AND MEANINGFUL QEP

2.12 Choosing a Topic

- Possible topics identified from results of IE process – What does the *data* tell you?
- Involve various important constituencies in process of identifying and choosing topic
- Keep good records of campus discussions
- Remember parameters – enhance student learning
 - Student learning outcomes *and/or* Student learning environment
- Do more than just a literature review. Look for articles from like peers; don't miss this opportunity to involve librarians and faculty from other disciplines; interview and visit peer institutions

2.12 Focus

- Project that is important to institution
- Can't do everything in Strategic Plan – save other ideas for the next QEP; not everything worth doing has to be “QEP”
- Clear statement of “thesis”
- Clear idea of desired “impact” on students
- Keep good records

3.3.2 Capacity

- Budget should be robust enough to assure completion of the plan; first two years need to be pretty firm
- Identify both financial and human resources necessary for success
- Don't neglect the library/learning resources!
- What about facilities?
- Think MONEY
 - **Do** Identify financial resources required for each item on the timeline
 - **Do** Allocate funds for “release time” for faculty and staff
 - **Do** Calculate the ROI of a successful project
 - **Don't** Use money as a substitute for well-planned processes
 - **Don't** Think that you have to have a budget item for everything you're doing. Some things really are free!
 - **Don't** Rely on grant funds that you haven't yet secured

3.3.2 Broad Implementation

- Impact a significant student population
- Continue to engage various constituencies and stakeholders
- Designed to play a central role in educational life of institution over at least next five years
- Establish a timeline. Pilot, pilot, pilot! Think through sequences; allow time for policy and procedure changes. Organize to implement
 - **Do:** Identify personnel required for each item on the timeline
 - **Do:** Make sure important hiring actions are on the timeline
 - **Do:** Plan for ‘picking up the slack’ when assigning tasks to existing employees
 - **Do:** Account for personnel capabilities and limitations
- **Don’t:** Be unreasonable – too much work piled on existing employees will raise questions about the college’s capacity to carry out the plan.
- **Don’t:** Leave faculty and front-line staff hanging. Make sure a clear “chain of command” is established for the QEP
- **Don’t:** Forget to assign administrative responsibilities (e.g., budget)

3.3.2 Assessment

- Clear statements of goals and outcomes; learning outcomes should be **measurable, directly related to the topic, and reasonable**
- *Enhanced student learning*, not enhanced assessment of student learning
- Clear and understandable assessment “flow”
- Important “audience” for assessment is Impact Report
- Assess progress of plan, as well

Sound Practices

- Start early, and use IE results
- Good excuse for discussions about student learning across the institution
- Document the process
- Is this the most important use of time, energy, and resources right now?
- Faculty-led process

QEP Document

- Audience(s)
 - On-Site Committee
 - C&R/BOT
 - Other internal/external audiences?
- Clear, logical organization
- “Finished” document; final draft
- Answer the “questions”....

On-Site Review

- QEP lead evaluator

- On-Site Committee Visit
 - Initial institutional presentation
 - Multiple conversations
 - QEP team
 - Faculty
 - Students
 - Other constituencies important for committee to understand
- Consultative
 - Recommendations (tied to standards)
 - Suggestions

Common Problems

- Focus is unclear
- Scope is too broad/too narrow
- Budget is inadequate/absent
- Goals and outcomes aren't clear
- Assessment measures are too limited/too complex/missing
- Plan doesn't address significant student population

Impact Report

- Part of Fifth-year Report
- Narrative results from assessment process
- What “impact” has this project had on your institution and student learning?
- Did it accomplish what you intended/hoped? Were mid-course corrections necessary?
- Reaffirmation is just the beginning....