

### QEP FAQ's and Talking Points

<http://www.moreheadstate.edu/qep/>

**What is a QEP:** the QEP or Quality Enhancement Plan is a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning (SACS Handbook for Reaffirmation of Accreditation, 2007, p. 3).

**Student Learning:** Within the context of the QEP as a requirement for SACS reaffirmation, the Commission on Colleges broadly defines student learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors, or values (Handbook for Reaffirmation of Accreditation, 2007, p. 4).

*MSU General Education Student Learning Outcomes:* communications skills, intellectual skills, quantitative skills, knowledge of human cultures, knowledge of the natural world, and knowledge of aesthetics (MSU General Education Reform at <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/genedreform/> retrieved on 02.27.2009).

### **Why are we doing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)?**

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is the component of the accreditation process that reflects and affirms the commitment of the Commission on Colleges to the enhancement of the quality of higher education and to the proposition that student learning is at the heart of the mission of all institutions of higher learning ***and is a requirement for SACS accreditation***. This requirement launches a process that can move an institution into a future characterized by the development and/or modification of creative, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences for students (The Quality Enhancement Plan Handbook, 2007, pp. 1-2).

### **What is MSU required to do for the QEP?**

There are five (5) elements that SACS requires of institutions for the QEP, as follow.

1. MSU must develop a broad-based QEP process to identify key issues or problems at MSU that become known through institutional assessment. This requires a comprehensive review of available data related to student performance and engagement.
2. The QEP topic must be focused on the enhancement of student learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning. This is this most critical element of the QEP; student learning must be the primary emphasis.
3. MSU must demonstrate that the institution has the capability to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP. Detailed planning and documentation is critical.
4. The QEP process must provide broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation. The members of the QEP committee broadly represent the various constituencies of the University. Further, as a first step, the QEP committee is visiting multiple groups within and external to the University as well as hosting open forums to begin disseminating QEP information and to gather a first round of feedback.
5. MSU must identify goals for the QEP and develop a detailed plan to assess the achievement of those goals. [Principle 2.12, *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, p. 19, <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2008PrinciplesofAccreditation.pdf>]

### **What is the QEP topic?**

***THE QEP TOPIC HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED.*** Several groups representing MSU constituencies will be visited by the QEP committee in the coming months to share information on the QEP and gather feedback on how we may enhance student learning. The QEP committee also openly invites any group who would like for us to visit with you to answer your questions regarding the process and how you may get involved. ***THE QEP TOPIC DEPENDS ON YOU!***

**How do we select a QEP topic?**

- ↪ Broad-based solicitation of QEP themes topics
- ↪ QEP themes/topics distributed and feedback sought
- ↪ QEP committee narrows down to 3-4 themes/topics
- ↪ Faculty/Staff writing QEP white papers; QEP committee writing preliminary report sections
- ↪ QEP white papers distributed and feedback sought
- ↪ Based upon feedback and data, QEP topic finalized and broadly communicated to MSU community

**What resources are needed for the QEP process? From where will we get the resources?**

SACS requires us to demonstrate that we have the capability to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP. This typically includes recurring resources sufficient to: (1) assign a QEP director and full-time supporting staff; (2) develop and maintain a permanent QEP office located on campus; (3) meet the requirements set in the final QEP that enhance student learning; and, (4) provide professional development to faculty and staff in order to facilitate the QEP.

From where will these resources come? In the current budget climate at the state and national level, that is a good question. Every plan, however, will require identification of personnel time, money, and materials necessary for its successful implementation. Based on feedback from several institutions who have implemented their QEP's, a reasonable range of \$200K - \$500K is the annual budget. It's important to understand that the commitment of resources is not optional; ***it is an accreditation requirement.***

**What will the QEP final report address?**

The final report will address a topic that is important for our students and MSU; that clearly addresses student learning; that is supported by documented research; that is implementable with reasonable resources; that is assessable during its entire implementation; and, that has broad agreement that the QEP is important and valuable to students, faculty, staff, and broader community.

**What the QEP is not?**

- It is not "easy" to do, at least to satisfy SACS requirement and evaluators.
- It is not a linear process but rather a recursive process with deliberate and reflective planning and writing. The process will shift and evolve as the research, writing, talking, and campus participation occur. Ambiguity is expected, at least at first.
- It does not result in a broad and complicated topic. The QEP topic must be focused and relatively narrow.
- It is not focused primarily on faculty teaching; instead the focus **MUST** be student learning.

**When is the final report due?** Early Spring 2011.

*For more information contact:*

Dr. Charles Patrick, SACS Director and Accreditation Liaison

Provost's Office

26 Allie Young (office), 205 HM (mail)

Phone: 606-783-2884 (office)

Email: [c.patrick@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:c.patrick@moreheadstate.edu)

Website: <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/SACS/>