

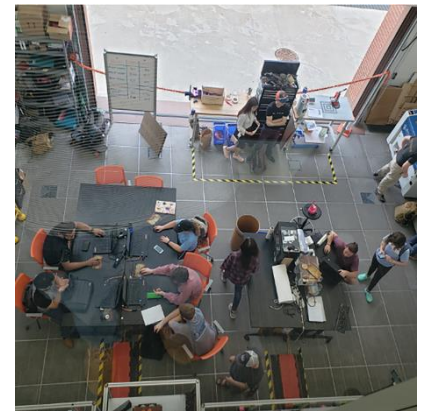
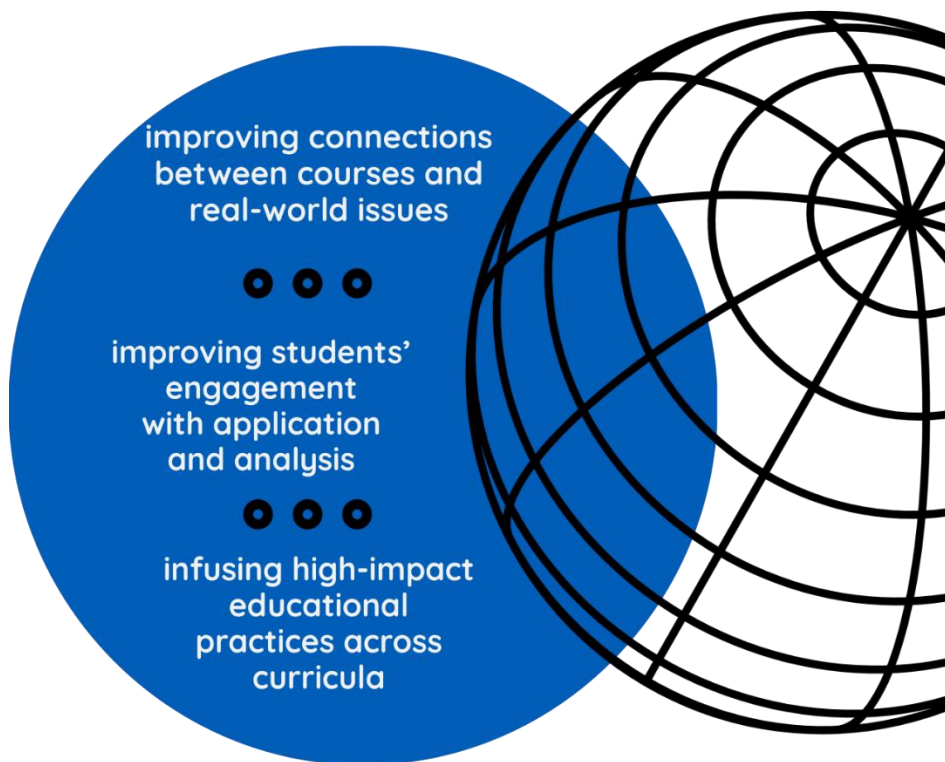
Executive Summary

Clemson University Quality Enhancement Plan Status, April 2021

What if Clemson University were able to better deliver our academic mission through improving connections between courses and real-world issues, improving students' engagement with application and analysis, and infusing high-impact educational practices across curricula?

When we ask our students what an education should be, they extoll the benefits of projects and the relationships with engaged faculty and staff who guide their thinking, communication, and leadership abilities while providing access to burgeoning knowledge and interests. They want to make a difference in their careers and in their societies. Our most innovative students, faculty, staff, and other leaders critique educational structures that have an overreliance on memorization or convergent tasks directed at getting the right answer, and they promote a system-wide strategy for improved relevance and engagement.

With the advent of a new university Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in 2023, we have the opportunity to advance what a Clemson University education *is* and *could be*. We have institutional data, support, and other evidence for this topic, and the QEP Exploratory Group recommends to the Office of the Provost that we move forward with further developing it as our next QEP.



I.) Overview

A QEP, or Quality Enhancement Plan, is a SACSCOC core requirement to be addressed in our next 2023 reaffirmation of accreditation. The topic must focus on student learning and/or student success. The identification of the topic should come from the university's data and planning process. It must have specific student learning outcomes, which are directly assessed as part of the plan. It should be sustainable and reasonable for the intended student population, and resources must be committed to the plan.

II.) Summary of QEP Exploratory Group Process and Timeline

Throughout October and November 2020, the QEP Exploratory Group analyzed 15 data sets on student learning and student success.

Each data set had two readers, who completed a short analysis of the data set, identifying areas where we are doing well (i.e. – no interventions needed) and areas for improvement (i.e. – interventions could benefit student learning or student success). The full Exploratory Group went through summaries from the readers' analyses and discussed the different data sets, drawing connections and looking for trends.

Most of these data sets were focused on undergraduate students, but we had a complementary meeting with Dean John Lopes and his data and assessment team in The Graduate School to determine which trends could also intersect with needs and initiatives for Clemson graduate student learning and success. The College Associate Deans reviewed the trends as potential QEP topics in January 2021.

From February 2021 to March 2021, the Clemson community was invited to provide additional specific ideas and insights on the trends identified. An article was shared in the weekly campus newsletter (Our Clemson), a sampling of students from high-enrollment courses were asked for their input, and information was shared through student government, Tiger Quest (student involvement platform) and faculty/staff/student committees.

In April 2021, the QEP Exploratory Group reviewed the input received. We believe that there is the strongest evidence and support for further developing a focused and SACSCOC-compliant QEP around a combination of trends 1 and 4 – improving connections between courses and real-world issues, improving students' engagement with application and analysis, and infusing high-impact educational practices across curricula.

III.) General Timeline for Next Steps

The task of the Exploratory Group is complete. Clemson needs to send a group to the SACSCOC Summer Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation and transition the work to a Project Development Team, expanding the team's membership in line with the topic. Activities related the topic will be piloted in AY21-22 for gathering baseline data. The plan will be completed in AY22-23 and submitted to SACSCOC in Spring 2023 as part of the on-site visit. The plan will officially begin in Fall 2023 and run through Fall 2028.

IV.) Contacts for QEP Exploratory Group

For questions or additional information, please contact Associate Dean Dr. Bridget Trogden (trogden@clemsn.edu) or Office of Institutional Effectiveness Assessment & Accreditation Manager Abby Baker (bakera@clemsn.edu).

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V.) Trends Identified as Potential QEP Topics

The following represent areas where a Quality Enhancement Plan topic could lead to improved student learning and/or student success.

Trend 1. Improve connections between courses and real-world issues, especially via application and analysis.

Trend 2. Address time to graduation for transfer students and/or students who change majors.

Trend 3. Identifying and addressing issues in gateway courses (high enrollment, high DFW rates), especially those with equity gaps.

Trend 4. Infusing high-impact educational practices (student-faculty research, study abroad/international virtual exchange, community-engaged learning, capstones, etc.) across major courses of study.

VI.) Input from Campus Community

Clemson students, faculty, staff, alumni, emeritus faculty, and other stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on the topic ideas. A Qualtrics survey was created that briefly described the QEP process and the four topics identified thus far. The survey allowed respondents to indicate the topics for which they had further ideas to share, as well as providing ideas outside of the four topics. Respondents were not required to provide their names or departmental/college affiliations, and many submitted their responses anonymously. Respondents were also not required to provide their Clemson role(s), but the majority did provide that information. Responses were viewed and vetted by internal committees and stakeholders.