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OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

February 1, 2007

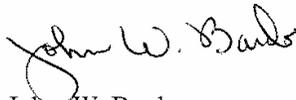
To Members of the Western Carolina University Community:

As we complete an intense evaluation of our university as part of the review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), I am pleased to support a plan designed to enhance student learning at our University.

The Quality Enhancement Plan, *Synthesis: a Pathway to Intentional Learning*, was developed as a part of the SACS Review and it is a critical initiative for preparing our graduates for life in the twenty first century. Increasingly, effective college learning must involve engaged students who participate in active education that integrates theory, methodology, and subject matter with practice and reflection—synthetical education. Our plan aims to increase the ability of Western students to synthesize their educational experiences in a way that will best serve them for life beyond college. This plan presents a coherent model for doing just that and I am pleased to endorse it.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the work of the faculty, staff, and students who contributed to the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan—their devotion of countless hours to improve the experience of students at Western Carolina University is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



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**SYNTHESIS: A PATHWAY TO INTENTIONAL LEARNING AT
WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
PREFACE**

Acknowledgements

We extend sincere appreciation to the many members of the Western Carolina University community for the support they afforded us during the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan and in the preparation of this document. To the faculty, students, staff, and administrators, who attended public forums, invited us to attend unit meetings, and provided invaluable suggestions and feedback, asked us difficult questions, and reviewed numerous drafts, we hope this plan to enhance student learning is an accurate reflection of your hopes and ideas. We are also grateful to Ann Chard, Vice President of the Commission on Colleges and our SACS Liaison, who provided early, constructive feedback on our plan, and to the many presenters and colleagues at other institutions who allowed us access to their Quality Enhancement Plans.

Specifically, we express appreciation to the following individuals and their staffs: Mardy Ashe at Career Services; Glenn Bowen at Service Learning; Anna McFadden at the Coulter Faculty Center; Robert Caruso in Student Affairs; Keith Corzine at Residential Living; and Allen Lomax and Steve Baxley at the Advising and Student Success Centers. The following individuals provided technical and public relations support: Amy Walker and Jed Tate in Web Services; Bill Studenc, Teresa Killian, Rubae Sander, and Ashley Evans in Public Relations; Jacquie Arrington, Tom Frazier, and Clint Hardin at University Print Shop.

Several members of the QEP Committee provided significant effort beyond regular committee duties: Cindy Atterholt (Chemistry and Physics), Raymond Barclay (Institutional Research and Planning), Heidi Buchanan (Hunter Library), Tammy Haskett (Orientation), Irene Mueller (Health Sciences), Bob Orr (Information Technology), Nory Prochaska (Math Tutoring Center), Newton Smith (Web Services), and Mike Stewart (Administration and Finance). Melissa Wargo's (Assessment) work on the implementation and assessment sections was critical in helping us to complete the plan.

Chancellor John Bardo and Provost Kyle Carter allowed us the freedom to explore ideas with the potential for significant impact on how our students learn and helped us to frame a context for implementing and assessing the plan.

Finally, Ann Hallyburton, Reference Librarian at Hunter Library, provided extensive editing of the Quality Enhancement Plan.

With much appreciation,

Scott Philyaw and Brian Railsback
Co-Chairs, QEP Committee

Carol Burton
Director, SACS Review

**SYNTHESIS: A PATHWAY TO INTENTIONAL LEARNING AT
WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
PREFACE**

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Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

The glossary of terms and acronyms that follows will assist internal and external audiences' understanding of terminology used in the Quality Enhancement Plan.

AS - College of Applied Sciences

A&S - College of Arts and Sciences

Academic Learning Community - a grouping of 2 or 3 courses around a common theme for entering students; most Learning Communities include USI 130 (see below) as a component course

Advising Center - comprised of professional advisors who guide students on the Liberal Studies Program, academic majors, and other academic subjects using the case study approach

ADP/American Democracy Project - a civic engagement initiative sponsored by the Association of American State Colleges and Universities

BUS - College of Business

Project CAT - Assessment of Critical Thinking test

ASSIST - Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students

BCSSE - Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement

Career Services - assists students with internships, co-operative education, and job placement; also offers a variety of workshops and other services on campus

CatWalk - electronic portal for newly admitted students

CEAP - College of Education and Allied Professions

CLA - Collegiate Learning Assessment

Co-curricular Transcript - electronic record of a student's activities with student government, clubs, intramurals, and other co-curricular activities

COC - Commission on Colleges

Core Requirement - foundational courses of English, mathematics, oral communication, science, and wellness within the Liberal Studies Program

Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning - center that supports faculty in teaching and learning

EB - Education Briefcase

Faculty Survey on Technology - a University of North Carolina survey of faculty use of educational technology

First Year Seminar - a rigorous, integrative course intended to introduce first-year students to the intellectual life of the university

Focused Growth Institution - a University of North Carolina designation for the seven campuses allocated additional funding to increase enrollment

Freshman Surveys – University of North Carolina assessment of first-year students

FSSE - Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

GA - General Administration of the University of North Carolina; also Graduate Assistant

Graduating Senior Surveys - University of North Carolina assessment of graduating seniors

HERI - Higher Education Research Institute

IT Services - Information Technology Services

LS - Liberal Studies; the WCU General Education Program

My Cat - an electronic portal that provides access to a variety of university services

NACE - National Association of Colleges and Employers

NSSE - National Survey of Student Engagement

One-Stop - an express center for students offering advising, career, financial aid, registration, cashier, and other student support services

Perspective Area Requirement - a component of the Liberal Studies Program consisting of courses in the social sciences, history, the humanities, the fine and performing arts, and world cultures

QEP - Quality Enhancement Plan

RHA - Residence Hall Association

SACS - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Service Learning Department - coordinates Service Learning activities for faculty and students on campus and the local community

SGA - Student Government Association

Sophomore Institutional Evaluation Surveys - WCU assessment instrument for second year undergraduate students

Staff Forum - campus group representing university staff

TCI - Transition to College Inventory

UAC - University Advisory Committee; comprised of students, staff, and faculty

UNC - The University of North Carolina system consisting of the following institutions:

ASU - Appalachian State University

ECSU - Elizabeth City State University

ECU - East Carolina University

FSU - Fayetteville State University

NCA&T - North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University

NCCU - North Carolina Central University

NCSU - North Carolina State University

North Carolina School of Science and Math

UNCA - University of North Carolina at Asheville

UNCC - University of North Carolina at Charlotte

UNCCH - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

UNCG - University of North Carolina at Greensboro

UNCP - University of North Carolina at Pembroke

UNCW - University of North Carolina at Wilmington

WCU - Western Carolina University

WSSU - Winston Salem State University

Upper Level Perspective - A required 300 or 400 level Liberal Studies course outside the major; typically interdisciplinary

USI 130 - University Studies-Interdisciplinary; a one-credit hour transition/orientation course that introduces students to the university experience

WE LEAD/We Encourage Leadership Enhancement and Development - a comprehensive educational, training, and development program offered to students through Student Affairs based on the social change model of leadership development

WebCat and WebCT - web-based learning environments

YFCY - Your First College Year survey

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A Statement on Integrative Learning from the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

a statement on integrative learning

*association of american colleges and universities
the carnegie foundation for the advancement of teaching*

Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges of higher education. The undergraduate experience can be a fragmented landscape of general education courses, preparation for the major, co-curricular activities, and “the real world” beyond the campus. But an emphasis on integrative learning can help undergraduates put the pieces together and develop habits of mind that prepare them to make informed judgments in the conduct of personal, professional, and civic life.

Integrative learning comes in many varieties: connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying theory to practice in various settings; utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view; and, understanding issues and positions contextually. Significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unscripted and sufficiently broad to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions and benefiting from multiple perspectives.

Many colleges and universities are creating opportunities for more integrative, connected learning through first-year seminars, learning communities, interdisciplinary studies programs, capstone experiences, individual portfolios, advising, student self-assessment, and other initiatives. Often, however, such innovations involve only small numbers of students or exist in isolation, disconnected from other parts of the curriculum and from other reform efforts. But a variety of opportunities to develop the capacity for integrative learning should be available to all students throughout their college years, and should be a cornerstone of a twenty-first century education.

Students need programs of study that will help them understand the nature and advantages of integrative learning and assist them in pursuing their college experience in more intentionally connected ways. They also need courses designed by creative faculty that model and build integrative skills, and curricula that define pathways that encourage integrative learning within and across fields. Wider collaboration between academic and nonacademic staff, college and community, four-year and two-year institutions, higher education and K-12 will create further opportunities for integrative learning throughout students' educational careers.

It is important for educators to work together to build knowledge about integrative learning in its many varieties, and about how it is best encouraged and assessed. Developing students' capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today's global society. Students face a rapidly-changing and ever-more-interconnected world, in which integrative learning becomes not just a benefit... but a necessity.



This statement was developed in conjunction with the national project, *Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect*, March 2004.

Executive Summary

Western Carolina University

Western Carolina University (WCU), a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina, has a current student enrollment of almost 8,900 students. Established in 1889, the university offers more than 120 undergraduate and 50 graduate programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, education, business, engineering, and health professions. WCU is located in Cullowhee in western North Carolina, near the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Great Smoky Mountains.

The Quality Enhancement Plan

1. Overview

Synthesis: A Pathway to Intentional Learning at Western Carolina University initiates new and enhances current connections among existing programs to create a more holistic approach to educating students. WCU faculty and staff recognize that a major challenge of higher education is the need for students to synthesize their curricular and co-curricular (outside of courses) college experiences. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) uses *synthesis* – the ability to integrate knowledge from different areas into an original whole – as the driving framework for teaching and learning. This emphasis on synthesis enhances students’ educational journey and helps prepare them for life beyond college. Many students may view their courses and co-curricular experiences as isolated activities to be approached in check-list fashion. The QEP fosters synthesis across the disciplines, coordinating curricular and co-curricular experiences to facilitate students’ development of a clearer purpose at the university. The plan’s implementation will impact academics, residential life, service learning, student leadership, study abroad, and career planning/education. The outcome of the plan will be students who are intentional participants in their own educational journey.

2. Learning Goals/Outcomes of the QEP

The overarching learning goal of the QEP is one where students will synthesize knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. Specifically, students will:

1. Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations;

2. Modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
3. Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career goals.

3. Implementation

The successful implementation of the QEP will rely on a coordinated university effort centered on the principles of synthesis. The key elements of the plan's implementation are:

1. The creation of a QEP oversight structure that will implement, coordinate, and monitor the plan;
2. The development of a pilot study that will enable the university to implement, assess, and fund the QEP as it expands over time;
3. An enhancement of services offered by the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to train faculty and staff to integrate the QEP into their teaching and university work;
4. An integration of the synthesis concepts into admissions, orientation, and other early academic/co-curricular services offered to students;
5. The coordination of advising, service learning, international programs, undergraduate research, and career education through the synthesis concept; and
6. The development of the "Education Briefcase": an electronic portal through which students will be able to interact with faculty, advisors, and career counselors; it is the manifestation of the student's learning plan.

Conclusion

Synthesis: A Pathway to Intentional Learning at Western Carolina University intends to diminish barriers that inhibit students' abilities to identify and benefit from the interrelationships of their curricular and co-curricular experiences. The plan's knowledge base is derived from research on learning conducted by Bloom (1956) and his successors and reflected in his taxonomy of learning and D. A. Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning. The plan also incorporates many precepts presented in *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-wide Focus on the Student Experience* (Keeling, 2004), *Learning Reconsidered 2: A Practical Guide to Implementing a Campus-wide Focus on the Student Experience* (Keeling, 2006), and *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002)

Introduction

Western Carolina University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) identifies *synthesis*—the ability to integrate seemingly unrelated parts of experience from different areas into an original whole—as the driving framework for teaching and learning. Western's plan will connect undergraduate academics, advising, residential living, service learning, student leadership development, and career orientation so that students will explore, discover, and strengthen their sense of educational purpose. A coordinated university effort to assist undergraduate students with synthesizing their university experiences will equip them with the intellectual and experiential skills necessary to make more informed decisions about their lives and careers. The QEP calls for undergraduates, with guidance from faculty mentors and advisors, to apply the principles of synthesis and to develop a path (conceptual framework) for their university experience. The plan will commence with a focused pilot study that will allow gradual, careful expansion.

Introduction to the principles of synthesis will begin for students with recruitment and orientation activities. Recruitment materials content, orientation presentations, and discussions in early curricular and co-curricular experiences will underscore for undergraduates the importance of synthesis in the university experience. Beginning in 2008, students in the pilot program will learn the foundational skills and concepts necessary for synthesis through coursework, advising, and other venues. Mentored reflection leading to the learning outcomes identified in the QEP will begin in specially designed sections of USI 130, a course which transitions students from secondary to post-secondary education. As sophomores, juniors, and seniors, students will build on these foundations with mentored reflection in a sequence of enhanced courses within the major. Student reflection and artifacts created for the Education Briefcase will continue the synthesis of the university experience as students make key decisions, such as choice of major and career path or graduate school. Through course experiences as well as professional and academic advising, undergraduates will be encouraged to participate in activities that foster synthesis: service learning opportunities, WE LEAD (a program that fosters student leadership development), undergraduate research, study abroad programs, residential life programs, and cooperative (co-op) education and internships. Students in the QEP pilot will be encouraged to make culminating, public presentations that synthesize the university experience and career/graduate school plans as part of the capstone or culminating academic experience.

The Need for Synthesis at WCU

The National Picture

Western Carolina University selected synthesis as a focus because, too often, college students fail to integrate individual collegiate experiences into a coherent whole that leads to understanding, direction, and a career. Colleges and universities have attempted to offer an extensive variety of programs and techniques to address this issue. While changes in curricula, advising, pedagogy, student life, and other areas have each led to some improvement, no single approach has produced significant advancement. We believe the problem results from the disjointed approach to education most students experience. As Derek Bok (2006) observes in *Our Underachieving Colleges*, compartmentalizing curricular and co-curricular experiences is a

problem “because student experiences inside the classroom and out are often too closely intertwined to be kept separate” (p. 53). Undergraduates who do not synthesize their experiences tend to view their courses and co-curricular activities as isolated events and fall short of making the holistic and purposeful connections necessary to define their real world application to other related, yet disparate, events.

The Quality Enhancement Plan Committee’s identification of the disconnected experiences of undergraduates and the proposed QEP were affirmed by the January 2007 online reports from the Association of American Colleges and Universities and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect*: “The undergraduate experience is often a fragmented landscape of general education, concentration, electives, co-curricular activities, and for many students, ‘the real world’ beyond campus,” stated Mary Huber, who co-directed the project. “An emphasis on integrated learning can help undergraduates find ways to put the pieces together and develop habits of mind that will prepare them to make informed judgments in the conduct of personal, professional and civic life.” The objectives of this recent report nearly mirror the overarching goals the QEP Committee established in 2005.

The development of the Quality Enhancement Plan at Western Carolina University incorporated important research conducted for *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002), *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-wide Focus on the Student Experience* (Keeling, 2004), and *Learning Reconsidered 2: A Practical Guide to Implementing a Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience* (Keeling, 2006). *Greater Expectations* (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002) discusses the “misalignment of high school work with college entry expectations,” (p. 13) including the lack of any formal or informal exposition of why college-bound high school students should be prepared for an interactive or holistic approach to higher education.

Furthermore, this disconnect is often repeated in college; students typically complete a list of courses while making no connection between those courses and participate in co-curricular activities that shed little or no light on the importance of an integrated college experience. This lack of coherence in curricula and programs is underscored by the “absence of a plan for connected learning,” so that students often matriculate without understanding relationships that exist between all aspects of their college experience (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002, p. 16). *Greater Expectations* (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002) outlines existing barriers to meeting the goals of higher education in the 21st Century and proposes important recommendations to meet those goals. Western Carolina University’s QEP embraces the desire proposed in *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004) to create a university experience for students that is “a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development processes that have often been considered separate, and even independent of each other” (p. 18).

Learning Theory and Research Support for the QEP

A challenge exists in higher education as it pertains to life or career-based education—in particular, how an institution of higher education can build upon well established pedagogical strategies and help students intentionally integrate their exploration of life and career-based choices. The QEP will function as the framework for infusing synthesis intentionally and systematically within the broader curricular and co-curricular frameworks.

The notion of synthesis is derived in part from Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (1956). The taxonomy classifies objectives and skills educators establish for student learning according to levels within affective, psychomotor, and cognitive domains.

Synthesis is here defined as the putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole. This is a process of working with elements, parts, etc., and combining them in such a way as to constitute a pattern or structure not clearly there before. Generally this would involve a recombination of parts of previous experience with new material, reconstructed into a new and more or less well-integrated whole. This is the category in the cognitive domain which most clearly provides for creative behavior on the part of the learner. However, it should be emphasized that this is not completely free creative expression since generally the student is expected to work within the limits set by particular problems, materials, or some theoretical and methodological framework. [The student's] efforts should yield a product – something that can be observed through one or more of the senses and which is clearly more than the materials he began to work with. It is to be expected that a problem which is classified as a task primarily involving synthesis will also require all of the previous categories [comprehension, application, analysis] to some extent. (p. 162)

Our emphasizing of synthesis builds on D. A. Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning. Other models that have influenced this plan include the constructivist learning model of Lawson (1989), Vygotsky's model as framed by Moll (1990), and the scaffolded knowledge integration (SKI) framework developed by Linn (1995). Kolb's (1984) framework organizes those instructional activities that best arrange synthesis into four areas: reflective observation, active experimentation, concrete experience, and abstract conceptualization (Kolb, 1984; Svinicki, 1990). Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning focuses on the preparation of students for lifelong learning. It also values a *learner-centered approach* to assessment that is contextual or goal driven so the educator can accommodate the unique needs, goals, and learning styles of the student. Our plan will focus on pedagogical strategies or other alternate instructional techniques that foster the integration of the broader learning experience within the context of application and societal factors; academic and co-curricular experiences must work together with real-life experiences.

Greater Expectations (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002) and previously cited works highlight the changing landscape of the American work place – more global in nature, more reliant on “creative problem-solving, team work, and adaptability,” and heavily dependent on high-level intellectual skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, analysis, and technological prowess (p. 6). Colleges and universities also are undergoing a metamorphosis as they try to meet their rapidly multiplying missions in an increasingly complicated society. Compounding this change are the outcomes and expectations for higher education that are desired by different constituents. High school and college students believe that completing a curriculum will prepare them for a career and advancement within that career. Employers, on the other hand, expect to hire employees who are not only trained for jobs, but who are able to “perform consistently well, communicate effectively, think analytically, help solve problems, work collegially in diverse teams, and use relevant skills of the profession” (Association of

American Colleges and Universities, 2002, p. 8). Similarly, policymakers are interested in meeting local and regional needs for economic development and the workforce. Meanwhile, faculty members expect students to be active learners in their educational journey, to achieve greater intellectual understanding, and to master knowledge specific to their disciplines. They also expect students to be effective communicators and active contributors to society.

The Situation at WCU

Student Perspective

WCU baseline data, outlined as follows, indicate that students who persist at the university are satisfied with their academic and co-curricular activities. However, WCU's retention and graduation rates, lower in comparison to UNC peer institutions, suggest that students need to connect these experiences to facilitate their learning and develop a plan that will take them through the university experience and its key decision points (for example, selection of a major, and co-curricular involvement) to degree completion and a career or further education.

Western Carolina University routinely collects and analyzes information on current students, alumni, and faculty with a variety of institutional, system, and national surveys. The Quality Enhancement Plan Committee reviewed this information, as well as institutional and national trend data, to identify the area(s) that would ultimately become the focus for the QEP. The surveys and significant results, as well as data on retention and graduation rates, are detailed. Surveys administered by organizations external to WCU are as follows:

1. Transition to College Inventory (TCI)
2. Your First College Year Survey (YFCY)
3. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
4. Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

Surveys administered by Western Carolina University are as follows:

1. Freshman Surveys
2. Sophomore Institutional Evaluation Surveys
3. Graduating Senior Surveys
4. Faculty Survey on Technology

A recent analysis of these multiple measures of student achievement, student and faculty perceptions, and institutional performance generated significant findings related to student learning expectations and outcomes and the learning environment at Western Carolina University.

Administered to all first-time freshmen at Western in fall 2004, the Transition to College Inventory (TCI) (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2004b) underscored the first-year students' desire to pursue an undergraduate education to launch a career (99%) and possibly prepare for graduate school (79%). Despite this strong desire, only 45% had decided on a career path at the time the inventory was administered. This finding presents an opportunity for the university to assist students with this important decision.

The 2004 administration of the Your First College Year (YFCY) Survey (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2004c), a national survey developed by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), revealed that first-year WCU students were more satisfied with the amount of faculty contact they experienced, opportunities for community service, relevance of coursework to everyday life, and overall college experience than students at many of the 132 other colleges and universities that participated in the survey.

However, of the WCU freshman class, 45% of females and 47% of males reported that orientation did not prepare them for life at WCU. Approximately 33% of entering first-year students reported declaring a major during summer orientation, while 29% had not declared a major at the end of their first year; the remaining 15% and 14% reported declaring a major by the end of the fall semester and during the spring semester, respectively. Forty-four percent reported receiving guidance and advice about their educational program from a professor, and a significant number of males (67%) indicated that they were concerned about life after college. In sum, the survey indicated that, while students felt good about the academic experience early on, more program and career direction is needed in the first year.

Second-year students rate Career Services at WCU highly—this is clearly a program the QEP can build upon by introducing it to students earlier in their university experience. The 2004 Sophomore Institutional Evaluation (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2004a) was completed by 47% of Western sophomores, 94% of whom responded that opportunities for career assistance were good or excellent and 81% of whom rated overall career-related services as good or excellent. Both indicators reflected an increase from 77% on each rating in 2000. Ninety-eight percent indicated that faculty efforts to set high expectations for student learning were good or excellent and 91% reported that faculty members were good or excellent at encouraging them to be actively involved in learning, an increase of six points from 2000.

WCU participated in the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for first and fourth year students in 2001, 2004, and 2006 (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2006c). The NSSE data illustrate that while most students (87% of first-year students and 85% of seniors) evaluated their experience at WCU as good or excellent, students reported mixed results related to items that track closely to those behaviors we hope to impact with our QEP. Almost half (46%) of first-year students and nearly one-third (30%) of seniors reported, for example, that they only sometimes or never put together ideas from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions. Almost 60% of first-year and nearly half (47%) of seniors reported that they only sometimes or never talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor. One-third of first-year students and one-quarter of seniors reported that coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences only very little or some of the time. Twenty percent of both first-year students and seniors reported that they had not yet decided or did not plan to participate in an experiential learning activity such as a practicum, co-op experience, field experience or clinical assignment during their college career. Additionally, almost two-thirds of first-year students and nearly half of seniors reported that they had not yet decided or did not plan to participate in a culminating educational experience such as a capstone course or senior project.

Internal Graduating Senior surveys also proved useful. Completed by 56% of graduates during the 2005-2006 academic year (Graduating Senior Survey for December 2005 - August 2006 at <http://planning.wcu.edu/Assessment/Surveys/seniorsvy0506.htm>), the data showed that WCU has an excellent faculty and staff to build upon but that graduates still under-perform in terms of beginning careers in comparison to national averages (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2006d). The data revealed that 91% of the seniors rated WCU faculty as good or excellent in encouraging them to be actively involved in their

learning, and the same percentage of seniors reported that WCU faculty, in general, were good or excellent at encouraging student-faculty interaction inside and outside of the classroom. Of the graduating students who reported using Career Services, 77% rated their experiences as good or excellent, and again approximately the same percentage perceived that the resources available to them (career and internship information) were good or excellent. Seventy percent reported that access to employment opportunities and assistance with résumé preparation was good or excellent. Of these same graduating seniors, 25% were unemployed at graduation, up from 23% the preceding year (Graduating Senior Survey for December 2003 - August 2004 at <http://planning.wcu.edu/Assessment/Surveys/seniorsvy0304.htm>), while 27% had already accepted a job. Of the latter group, 74% indicated that the job was in their major field of study; 96% felt that the overall quality of instruction in their major courses was excellent or good, as compared to 89% who rated the overall quality of instruction as good or excellent.

In a recent National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) study (2005 Career Services Benchmark Survey), an average of 49.8% of graduates for the 2003-2004 academic year had jobs at the time of commencement, approximately 22% higher than reported by Western's graduating seniors (Graduating Senior Survey for December 2003 - August 2004). Only 18% of those surveyed at WCU planned to pursue graduate studies.

Faculty Perspective

Supplemental to the NSSE study, the first administration of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) was conducted at WCU in spring 2006. Results of the FSSE can be found at <http://www.wcu.edu/assessment/FSSE2006.htm> and comparisons of the 2006 NSSE and FSSE results are located at <http://www.wcu.edu/assessment/NSSE-FSSE2006Comparisons.htm> (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2006b). The FSSE results reveal strong underlying support for the primary initiatives we plan to address with the QEP. Eighty-five percent of faculty, for example, reported that it was important or very important for undergraduates to participate in experiential learning activities such as practica, co-op experiences, study abroad, etc. Eighty-one percent of faculty felt it was important or very important for undergraduates to complete a culminating senior experience. FSSE data also reveal where we can achieve substantive improvements with the QEP initiatives. For example, most faculty (more than 75%) reported spending very little time (four hours or less) in a typical seven-day week working with students on activities other than coursework or in other interactions with students outside of the classroom. Faculty teaching lower division courses reported that less than 25% of students talked with them at least once about career plans. Over half (53%) of faculty teaching lower division courses and 43% of faculty teaching upper division courses considered putting together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions to be either not important or only somewhat important. Similarly, 60% of faculty teaching lower division courses and 51% of faculty teaching upper division courses structured those courses only very little or some so that students learned and developed their understanding of themselves.

A faculty survey dealing with technology use conducted at WCU in 2002 (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning) indicated an academic culture that would support the innovation of the QEP's Education Briefcase. Approximately 60% of faculty indicated that interactions between the faculty member and his or her students increased as a result of incorporating technology into teaching. Fifty percent of the faculty who

responded to the survey reported that active or engaged learning opportunities increased as a result of incorporating technology into their classes, and 42% felt their expectations of students' performance increased as well. Finally, 46% of faculty reported that their teaching effectiveness increased because of computer technology.

Retention and Graduation Rates

The data cited above suggest that academic and co-curricular programs in place are working favorably for undergraduates at WCU. However, the survey results also reveal some weakness in student academic and career planning. In light of this weakness, it is not surprising that the university needs to improve in terms of retention and graduation rates. In a recent comparison of institutions designated as peers of Western Carolina University used by the WCU Office for Institutional Research and Planning, the graduation rate for Western students was 48.9%, compared with the peer group average of 53.9% (<http://planning.wcu.edu/peers/summary%202006.xls>). Additional comparisons of peer institutions selected by NSSE based on our Carnegie Classification and of institutions that were self-selected through our decision to be part of the American Democracy Project (ADP) consortium are included in Table 1.

Table 1: College Retention Rates by Carnegie and American Democracy Project Peers		
Fall 2006 Data		
<u>Institution</u>	<u>Retention Rate</u> <u>F05-F06</u>	<u>Graduation Rate (6</u> <u>year)</u>
WCU	70.9%	47.3%
Carnegie Peers:		
Central Missouri State U.	68.0%	45.0%
Central Washington U.	79.1%	51.6%
Georgia College & State U.	69.0%	30.0%
Montclair State U.	72.0%	44.6%
Southern Connecticut State U.	67.0%	39.0%
Southern Illinois U. - Edwardsville	64.0%	63.4%
U. of Wisconsin – Oshkosh	76.0%	46.0%
Average	70.7%	45.7%
ADP Peers:		
Fort Hays State University	66.5%	50.0%
Indiana University-South Bend	62.1%	21.0%
Indiana University Kokomo	58.0%	22.0%
The Richard Stockton College of NJ	81.4%	62.3%
University of Northern Iowa	81.4%	65.2%
University of South Carolina Aiken	60.2%	60.2%
Western Kentucky University	72.0%	44.6%
Average	68.8%	46.5%

Although WCU does not stand out negatively in peer group comparisons, the university is near the bottom of the 16-campus University of North Carolina system in terms of retention and graduation, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2: UNC Retention and Graduation Rates, Fall 2004-2005			
<i>Ranked by Retention Rate</i>			
University	Retention Rate	4-Yr Graduation Rate	6-Yr Graduation Rate
UNC-CH	96.5	70.7	83.7
NCSU	88.7	36.7	71.7
ASU	85.8	37.1	64.0
UNCW	83.2	41.5	63.5
UNCC	78.7	26.4	48.7
UNCG	77.4	26.9	51.0
UNCA	76.4	33.2	53.1
ECU	75.9	25.5	54.4
NCCU	75.9	22.8	44.9
FSU	75.4	15.7	42.2
WSSU	75.3	20.2	47.9
ECSU	74.7	28.1	49.1
NCSA	73.9	46.6	57.0
NCA&T	72.5	20.1	39.5
UNCP	72.3	14.7	34.9
WCU	70.9	22.5	47.3
AVERAGE	78.3	27.9	53.30

Retention and graduation rate data suggest that undergraduates at WCU, despite good academic and co-curricular programs, still do not persist or graduate at a rate the student responses to individual programs would suggest. The QEP will encourage students to link these various programs and experiences into a coherent learning plan - a pathway toward intentional learning and matriculation. The learning goals presented in the QEP are designed to foster the development and completion of such a learning plan.

Learning Outcomes

Western's QEP will encourage students to align their disjointed experiences into a coherent whole that has focus and direction. Students will be expected to apply synthesis throughout the university experience, from understanding as a first-year student to evaluation as a graduating student. Specific, measurable learning outcomes will occur through on-going compilation of the Education Briefcase and the collection of data related to student outcomes in the QEP pilot USI course and major-level courses. The overarching goal of synthesis learning is for students to integrate knowledge and skills from academic and co-curricular experiences and become intentional participants in their learning and career plans. Specifically, students will:

1. identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations;

2. modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
3. recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career plans.

Table 3: Synthesis - A Pathway to Intentional Learning offers an outline of the key learning goals, outcomes, and behaviors or activities for the QEP.

Table 3: Synthesis - A Pathway to Intentional Learning		
<i>Overarching Goal: In synthesis learning, students will integrate knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning and career plans.</i>		
What are we trying to effect in our students? (Learning Goals)	What do intentional learners do/know/value? (Learning Outcomes)	How will they demonstrate what they know/do/value? (Key Behaviors/Activities)
Understanding of Self	Students will identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a realistic self-appraisal. • Evaluate and explore career opportunities. • Develop career, education, and personal goals. • Develop preliminary career and degree plans.
Flexibility/Versatility	Students will modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and participate in co-curricular experiences consistent with their goals and interests. • Select a major (and concentration, minor, and, if necessary, a second major) and develop a degree plan. • Reflect on what has been most useful, interesting, and challenging in their academic and co-curricular experiences. • Refine their career and degree plans relative to new knowledge and skills.
Integrated Learning	Students will recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-examine their self-appraisal. • Articulate the value of setting goals. • Reflect on their university experiences • Articulate how those experiences furthered their goals. • Make connections between their academic experiences, co-curricular experiences, and their future plans. • Prepare a career package (cover letters, personal statements, résumés) for employment or graduate school.

Development

Conceptualization of the Plan

Two significant events occurred during the 2004-2005 academic year that galvanized the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan at Western Carolina University. The first, a five-hour leadership retreat held on September 23, 2004, was attended by more than 100 faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Hosted by Chancellor John Bardo and Troy Barksdale, then Director of University Planning at WCU, this retreat introduced the concept of the Quality Enhancement Plan as an important new element of the SACS reaffirmation process and it opened discussions on potential topics. The retreat agenda included four presentations by three administrators external to WCU who were knowledgeable about the new SACS reaffirmation process and the QEP in particular: Ephraim Schechter, formerly director of University Planning and Analysis at North Carolina State University (Schechter, 2004a; Schechter, 2004b), Houston Davis at Austin Peay State University (Davis, 2004), and Teresa Summers from Louisiana State University (Summers, 2004). Presentations by the director of WCU's 1996 SACS Self-Study, Frank Prochaska (Prochaska, 2004), and Troy Barksdale (Barksdale, 2004) framed the context for discussions by providing information about WCU's mission, the institution's past and current characteristics, and future challenges and opportunities. More than 150 potential topics were generated during the brainstorming session facilitated by Newton Smith, then Chair of the Faculty. These topics were subsequently clustered into 23 general themes and used later in the QEP development process (WCU-SACS Leadership Retreat, 2004).

The University Mission

The second major initiative impacting the QEP's development was Chancellor Bardo's charge to the University's Strategic Planning Committee to review the institutional mission and to make recommendations for a revised mission statement. As a focused growth institution¹ within the UNC system, WCU encounters many challenges as well as opportunities that significantly impact the institution's ability to serve our constituents and effectively fulfill our mission. A thorough review of the current mission, last approved in 2002, and the proposal of a new mission, accompanying vision, core values, strategic directions and goals resulted from the work of the Strategic Planning Committee during the 2005-2006 Academic Year (Western Carolina University, 2006a; Western Carolina University, 2006b).

Western Carolina University's revised mission statement provides direction for the institution to prepare students to be successful academically and personally through opportunities for engaged learning, experiential education, and service. The most recent review of the mission, which took place during the 2005-2006 academic year, emphasizes the importance of integrating the whole college experience:

¹ Focused Growth Institutions – seven public institutions in North Carolina identified in 1998 as having excess physical capacity and smaller enrollments agreed to pursue aggressive enrollment growth of 20% or more by 2003. The institutions received special funding and support provided by the General Assembly and the UNC Office of the President to develop comprehensive enrollment growth plans, improve instruction, develop new academic programs, promote greater operating efficiencies, enhance development offices, strengthen facilities management capabilities, and reduce additional stresses on campus services associated with enrollment growth.

Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research and service through residential, distance education and international experiences. The University focuses its academic programs, educational outreach, research and creative activities, and cultural opportunities to improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in the region, state, and nation. (Western Carolina University, 2006a)

The mission of the university is based on its espoused core values:

The University prepares students to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a global community. By working independently, collaboratively, and in teams, graduates of the University should demonstrate:

- Integrity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and both written and oral communication skills;
- Proficient and responsible use of information and technology;
- Appreciation for the arts, sciences, humanities, and technologies;
- Intellectual competence and professional and technical skills; and
- Continued personal development and lifelong learning.

To encourage and protect the free and open interchange of ideas, the University strives to provide experiences that foster the development of respect among all its members toward the larger communities of which it is a part. Accordingly, the University encourages its students, faculty, and staff to display the following traits of citizenship:

- behavior characterized by honesty, integrity, and responsibility;
- service to others;
- awareness of and sensitivity to the concerns of diverse people and cultures; and
- commitment to stewardship of the natural and cultural environment (Western Carolina University, 2006b).

The revision of the mission statement and the development of the Quality Enhancement Plan are connected in several ways. First, several faculty, staff, and administrators who served on the QEP and Strategic Planning Committees injected relevant information to each process. Second, early in the process and several times thereafter, the Director of the SACS Review met with the Strategic Planning Committee to discuss the relationships between institutional mission, strategic planning, budgeting, assessment, and the QEP. Third, several documents were used jointly to guide and inform both processes: the internal and external scanning documents produced for the revision of the mission in 2002 and 2005 (Western Carolina University Strategic Planning Committee, 2001a; 2001b; 2005a; 2005b); the list of potential QEP Topics produced at the Leadership Retreat held on September 23, 2004 (WCU-SACS Leadership Retreat, 2004); University Fact Books (Western Carolina University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2006a); and various assessment results presented previously.

Quality Enhancement Plan Committee

The Quality Enhancement Plan Committee, composed of faculty, staff, administrators, and one student, was established in December 2004 with input from the Chancellor, Provost, Vice Chancellors, SACS Director, Deans, and several Department Heads and Directors (Burton, 2006). Letters of invitation to serve on the QEP Committee were distributed in early January 2005. The SACS Director then trained committee members in the SACS reaffirmation and QEP processes in February 2005 (Burton, 2005). Co-chairs Brian Railsback, Professor of English and Dean of the Honors College, and Scott Philyaw, Associate Professor of History and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate, were selected in early March by the Provost and the Director of the SACS Review. The committee met for the first time on March 22, 2005 to formulate strategies for developing the QEP. The QEP Committee met throughout the summer and fall of 2005 to develop, review and refine the QEP topic, solicit input, and update the university community on potential topics (Western Carolina University QEP Committee, 2006).

Selection of the QEP Topic

During the final weeks of the spring semester of 2005 the QEP Committee issued campus-wide emails about the QEP process. All members of the Quality Enhancement Plan Committee conducted visits to more than 30 academic, extracurricular, and student groups, as well as WCU's Board of Trustees, Staff Forum, University Advisory Council (UAC), Council of Deans, Faculty Senate, and student Honors College Board to discuss the concept of the QEP and to solicit ideas on potential areas of focus for enhancing student learning (WCU QEP Committee, 2005a). The unit discussions were based on guiding principles established by SACS (WCU QEP Committee, 2005b) and those discussions resulted in the development of a master document that reflects the collective wisdom and professional judgment of faculty, students, staff, administrators, alumni, and Board of Trustees members (WCU QEP Committee, 2005c). The QEP Committee synthesized the master document into 20 potential QEP topics after eliciting feedback from the university community (WCU QEP Committee, 2005d). Throughout the process of refining the topic, the recurring themes of student and faculty engagement, community service and experiential learning, study abroad experiences, and application of knowledge emerged.

The theme that guided the work of the committee in the summer of 2005 was: *From students to educated citizens: learning through engagement (enhancing student learning by application of knowledge, experiential education, and professional endeavor in a regional and global community)*. In October 2005, after input from the university community, the QEP Committee proposed the following revision for Western's QEP: *Academic Engagement Inside and Outside the University (AEIOU)*. Sub-committees were formed to investigate four areas identified as keys to implementing AEIOU: academic and co-curricular programs, service learning, faculty development, and careers/internships/co-ops. The sub-committees' charge to connect the classroom or on-campus experience with the wider community was achieved by raising and addressing the following questions for each of the four areas:

1. How does this engagement activity positively impact student learning?
2. How can this impact be assessed in terms of student learning outcomes?
3. How does this activity relate to the university mission and strategic plan?

4. What resources are needed to increase positive student learning in relation to this engagement activity?

In November 2005, Dr. Ann Chard, the SACS Liaison from the Commission on Colleges for Western Carolina University, visited the campus to provide feedback on our SACS Review progress and respond to questions from members of the SACS Committees, faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Dr. Chard's feedback was clear regarding the QEP: the current version was too broad and unnecessarily complicated. The QEP Committee revised its earlier draft after a series of discussions on the purpose of desired QEP outcomes. Building upon these revisions the Provost, SACS Director, and QEP Co-chairs identified synthesis as a potential focusing element. The QEP Committee continued its review and revision through several meetings as the early stages of the synthesis model evolved into the present topic. The implementation plan for the QEP, presented in the next section, was developed in the summer and fall of 2006 by a sub-committee of the QEP Committee.

Implementation

Western Carolina University's Quality Enhancement Plan is an enhancement of several on-going campus operations coordinating previously disjointed aspects of students' academic and co-curricular activities. Relating learning outcomes to synthesis and developing campus-wide attention to synthesis learning comprise the enhancement. Under the coordinating authority of the Office of the Provost and the QEP Implementation Committee, the QEP links several campus support offices traditionally treated as separate in mission, services offered, and administrative structure. As the implementation of the QEP integrates the work of these various campus offices it will serve as an example of the kind of synthesis thinking and learning we aim to foster among students.

Planning and reflection will reinforce intentionality. The longitudinal and complementary nature of these activities will anchor students' increased understanding and appreciation for synthesis. University faculty and staff will systematically alert students to various synthesis experiences; promote the value of synthesis; encourage student participation; and, through student reflection, deepen understanding of synthesis.

The areas that will initially experience the greatest impact of the QEP are student orientation, advising, academic departments that volunteer to be in the pilot study, the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and Career Services. As students progress through the university, the key areas of student recruitment/orientation (introduce synthesis), advising and special courses (reinforce the synthesis concept), and Career Services (apply synthesis learning to student plans at graduation and beyond) will be critical. The Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will serve a central role in training faculty and staff on the integration of synthesis activities within coursework, advising, and other departmental activities; the Center will also continually introduce the plan to new faculty members as the pilot study expands to several departments or other units.

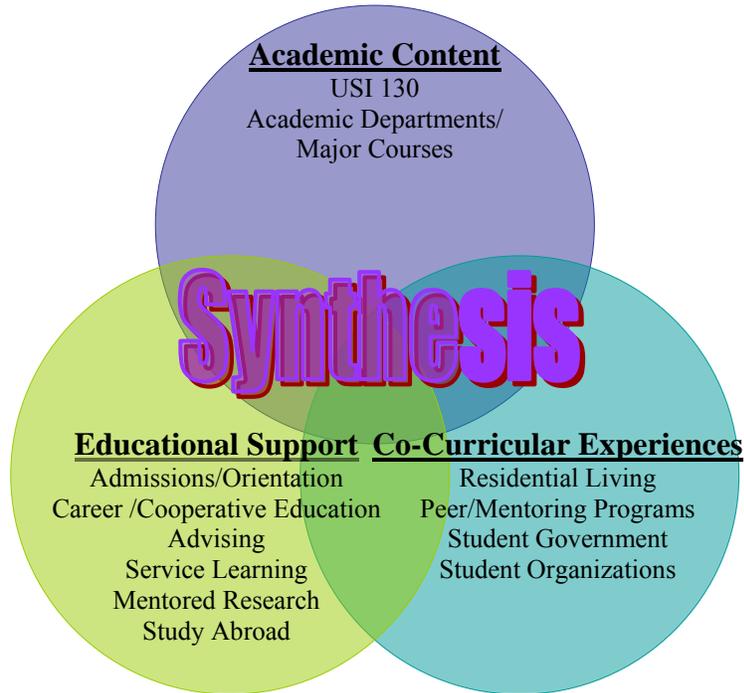
There are four key components for the implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan:

- I. Oversight of the Plan
- II. Training of Faculty and Staff
- III. Learning Outcomes
- IV. QEP Pilot Study

I. Oversight of the Plan

Administrative oversight of the QEP will be under the direction of the Office of the Provost. A Project Manager for the QEP (half-time faculty or administrative staff position, reporting to the Provost) will chair a Quality Enhancement Plan Implementation Committee and will appoint chairs for sub-committees that emerge from the larger group. The entire QEP Implementation Committee will meet at least once a semester, or more frequently as needed. The following figure represents campus constituencies that tie into the synthesis plan and that will have representation on the Implementation Committee.

Figure 1. Campus Constituencies Tying into the Synthesis Plan and Having Representation on the Implementation Committee



Working with the Provost, academic deans, and the Chair of the Faculty Senate, the Project Manager will form a committee consisting of:

- Director of Assessment
- Director of Institutional Research and Planning
- Chair of the Faculty Senate or designee
- One-two faculty representatives from each of the academic colleges. Faculty representatives will be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the college dean.
- A Student Affairs Division representative (Vice Chancellor's appointment)
- Director of the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- New Faculty Fellow of the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (Curriculum Design Specialist)

- Associate Chief Information Officer, IT Division
- Director of Orientation
- Director of Advising and Student Success
- Director of Career Services
- Director of International Programs
- Coordinator of USI 130
- Two students (appointed by the QEP Committee)
- Director or Associate Director of Service Learning
- A representative from Residential Living appointed by the Director of Residence Life
- A representative from the Graduate School appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Project Manager and the members of the committee may opt to alter the size of the committee as they deem necessary. The committee will advise and assist the Chancellor and Provost on the QEP implementation and oversight. Specific areas of emphasis by the committee include:

- faculty and staff training in preparation for the QEP;
- phasing in the QEP and meeting deadlines set forth in the plan;
- monitoring the use of resources and the budget set forth in the plan;
- assessing the implementation and success of the plan;
- recommending adjustments to the plan as a result of ongoing internal and external assessment;
- preparing for the next SACS review of the plan, including writing the five-year Impact Report, based on assessment of the plan's implementation; and
- creation of a training/resource manual and coordination of training activities with the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

The committee will establish sub-committees in the following areas:

- QEP IT Services Sub-Committee: charged with working with the Implementation Committee and specifically creating and monitoring the Education Briefcase, co-curricular transcript, assessment tools, QEP Web site, and other aspects of the QEP requiring technological solutions/infrastructure;
- QEP Assessment Sub-Committee: charged with assessing the implementation and success of the plan, and making recommendations for improving the plan.

The Project Manager will establish additional sub-committees as necessary.

II. Training of Faculty and Staff

The role of the Faculty Center will be critical in the implementation of synthesis learning for the QEP. The Center's role will be to assist with faculty and advisor training and the integration of synthesis content and learning activities into syllabi and curricula for specially designed USI and major courses. The Center will also assist adopter departments create appropriate cognitive learning outcomes relevant to the department major and the QEP learning outcomes; the QEP Committee and the Center will enhance this effort with outside consultants or a review panel. A curriculum design specialist will conduct research, provide resources, and lead

training on synthesis. In addition, summer retreats devoted to the QEP (led by selected faculty from an early adopter department) will facilitate the incorporation of synthesis learning into the curriculum. These retreats will be modeled on the Center’s summer retreats already in place. Faculty workshops and a Faculty Learning Community will be sponsored during the academic year and synthesis-related activities will also be integrated into other Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning events.

In consultation with the QEP Implementation Committee, the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will support the:

- development of a training/resource manual based on the QEP for faculty and staff;
- selection of campus personnel who will assist in QEP training;
- emphasis of on-going training of key personnel (such as advisors and new faculty participants as the pilot expands) on the QEP; and
- identification of relevant consultants and advisors external to WCU to enhance training efforts.

III. Learning Outcomes

Table 4: WCU’s Pathway to Synthesis Learning, illustrates students’ progress through the QEP and the connection of learning outcomes to general timeframes in undergraduate life. The map includes a listing of assessable artifacts related to learning outcomes that would be created under the guidance of course instructors from the first year to the senior year. While not all traditional undergraduates might follow this path so neatly, the process map suggests the typical trend. Following the process map are discussions of key support areas for the QEP, including the Education Briefcase, instructors, advisors, and a variety of support offices across WCU.

Table 4: WCU’s Pathway to Synthesis Learning

Overarching learning goal of the QEP: In synthesis learning, students will integrate knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their learning and career plans.

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
Learning outcomes	<p>Students will identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations.</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate a learning plan; • demonstrate synthesis. 	<p>Students will modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences.</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect the academic and student life components of their experience; • refine their learning plan. 		<p>Students will recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career plans.</p> <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate the connections; • review and revise their learning plan.

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
Activity (data collection points)	<p>In USI 130, students will be led through prompts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do a realistic self appraisal; • write out their life goals (include personal and educational goals); • develop an educational plan to achieve their career/graduate plans; • identify career choices based on assessment of interests, values, skills, and abilities; • articulate the relationship between academic and co-curricular experiences; • articulate a rationale for the selection of academic major, co-curricular experiences, and career choices; • make use of campus resources. 	<p>In 200-level major course, students will be led through prompts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-examine their self appraisal; • re-examine their life goals; • re-examine their educational goals; • revise their career plan with an accompanying essay about changes; • revise their educational plan with a personal assessment about what has been most useful, most challenging, and most interesting; • write a proposal or application for a co-op/internship or international experience that incorporates knowledge obtained in a variety of course work and knowledge and experience gained outside class; • participate in co-op/internship, study abroad, or service learning activities. 	<p>In 300-level major course, students will be led through prompts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-examine their self appraisal; • re-examine their life goals; • re-examine their educational goals; • revise their career plan with an essay about changes; • revise their educational plan with a personal assessment about what has been most useful, most challenging, and most interesting; • write a proposal or application for a co-op/internship or relevant co-curricular activity that incorporates knowledge obtained in academic work and knowledge gained outside class; • participate in co-op/internships or other relevant activities. 	<p>In 400-level major capstone course, students will be led through prompts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare an extended career package for employment or graduate school; • re-examine their self appraisal/life goals; • revise their career plan with an essay about changes; • revise their educational plan with a personal assessment about what has been most useful, most challenging, and most interesting; • write an essay about how their beliefs have changed and why; • write an essay reflecting and evaluating how their university experience prepares them for post-graduation plans.

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
Assessable artifacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-appraisals • Goal statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal statements • Essays on career and educational plans/reflective narratives • Reflection statement on internship/co-op experience, study abroad experience, or other co-curricular activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal statements • Essays on career and educational plans/reflective narratives • Internship/co-op experience or reflection statement on relevant co-curricular activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career package materials • Career and educational plans • Essays/reflective narratives

The Role of the Education Briefcase

The Education Briefcase (EB) will support the pathway charted previously as a collaborative space where students and university personnel share information to facilitate the holistic, personal development of each student’s educational career. The EB will be an electronic portal that supports student planning and reflection mentored by instructors and advisors. Students will use the EB to chart their educational progress, social activities, experiential learning, and future educational/career plans. Advisors and instructors will use the additional information available in the EB to understand more fully the student’s total education to better advise and guide a student through decision-making processes.

The briefcase will be a repository for sharing learning plans, résumés, academic and co-curricular transcripts, templates, questions and suggestions from advisors, student reflections/essays on university activities, and other synthesis-related documentation. Access to the student’s EB will be restricted to assigned instructors, advisors and career counselors, and university personnel assisting in assessing sample briefcases.

The Education Briefcase will be the literal manifestation of the student’s learning plan and will include information that reflects the evolution of the student’s plan as degree and associated experiential objectives are completed. The EB provides the advisor, student, faculty member, or staff person with information to assist in the formation of a student’s educational experience. Items automatically included in the EB will include:

- information on high school activities and interests from each student’s application to WCU;
- information from Orientation’s CatWalk on possible majors and other interests;
- data from the Personality Mosaic for students who complete it as part of orientation;
- student papers or other work indicative of a student’s interests in majors and careers submitted from USI instructors;
- reports, job descriptions, reflections, and other relevant materials for student internships and co-ops included from Career Services;
- résumé (updated regularly);
- links to the student’s co-curricular transcripts, the Leadership Program, and other activities submitted from Students Affairs;
- a student’s reflection essays, job descriptions, and other documents generated for service learning activities submitted by the Service Learning Department;
- reflection papers and other documents generated by study abroad experiences;

- students' electronic proposals (and possibly their research papers) as submitted to the Undergraduate Research Expo; and
- notes, questions, feedback, and other information for the student submitted by Advising Center staff.

Students may voluntarily submit other materials germane to their major, minor, or professional and career interests.

The Role of Instructors

The mentored reflection and instruction necessary for students to begin working in the synthesis concept will occur in the first semester at WCU through modified sections of USI. Upon declaring their major, students will take courses in the major that have been modified to accommodate the QEP learning objectives. Instructors involved in the QEP, beginning with early adopters in the pilot study, will receive training in the summer before working with students and shorter follow-up training sessions afterward. Early adopter faculty will in turn work with the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to train other instructors added as the QEP expands from the pilot study.

While faculty members in 200- and 300-level courses will reinforce the synthesis concept introduced in USI 130, the 400-level capstone experience will also be critical. Many WCU programs require some type of culminating academic experience. These include activities as varied as capstone courses, internships, public performances and presentations, research projects, and other activities depending upon discipline. The Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will support academic programs with resources and training as needed to enhance such capstone experiences in relation to the learning objectives of the QEP. Students will be provided with opportunities to offer a public presentation of their synthesis experiences.

The Role of Advisors

Using the materials collected in the Education Briefcase, advisors will confer individually with students (initially, those students in the pilot) about learning plans and the synthesis concept to reinforce instructors' work in USI courses. Upon declaration of a major, students will confer with advisors in the major to integrate academic and co-curricular experiences along with other activities that prepare undergraduates for graduation and beyond.

The Role of Co-Curricular and Support Offices

Admissions

As the initial point of contact, Admissions recruiters and counselors will introduce the concept of synthesis to prospective students and their caregivers, as well as high school and community college faculty and staff. Initially, recruiters will be trained to introduce the synthesis concept to prospective students who indicate an interest in a major offered by early adopter academic departments. Letters and brochures that define the synthesis concept will support this effort.

Orientation

The Orientation Program introduces new students to the college classroom and will set the tone for synthesis' enhancement of learning. Orientation staff, including student counselors, faculty, and administrators, will introduce the synthesis concept to new students and their caregivers. QEP implementation will capitalize on existing elements of orientation and will foster the development of new initiatives, such as teaching students to make connections between curricular and co-curricular experiences, providing them with real-life examples of integrated learning and its benefits, and fostering self-awareness by administering career and personality inventories. Special orientation sessions will be arranged for first-year students who indicate an interest in a major offered by an academic department in the QEP pilot project.

Information Technology (IT) Services

Instructors and advisors will use the Education Briefcase to monitor academic and co-curricular progress of students; the QEP IT Services Sub-Committee will monitor progress of the electronic aspects of the plan and coordinate IT support for the EB. WCU, as part of its technology infrastructure upgrade, is actively creating systems to support student, faculty, advisor, and career counselor interaction. We anticipate the adoption of Microsoft's Share Point portal system in conjunction with existing enterprise systems. A new staff position will be created to maintain and manage access to the shared Education Briefcase. Upon full implementation all students will have an Education Briefcase that is accessible by students, their advisors, and select faculty members, staff members, and career counselors.

Service Learning

The mission of the Service Learning Department is to promote service learning as a special form of experiential education where students engage in organized activities designed to enhance their intellectual, social, and personal development while meeting community needs. Service Learning administrators and faculty fellows will be trained in the principles of synthesis to enhance existing efforts to focus students' attention on integrating academic and community service experiences with career plans. The Service Learning Department currently promotes integrated learning by encouraging and assisting faculty to combine academic goals with civic, social, and career-related goals through the service learning component of courses. Service Learning faculty fellows assist their faculty colleagues in using service learning reflection effectively. Through structured reflection, students think about, discuss, and document knowledge, skills, attitude changes, and accomplishments resulting from service experiences in relation to coursework. This reflection process, already in place, will support the QEP as Service Learning personnel mentor students who create reflection artifacts for the Education Briefcase.

The Service Learning Department will produce a Reflection Manual primarily for faculty use. Detailed reflection procedures, activities, and assessment criteria related to the QEP will be included in the manual.

Undergraduate Research

Mentored research or creative work at the undergraduate level, encouraged at WCU for many years, requires students to synthesize several skills including research methodology, written communication, and public presentation. Students currently present their research in a variety of local, regional, and national venues including the National Conference on

Undergraduate Research. In 2006, WCU was second in the nation in the number of student presentations at this conference.

Faculty and staff will expect students to participate in mentored research and public presentations in venues such as department symposia, public presentations, and local, regional, and national research conferences. WCU's Honors College will continue to encourage and support mentored research by allocating funds to underwrite a campus Undergraduate Research Expo, WCU's participation in the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, the Undergraduate Projects Grant Program, and printing the publication *Imagine* to highlight such endeavors.

Undergraduate research or creative work has a natural connection to the objectives of the QEP as students will be expected to participate in mentored research and connect such activity to the evolving learning plan contained in the Education Briefcase. As more departments phase into full implementation, there may be an opportunity to modify the existing Undergraduate Expo so that students enrolled in specially designed capstone courses will have a public venue to present culminating synthesis projects.

Office of International Programs

The Office of International Programs, which has hosted nearly 1,000 students in Study Abroad advising sessions since 2001, is well prepared to incorporate the synthesis concept in advising meetings with students. Advisors in International Programs already work closely with study abroad students to ensure that their experiences tie back to WCU coursework and student degree plans. Also, in reviewing applicants for study abroad, staff members consider the student's total university experience (courses, major plans, and co-curricular activities).

Career Services

Using the Education Briefcase, counselors in Career Services will guide students in the formation of their career plans and translate those plans into specific outcomes (job or graduate school applications). Students will be able to see how their social and academic activities have prepared them for related employment and/or graduate school opportunities. With guidance, students will be able to create the documents needed (résumés, cover letters, etc.). If this process begins in the sophomore or junior year, students will have an opportunity prior to graduation to reflect on and enhance areas that might need additional development.

The co-op/internship opportunity for students is an excellent synthesis activity coordinated by Career Services and select academic departments. As students participate in a job or activity directly related to their major, they have a focused opportunity to draw on their university experiences and apply these to the field. After their experiences, students return to the university with an understanding of what they need to know and how that knowledge contributes to their educational and career goals.

Advisors, Career Services staff, and department faculty (initially in pilot departments) will encourage students to participate in on- and off-campus internships and co-ops that support students' academic and career goals. Career counselors will review student reflection essays and employer evaluations and ensure that these artifacts are added to the Education Briefcase.

IV. QEP Pilot Study and Expansion

While the QEP will provide a context for synthesis learning at WCU through faculty, staff, and advisor training, as well as the Education Briefcase, a pilot study will allow phased implementation of the QEP initiatives informed by assessment processes and student learning. Initially, the pilot will serve as a model to assess QEP learning outcomes and related cognitive learning outcomes developed by adopter departments, evaluate the effectiveness of mentored reflection, and create recommendations for faculty members participating in the pilot. Outside consultants or external review panels will help the assessment of adopter department progress and, in the third year, the progress of the entire QEP. Depending on assessment of the pilot, the QEP Implementation Committee will make recommendations for expanding or adjusting the model as it moves from the pilot phase to the mainstream. The expansion of participating departments will, in early phases, be voluntary; it is recognized that other approaches to synthesis may emerge over time as the Implementation Committee continues to manage the QEP.

The QEP Pilot Study

The pilot study serves several needs identified by the QEP Committee in addition to needs ascertained through feedback from the Chancellor, Provost, Faculty Senate members, and other university constituents. Table 5 and the following Timeline outline the pilot study.

Table 5: QEP Pilot Model

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
QEP Learning Objective(s)	1: Students identify aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate future goals and aspirations.	2: Students modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from academic and co-curricular experiences.	2-3: QEP Objective 2, and students recognize and evaluate the synthesis of university experiences relative to future education and career plans.	3: Students recognize and evaluate the synthesis of university experiences relative to future education and career plans.
Course	USI 130 ; fall term for pilot study	200-level major gateway ; fall term for pilot study	300-level mid-major course selected by department; fall term for pilot study	400-level major capstone course ; fall term for pilot study
Structured activities related to QEP Learning Outcomes	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create Education Briefcase (EB); • do mentored reflection of EB (student/instructor conferences); • write self appraisal for EB; • write life goals statement (personal, educational, career), articulating academic and co-curricular connections for EB; • write rationale for selection of major/minor (EB); • identify career choice based on assessment of interests, values, and abilities (EB). <p><i>Assessable artifacts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling of EBs • written appraisal and essays 	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise Education Briefcase (EB) materials; • evaluate EB materials (student/instructor conferences); • revise student self-appraisal for EB; • revise life goals statement for EB; • write proposal or application for service learning project, internship, study abroad plan, or undergraduate research/creative project (EB); • write statement reflecting on total university experience and how it helped in writing proposal/application; statement may include reflection on internship, study abroad, service, or research/creative activities already completed (EB). <p><i>Assessable artifacts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling of EBs • revised materials, applications, statements 	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise EB materials (self-appraisal, life goals statement); • evaluate EB materials (student/instructor conferences); • write or revise proposals or applications as in 200-level course; • write statement reflecting on how university experience to date has enhanced progress toward graduate or career objectives (EB); • write statement projecting what university experiences are yet needed to further graduate school or career objectives (EB). <p><i>Assessable artifacts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling of EBs • revised EB materials • written statements • evaluations by academic and external evaluators of student internship experiences (if internship is completed) 	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise EB materials (final self-appraisal, life goals statement); • prepare cover letters, résumés, and application materials for graduate school or career (EB); • present culminating undergraduate research/creative work for public presentation at university or external conferences (EB); • present “What I Learned, Where I’m Going” (synthesis statement) for capstone seminar, which synthesizes academic and co-curricular experiences and ties these to graduate/career plans (EB). <p><i>Assessable artifacts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling of EBs • cover letters, résumés, and other materials for graduate/career plans • culminating research/creative presentation • synthesis statement/presentation

Time line

2007-09:

- Initial department volunteers for pilot study identified (no later than May 2007)
- QEP Project Manager named (summer 2007)
- QEP Implementation Committee formed (fall 2007)
- Initial faculty members for pilot study are trained in a summer 2008 workshop
- Professional advisors trained in a spring workshop
- Education Briefcase technology in place for three pilot USI courses (no later than July 2008)
- Three special sections of USI 130 taught in fall 2008; these will be populated with first-year students who have indicated/declared a major in a volunteer pilot department
- First department in the pilot identifies 200, 300, and 400-level courses for study and modifies curricula and cognitive learning outcomes in those courses to accommodate QEP learning outcomes
- Two additional departments volunteer for pilot
- *Estimated number of student participants for first year: 60-70 first-year students*

2009-10:

- Assessment report for USI 130s; six sections taught in fall 2009
- Special 200-level courses taught in fall 2009
- Training of faculty from two new departments proceeds throughout year
- New departments identify/modify curricula/related cognitive learning outcomes for participating 200, 300, and 400-level courses
- On-going assessment of USI 130 as more courses added
- Two more departments volunteer for pilot by spring 2008
- First 200 level courses assessed; report in spring 2009
- Three departments offer 200 and 300-level courses in fall 2009
- Request for Proposal for new approaches to the QEP in early fall 2009; awards made in spring 2010 for implementation in 2010-11
- *Estimated number of student participants for second year: 120 first-year students; 30 sophomores*

2010-11

- Ten sections of USI taught in fall 2010
- Process described above continues with a total of five departments participating
- Based on assessment, QEP Implementation Committee creates a standard program from pilot models; more departments invited to participate
- First alternate model(s) based on grant awards implemented
- The QEP is assessed internally (QEP Assessment Sub-committee) and by an outside review panel (including external consultants)
- Based on internal and external assessment, QEP Committee makes recommendations for continuation of model(s), expansion, adoption by other departments, and projected number of participating departments from 2011 to 2014

- *Estimated number of student participants for third year: 200 first-year students; 75 sophomores; 45 juniors*

Training

Faculty members and department support staff in the volunteer department(s) will all be trained in the QEP in special summer training sessions and sessions throughout the academic year. These will be organized by the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Faculty Compensation and Evaluation

- Faculty members will receive a stipend for participation in the summer seminar.
- Faculty members who teach a course in the QEP will receive a research allotment for each course taught (money can be spent on travel, books, or equipment related to professional development).
- Faculty continuation in the program will be guided by performance feedback evaluations administered at the end of each course; the evaluations will be used for assessment in the QEP only and not for annual faculty evaluation or tenure, promotion, and reappointment purposes although faculty have the option of including QEP feedback in their regular evaluation documents. Decisions based on the evaluations will be determined by the QEP Implementation Committee (or a designated sub-committee) in consultation with the faculty member.

Conclusion: A Case Study

A view of QEP implementation is offered by following a hypothetical student, Karen, through the proposed plan.

Karen is introduced to the concepts of synthesis and the WCU Quality Enhancement Plan by an Admissions recruiter. She is approached with this information by the recruiter because she has indicated an interest in one of the majors in a department that has volunteered to be an early adopter in the QEP, for example, the English Department. At summer orientation, she is reminded of the QEP concept at a special session; Karen confirms she is still interested in English as a major.

In fall 2008, Karen is enrolled in one of three specially designed USI 130 courses for prospective English majors. In this one-hour course, the synthesis concept is reinforced and Karen works with her instructor to create several artifacts for the Education Briefcase related to her learning plan. Karen begins to think of her university experiences, from social activity to coursework, as interconnected. She is assigned a professional advisor who will support what she is learning in USI 130. She also enrolls in a special section of “Jumpstart.” Though Jumpstart, a non-credit course preceding the term that introduces freshmen to relevant technology, is already in place, Karen’s class has been modified to introduce the Education Briefcase. In the spring term she declares English as her major (consulting with her professional advisor) and then is advised by a QEP-trained advisor in the English Department. She continues to add artifacts to her EB in consultation with her new advisor.

In fall 2009, Karen enrolls in a special gateway course to the major: English 303 (Introduction to Professional Writing). Along with regular course content, Karen is encouraged

to maintain her EB, which her instructor periodically reviews, by adding special writing assignments. As she explores activities at the university that reinforce her major and career goals, she becomes interested in a minor in Spanish, study abroad and service learning. Her instructor directs her to meet with QEP-trained counselors in International Programs and Service Learning. Because she plans to be a journalist, she decides to write press releases for a non-profit organization in the community. Meeting with a Study Abroad counselor, she realizes that although she cannot manage a full year away, she can opt for a summer program in Mexico to reinforce her Spanish minor.

In fall 2010, she takes a special section of English 306 (Creative Nonfiction) where the instructor, after reviewing her EB, encourages her to continue her successful service work with the non-profit organization. In addition, she works on an assignment in class designed for presentation at the Undergraduate Expo on campus in the spring of 2011. She also submits an abstract to the National Conference on Undergraduate Research but it is not accepted. Her instructor and advisor, reviewing the evolving goals Karen has added to her EB, encourage Karen to go to the Career Center. There, another QEP-trained staff member reviews her EB and they decide she should apply for a summer co-op (English 389). Karen also uses her EB materials to apply for a position with the campus newspaper. Given Karen's hope to work for a newspaper in North Carolina, she applies to co-ops near her hometown in the Charlotte area. She finds a co-op with a magazine and works there throughout the summer of 2011.

Because Karen did a capstone experience with her English 389 course, she does not take a QEP course in the fall of 2011. Prompted by the career counselor with whom she has been working and her department advisor, she continues to develop her EB. Karen has already learned that the artifacts generated in the EB form a useful foundation for her job application materials (cover letters, résumé, and writing portfolio). Karen focuses her job search on positions with a news desk for a daily paper. She also considers magazines and e-media; because of her integrated learning experiences she can easily articulate her qualifications in these related fields. Another important factor for Karen is her fiancé who will soon begin graduate school at the University of South Carolina. Karen would like to be in graduate school as well, but her GPA of 2.89 makes that a dim possibility. Working with her advisor and career counselor, she decides not to graduate in May but instead to take another English course in the summer (delaying graduation until August).

Because of her earlier experiences at the magazine and her work for the non-profit organization and the student newspaper, Karen is offered a co-op at a newspaper in Columbia, SC. After graduating in August, Karen, now with letters of recommendation from two editors and an excellent portfolio of work developed from her experiences and EB, finds a job as a beginning news reporter.

Although the scenario described above is possible today at Western Carolina University, at present the burden of making all the connections described would be on the *student*. The enhancement of the QEP is the formation of learning objectives that encourage synthesis with a network of courses, instructors, advisors, and staff members across campus that can, with the foundation of the EB, collectively mentor a student to keep a holistic approach to university life with a constant focus on learning and career goals.

Budget

Western Carolina University's capability to implement and sustain the Quality Enhancement Plan will be reflected in the financial and physical resources allocated to the Plan. The budget for the Plan will be available to the reviewers during the on-site review.

Assessment

Assessment Strategies, Protocols, and Procedures

The long-term viability of the Quality Enhancement Plan depends on a manageable and sustainable process of assessment. The ambitious nature of the QEP will require not only a greater institutional commitment to providing deliberate experiences through which students will demonstrate their understanding and application of the synthesis concept, but will demand a creative and flexible approach to assessing the quality of student achievement related to synthesis.

The definitive measure of the Quality Enhancement Plan's effectiveness will be determined by student learning: how it has improved and how university processes enhance it. As Gary Hanson (2004, p. vii) has noted, the success of any higher education initiative is "not only about the educational outcomes we produce, but also the educational process we use to achieve those outcomes." Synthesis, like other complex learning, is not achieved in a single course, experiential activity, or co-curricular experience; assessment of synthesis cannot be reduced to a single summative measure either. Consequently, assessment of the QEP will take many forms but will focus on two primary dimensions:

1. Process evaluation/assessment of institutional support and effort, and
2. The extent of student learning.

To that end, the initial approach to assessment of the QEP will include:

1. An investigation of students' ability to synthesize information across content and context as impacted by:
 - QEP program initiatives and
 - student affective characteristics, such as academic motivation, self-efficacy, general coping ability, anxiety, cognition, and modes of critical thinking and problem solving
 - subject-based cognitive learning outcomes related to the QEP as developed by adopter departments
2. An analysis of the QEP programs and procedures that promote synthesis to determine which are most effective.
3. A development of formative and continuous feedback and analytic mechanisms to shape further QEP program enhancements and institutional efforts.

It is expected that, much like the process of complex learning, the reliability and validity of QEP assessments will improve over time.

Process Evaluation and Assessment of Institutional Support and Effort

Process evaluation for WCU’s QEP will be modeled on the general evaluation work of Patton (1997), Fitz-Gibbon and Morris (1978), and Posavac and Carey (1980). Specifically, process evaluation will focus on three primary areas including:

1. staff, student, and program context;
2. types and amount of services; and
3. fidelity to program design (program theory and model description, model deviation, implementation strategy, satisfaction, budget allocations, and cost effectiveness).

Process evaluation will function primarily as context for the interpretation of assessment results, capitalizing on those results which improve programs and/or demonstrate how programs and the related assessment frameworks can be applied in other contexts (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1978; Patton, 1997; Posavac & Carey, 1980). Structured interviews and/or focus groups will be conducted each term with students, faculty, and staff (initially those participating in the pilot) to understand this context. The QEP Assessment Sub-committee will coordinate these focus groups (see Appendix A for focus group questions).

In addition to the qualitative approach discussed previously, we will collect key output data related to institutional support and effort which will provide additional context for interpreting outcomes. These data measure the level and extent of the university’s commitment to the stated goals and outcomes of the QEP. Table 7 summarizes the means by which institutional support and effort will be assessed.

Table 7: Key Objectives Related to Institutional Support and Effort

<u>Key Objectives by Area of Responsibility</u>	<u>Methods of Assessment</u>	<u>Criteria for Success</u>
<i>Offices of the Chancellor/Provost</i>		
Provide adequate funding to ensure successful implementation of the QEP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare initial budget proposals outlined in the QEP and initial allocations based on those recommendations. • Compare subsequent annual budget requests from the QEP Implementation Committee with final allocations approved by the Chancellor’s Executive Council. 	Allocation of funds will be adequate to support approved QEP initiatives.
Establish and support campus leadership for the QEP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Provost will identify and name an existing faculty or staff member to be Project Manager for the QEP. • Based on recommendations outlined in the QEP and feedback from key stakeholders, the Provost will appoint and charge a QEP Implementation Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager will be named and in place no later than August 2007. • The QEP Implementation Committee will be appointed and charged by early fall 2007. Membership on the committee will be representative of the critical support units outlined in the plan.

<u>Key Objectives by Area of Responsibility</u>	<u>Methods of Assessment</u>	<u>Criteria for Success</u>
<i>Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning</i>		
<p>Provide training and support for faculty to incorporate QEP learning outcomes, assist instructors with the development of course/subject cognitive learning outcomes related to the QEP, activities, and assessments in their courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of training workshops and seminars offered. • Rates of participation in training workshops and seminars. • Rate of participation in QEP Faculty Learning Community. • Feedback on surveys and evaluations by faculty on their satisfaction with the amount and quality of training opportunities. • Number of course syllabi that explicitly address QEP learning goals and outcomes. • Analysis of results from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one summer training workshop will be developed and conducted in the first year of the QEP and will increase in number annually consistent with the number of departments participating in QEP initiatives. • The annual rate of participation in the QEP Faculty Learning Community will be comparable to that of other faculty learning communities. • Faculty will report high levels of satisfaction with the amount and quality of training opportunities offered by the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in support of the QEP. • Results of the FSSE will reflect an increase in classroom activities that promote the concepts of synthesis learning.
<p>Partner with the Advising Center and Information Technology to provide training and support for faculty advisors to incorporate the goals and outcomes of the QEP in student advising sessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of training opportunities offered. • Rate of participation in training workshops. • Feedback on evaluations by faculty regarding their satisfaction with the amount and quality of training provided. • Analysis of results from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two summer training workshops will be developed and conducted in the first year of the QEP and will increase in number annually consistent with the number of departments participating in QEP initiatives. • Faculty advisors will report high levels of satisfaction with the amount and quality of training opportunities offered by the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in support of the QEP. • Results of the FSSE will reflect an increase in advising activities that promote the concepts of synthesis learning.
<p>Promote the goals and outcomes of the QEP among all faculty.</p>	<p>Number of Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning events with themes and/or tracks consistent with QEP goals and outcomes.</p>	<p>In addition to the QEP training workshops, at least two events sponsored by the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will have a QEP-related theme or track.</p>

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<u>Key Objectives by Area of Responsibility</u>	<u>Methods of Assessment</u>	<u>Criteria for Success</u>
<i>Information Technology</i>		
Develop and implement a secure, user-friendly Education Briefcase that seamlessly integrates with existing enterprise systems and allows posting and organization of new documents and materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of EB interface. • Integration of EB with existing enterprise systems. • Focus groups of students and faculty on the design of the EB interface. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EB interface will be accessible to students in the initial cohort and their advisors by summer 2008. Accessibility to all students and advisors will occur on a phased implementation schedule in accordance with the QEP timeline. • All information currently available to students and their advisors on existing enterprise systems (i.e., academic transcripts, co-curricular transcripts, course schedules, etc.) will be accessible through the EB. • Feedback from focus groups will indicate students and faculty find the EB interface to be easily accessible, navigable, and user-friendly.
Develop training modules for students, faculty, and staff related to access and use of the Education Briefcase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training modules developed and implemented in Faculty Center workshops for faculty and in Jumpstart for students. • Evaluations by faculty of EB training in QEP workshops and by students of EB training in Jumpstart . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training materials for the EB will be provided to the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Jumpstart coordinators by mid-spring 2008. • Students and faculty will report high levels of satisfaction with training provided on the use of the EB.
<i>Career Services</i>		
Strengthen programming offered by Career Services in support of the QEP goals and objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of and participation in co-ops and internships. • Number and quality of contacts with students. • Participation in Career Services events. • Visits to Career Services website. • Focus groups of students and faculty on the amount and quality of Career Services programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of co-ops and internships available to students will increase as will the number of students requesting and participating in them. • Career Services counselors will contact each student in the initial pilot study at least once per semester. • Students in the initial pilot study will participate in at least one Career Services event each semester. • In feedback from focus groups, students will report that Career Services counselors helped them make connections between career plans and their academic and co-curricular experiences.

SYNTHESIS: A PATHWAY TO INTENTIONAL LEARNING AT
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<u>Key Objectives by Area of Responsibility</u>	<u>Methods of Assessment</u>	<u>Criteria for Success</u>
<p><i>Advising Center</i></p> <p>Enhance student advising in the context of the QEP to include guided reflection regarding the connections between students' academic and co-curricular experiences relative to their future goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of advisor evaluations. • Number of advisor contacts. • Focus group and structured interview questions related to student-advisor interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 75% of students in the initial pilot study will indicate satisfaction with their advisor and will report that their advisor made consistent use of materials from their EB during their advising sessions. • Advisors will contact students in the pilot study at least twice per semester during the first year and at least once per semester in subsequent years. • A majority of students participating in focus groups or structured interviews will be able to provide examples of how their advisor used materials from their EB during their advising sessions.

Outcomes Assessment

Assessment of synthesis and the related QEP learning outcomes will be based on the expected developmental trajectory of students as outlined in the Implementation section. For those students initially recruited as part of the pilot project, assessment of the QEP outcomes will be structured as a longitudinal study that will begin in fall 2008. Subsequent cohorts will be assessed using the following same key measures. Assessment will begin prior to matriculation and will continue in the specially designated USI 130 sections and in designated major courses as the student progresses toward graduation as outlined in Table 8 (see the Implementation section for a complete discussion of the QEP framework).

Table 8: QEP Framework Linked to Key Assessment Measures

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
QEP Learning Outcome(s)	1: Students identify aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate future goals and aspirations.	2: Students modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from academic and co-curricular experiences.	2-3: QEP Objective 2, and Students recognize and evaluate the synthesis of university experiences relative to future education and career plans.	3: Students recognize and evaluate the synthesis of university experiences relative to future education and career plans.
Course	USI 130 ; fall term for pilot study	200-level major gateway ; fall term for pilot study	300-level mid-major course selected by department; fall term for pilot study	400-level major capstone course ; fall term for pilot study
Key Assessment Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCSSE (summer prior to matriculation) • Evaluation of selected work products (fall semester) • Focus groups/structured interviews (fall/spring semesters) • NSSE (spring semester) • ASSIST (fall semester) • Test of critical thinking/problem-solving (fall semester) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor evaluation (fall semester) • Evaluation of selected work products (fall semester) • Focus groups/structured interviews (spring semester) • UNC Sophomore Survey (spring semester) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor evaluation (fall semester) • Evaluation of selected work products (fall semester) • Focus groups/structured interviews (spring semester) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor evaluation (fall semester) • Evaluation of selected work products (fall semester) • Focus groups/structured interviews (spring semester) • NSSE (spring semester) • UNC Graduating Senior Survey • Test of critical thinking/problem-solving (fall semester)

The assessment measures identified in Table 8 will provide a large and comprehensive set of data to use in assessing student performance relative to key QEP-related outcomes. The evaluation of selected student work from the EBs and student feedback from the focus groups and structured interviews will provide a rich pool of information on actual student learning. Results obtained from these key assessment measures, administered at consistent points, will

allow the QEP Implementation Committee to better target where breakdowns may occur and work with faculty, program directors, advisors, and counselors to ensure the QEP is successfully implemented. A full description of each assessment measure and a summary of responsibility for data collection and analysis are provided in Table 9.

Table 9: Outcomes Assessment Measures

Year 1

Assessment	Description	Data Collection/Analysis
Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)	The BCSSE measures students' pre-college involvement in academic and co-curricular activities as well as their expectations for involvement in and the importance of educationally purposeful activities in college. BCSSE provides student-level data which will be utilized as a control on the outcomes analysis and to undertake comparisons between students in the initial pilot cohort and those who do not participate (see Appendix C for sample BCSSE Survey).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for BCSSE administration and analysis. Results will be disseminated to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Evaluation of selected student work products	Faculty teaching the designated USI sections will be asked to use specific reflection, writing, and review activities related to the student's Education Briefcase that promote the synthesis approach to learning. Student work from the Education Briefcase will be evaluated using specially designed rubrics (see Appendix B for a general example). Review of student work over time will form the basis for judging progress toward the outcomes of the QEP.	Trained faculty reviewers will evaluate student works relative to predetermined rubrics. The QEP Assessment Sub-committee will ensure reviewers are appropriately trained following the protocols and procedures outlined in Wolcott and Legg (1998) and White (1989) to ensure meaningful results. Readers will be trained at the beginning and at regular intervals throughout the project. Summary of analyses will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Focus Groups/ Structured Interviews	Students will participate in focus groups or structured interviews (see Appendix A). These sessions will focus on student experiences with, and perceptions of, the various QEP initiatives in which they have participated.	Faculty and staff with appropriate expertise will conduct the focus groups and structured interviews relative to predetermined scripts. Summary of results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	The NSSE measures a range of student academic and co-curricular experiences and levels of engagement in college. The NSSE provides a body of extremely well-tested and reliable data that research has consistently shown to be empirically linked to student learning and development. Although an analysis of the complete NSSE results will be conducted, items of highest interest that track closely with our QEP outcomes include Items (1d), (1i), (1k), (1o), (1s), (2c-e), (7h), (11e), and (11m). NSSE provides student-level data and this information will be utilized as a control on the outcomes analysis and to undertake comparisons between students in the initial pilot cohort and those who do not participate (see Appendix D for sample survey instrument).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for administration and analysis of the NSSE. Results will be disseminated to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

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Assessment	Description	Data Collection/Analysis
Approaches and Study Skills Inventory (ASSIST) (Entwistle, 2000)	ASSIST is based on two primary dimensions: conceptions of learning and approaches to learning. The first four subscales attempt to ascertain whether or not a student has an instrumental approach to learning which indicates a conception of learning as oriented toward reproducing knowledge, while the remaining four subscales ascertain the degree to which the participant views learning as involving personal understanding and development (see Appendix F for sample instrument).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for administration and analysis of the ASSIST. Results will be disseminated to faculty teaching the designated USI 130 sections and to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Assessment of general critical thinking and problem-solving skills	Students will participate in a test of critical thinking and problem solving in Years 1 and 4. The specific instrument has not been selected, but will be either the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) or the Assessment of Critical Thinking (Project CAT).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for administration and analysis of the selected test of critical thinking skills. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

Year 2

Assessment	Description	Data Collection/Analysis
Advisor Evaluation	Students will be required to rate their advisors on a variety of sub-scales related to satisfaction, approachability, empathy, and effectiveness. An online evaluation form is currently in development.	The Office of Assessment and the Advising Center will provide oversight for the administration and analysis of the Advisor Survey. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Evaluation of selected student work products	Faculty teaching the designated 200-level major course section(s) will be asked to use specific reflection, writing, and review activities that reflect a student's ability to use the synthesis concept. Student work from the Education Briefcase will be evaluated using a specially designed rubric (see Appendix B for a general example). Review of student work over time will form the basis for judging progress toward the outcomes of the QEP.	Trained faculty reviewers will evaluate student works relative to predetermined rubrics. The QEP Assessment Sub-committee will ensure reviewers are appropriately trained following the training protocols and procedures outlined in Wolcott and Legg (1998) and White (1989) to ensure meaningful results. Readers will be trained at the beginning and at regular intervals throughout the project. Summary of analyses will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Focus Groups/Structured Interviews	Students will participate in focus groups or structured interviews (see Appendix A). These sessions will focus on student experiences with and perceptions of the various QEP initiatives in which they have participated.	Faculty and staff with appropriate expertise will conduct the focus groups and structured interviews relative to predetermined scripts. Summary of results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
UNC Sophomore Survey	The UNC Sophomore Survey is currently mandated by the UNC General Administration. Additional items related to student perceptions of their abilities relative to the QEP learning outcomes and their perceptions of and satisfaction with critical support functions such as the Advising Center, International Programs, and Career Services will be developed and included on the standard instrument. Responses of students in the initial cohort will be compared with those of other students not in the pilot study.	The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for the administration and analysis of the UNC Sophomore Survey. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

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ASSESSMENT**

Year 3

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Data Collection/Analysis</u>
Advisor Evaluation	Students will be required to rate their advisors on a variety of subscales related to satisfaction, approachability, empathy, and effectiveness. An online evaluation form is currently in development.	The Office of Assessment and the Advising Center will provide oversight for the administration and analysis of the Advisor Survey. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Evaluation of selected student work products	Faculty teaching the designated 300-level major course section(s) will be asked to use specific reflection, writing, and review activities that reflect a student's ability to use the synthesis concept. Student work from the Education Briefcase will be evaluated using a specially designed rubric (see Appendix B for a general example). Review of student work over time will form the basis for judging progress toward the outcomes of the QEP.	Trained faculty reviewers will evaluate student works relative to predetermined rubrics. The QEP Assessment Sub-committee will ensure reviewers are appropriately trained following the training protocols and procedures outlined in Wolcott and Legg (1998) and White (1989) to ensure meaningful results. Readers will be trained at the beginning and at regular intervals throughout the project. Summary of analyses will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Focus Groups/Structured Interviews	Students will participate in focus groups or structured interviews (see Appendix A). These sessions will focus on student experiences with and perceptions of the various QEP initiatives in which they have participated.	Faculty and staff with appropriate expertise will conduct the focus groups and structured interviews relative to predetermined scripts. Summary of results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

Year 4

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Data Collection/Analysis</u>
Advisor Evaluation	Students will be required to rate their advisors on a variety of subscales related to satisfaction, approachability, empathy, and effectiveness. An online evaluation form is currently in development.	The Office of Assessment and the Advising Center will provide oversight for the administration and analysis of the Advisor Survey. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Evaluation of selected student work products	Faculty teaching the designated 400-level major course section(s) will be asked to use specific reflection, writing, and review activities that reflect a student's ability to use the synthesis concept. Student work from the Education Briefcase will be evaluated using a specially designed rubric (see Appendix B for a general example). Review of student work over time will form the basis for judging progress toward the outcomes of the QEP.	Trained faculty reviewers will evaluate student works relative to predetermined rubrics. The QEP Assessment Sub-committee will ensure reviewers are appropriately trained following the training protocols and procedures outlined in Wolcott and Legg (1998) and White (1989) to ensure meaningful results. Readers will be trained at the beginning and at regular intervals throughout the project. Summary of analyses will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

**SYNTHESIS: A PATHWAY TO INTENTIONAL LEARNING AT
WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
ASSESSMENT**

Assessment	Description	Data Collection/Analysis
Focus Groups/Structured Interviews	Students participate in focus groups or structured interviews (see Appendix A). These sessions will focus on student experiences with and perceptions of the various QEP initiatives in which they have participated.	Faculty and staff with appropriate expertise will conduct the focus groups and structured interviews relative to predetermined scripts. Summary of results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	The NSSE measures a range of student academic and co-curricular experiences and level of engagement in college. The NSSE provides a body of extremely well-tested and reliable data that research has consistently shown to be empirically linked to student learning and development. Although an analysis of the complete NSSE results will be conducted, items of most interest that track closely with our QEP outcomes include Items (1d), (1i), (1k), (1o), (1s), (2c-e), (7h), (11e), and (11m). NSSE provides student-level data and this information will be utilized as a control on the outcomes analysis and to undertake comparisons between students in the initial pilot cohort and those who do not participate (see Appendix D for sample survey instrument).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for administration and analysis of the NSSE. Results will be disseminated to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
UNC Graduating Senior Survey	The UNC Graduating Senior Survey is currently mandated by the UNC General Administration. Additional items related to student perceptions of their abilities relative to the QEP learning outcomes and their perceptions of and satisfaction with critical support functions such as the Advising Center, International Programs, and Career Services will be developed and included on the standard instrument. Responses of students in the initial cohort will be compared with those of other students not in the pilot study.	The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for the administration and analysis of the UNC Graduating Senior Survey. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.
Assessment of general critical thinking and problem-solving skills	Students will be required to participate in a test of critical thinking and problem solving in Years 1 and 4. The specific instrument has not been selected, but will be either the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) or the Assessment of Critical Thinking (Project CAT).	The Offices of Assessment and Institutional Research and Planning will provide oversight for administration and analysis of the selected test of critical thinking skills. Results will be provided to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

In addition to the key measures outlined in Table 8, university programs with defined roles in the implementation of the QEP (see Implementation section for a discussion of the role of supporting units) will be required to identify and assess unit-specific objectives and outcomes relative to QEP learning goals. These assessments will occur annually and will be reported to the QEP Assessment Sub-committee.

Dissemination and Use of Assessment Results

Specific oversight of assessment of the QEP will be the responsibility of the QEP Assessment Sub-committee (QEP Project Manager, the Director of Assessment, the Director of Institutional Research and Planning, select faculty members, and others as necessary). The Assessment Sub-committee will be responsible for research design, data collection, data analysis, and reporting of results to the QEP Implementation Committee. The Assessment Sub-committee will prepare and submit an annual report of its activities and findings to the QEP Implementation

Committee and other university groups as needed. The QEP Project Manager will share the assessment results with key university constituencies and facilitate the use of those results to make program improvements as appropriate.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Questions (Process Evaluation)

1. What constitutes an active student and/or faculty participant in the QEP and what does this individual actually do in the program? What are their primary activities (in detail)? What do they experience?
2. What are the program's key characteristics as perceived by various stakeholders--for example, students, administrators, advisors, the QEP assessment and implementation team, faculty (term, full-time, part-time) actively participating and directly connected to the QEP initiative? How similar or different are those perceptions? What's the basis?
3. What is the consensus about next steps for the QEP Structure? Services?
4. How do the parts of the QEP structurally/programmatically fit together? Are there perceived gaps or disconnects?
5. After the initial pilot, what has changed from the original design and intentions of the QEP and related program elements and why? On what basis are adaptations from the original design being made? Who needs to "approve" such changes?
6. What is the participation rate of faculty in QEP related initiatives?
7. What parts of the curriculum evidence direct influence from the QEP initiative and why?
8. How is evaluation built into the delivery of our services? What are the primary capture points? Additionally, what are possible capture points moving forward?
9. What's working as expected? What's not working as expected? What challenges and barriers have emerged? How have we responded to these barriers?
10. How well are students, administrators, advisors, faculty (term, full-time, part-time) teaching in the program functioning together? What are their perceptions about what's working and not working? Do they know what outcomes they're aiming for? Do they "buy into" the program's goals and intended outcomes?

Appendix B: Sample Rubric for Evaluation of Student Work

This is a multi-definition rubric developed by Bowling Green State University to assess the ability of students to make connections, a type of complex integrative learning similar to what we have defined as synthesis. Faculty in the early adopting department(s) will utilize this descriptive model to develop analytic rubrics that measure the extent and quality of synthesis in a disciplinary context.

Beginning

- Describe similarities and differences in a collection or set of items
- Categorize items or observations into groups
- Recognize simple links among topics or concepts in a course
- Offer accurate definitions of terms and concepts
- Describe the setting (e.g., context, environment, culture, and domain) in which connections are being made.

Intermediate

- Organize groups of items into ordered collections and specify the organizing principles (s)
- Recognize links among topics and concepts presented in different courses
- Relate and use information from other courses or experiences in the current setting
- Formulate generalizations about collections or set of items
- Distinguish concrete and abstract representations
- Identify disciplinary concepts (theories, frameworks) and instances of their application

Proficient

- Use disciplinary frameworks and concepts to illuminate relationships among apparently diverse items
- Examine phenomena from multiple viewpoints, both concretely and abstractly
- Specify the limits or boundaries within which generalizations apply
- Apply abstract academic knowledge to solve concrete practical problems

Advanced

- Identify ways to reconcile diverse or conflicting priorities, viewpoints, or options.
- Call attention to something that has not been adequately noticed by others (e.g., a subtle or deep relationship, novel findings or interpretations, the context or frame of reference)
- Apply frameworks from multiple domains of knowledge and practice to create a culminating work (e.g., exhibition, business plan, musical composition, thesis, capstone paper, research project, etc.
- Integrate diverse elements into a product, performance or artifact that fits its context coherently.

6 During your last year of high school, about how many hours did you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

# of hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	More than 30
a. Preparing for class (studying, doing homework, rehearsing, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Working for pay (before or after school, weekends)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
c. Participating in co-curricular activities (arts, clubs, athletics, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
d. Relaxing or socializing (watching TV, talking on the phone, playing video games, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

7 While in high school, how involved were you in the following school-sponsored activities?

	Not involved						Highly involved					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Performing or visual arts programs (band, chorus, theater, art, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
b. Athletic teams (varsity, junior varsity, club sport, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
c. Leadership positions (student government, class officer, club officer, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
d. Publications (student newspaper, yearbook, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
e. Academic honor societies	<input type="checkbox"/>											
f. Academic clubs (debate, mathematics, science, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
g. Vocational clubs (business, health, technology, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
h. Service clubs or organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>											

8 From which type of high school did you graduate?

Public

Private, religiously affiliated

Private, independent

Home school

Other, specify:

9 How many students were in your high school graduating class?

<input type="checkbox"/> Fewer than 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 300 to 399
<input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 99	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 to 499
<input type="checkbox"/> 100 to 199	<input type="checkbox"/> 500 to 599
<input type="checkbox"/> 200 to 299	<input type="checkbox"/> 600 or more

College Expectations

10 What do you expect most of your grades will be at this college during the coming year? (Mark one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C
<input type="checkbox"/> A-	<input type="checkbox"/> B-	<input type="checkbox"/> C- or lower
<input type="checkbox"/> B+	<input type="checkbox"/> C+	<input type="checkbox"/> Grades not used

11 What is the highest academic degree that you intend to obtain at this or any college? (Mark one box only)

Vocational certificate

Associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.)

Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)

Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)

Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)

Health/Medical doctorate (M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M., etc.)

Law degree (J.D.)

Uncertain

12 How difficult do you expect the following to be in the coming year?

	Not at all difficult						Very difficult					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Keeping up with school work	<input type="checkbox"/>											
b. Managing your time	<input type="checkbox"/>											
c. Paying for college expenses	<input type="checkbox"/>											
d. Getting help with school work	<input type="checkbox"/>											
e. Making new friends	<input type="checkbox"/>											

13 How important is it to you that your college emphasize each of the following?

	Not important						Very important					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>											
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	<input type="checkbox"/>											
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>											
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	<input type="checkbox"/>											
f. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
g. Using computers in academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>											

14 How important is it to you that you do the following at this college during the coming school year?

	Not important						Very important					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>											
b. Make a class presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>											
c. Prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="checkbox"/>											
d. Work on a paper or project that requires integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>											
e. Include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>											
f. Come to class with readings or assignments completed	<input type="checkbox"/>											
g. Work with other students on projects during class	<input type="checkbox"/>											
h. Work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>											
i. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>											
j. Tutor or teach other students (paid or voluntary)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
k. Participate in a community-based project as part of a regular course (e.g., service learning)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
l. Use an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>											
m. Use e-mail to communicate with an instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>											
n. Discuss grades or assignments with an instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>											
o. Talk about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>											
p. Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	<input type="checkbox"/>											
q. Receive prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
r. Work harder than you think you can to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>											
s. Work with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
t. Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>											
u. Have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	<input type="checkbox"/>											
v. Have serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	<input type="checkbox"/>											
w. Examine the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	<input type="checkbox"/>											
x. Try to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>											
y. Learn something that changes the way you understand an issue or concept	<input type="checkbox"/>											

15 During the coming school year, about how many hours do you think you will spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	More than 30
a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Working for pay on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>							
c. Working for pay off campus	<input type="checkbox"/>							
d. Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
e. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

16 Compared to other students entering this college, how do you rate your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	Well below average	Below average	Average	Above average	Well above average
a. Having a broad general education	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Having job or work-related knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. Analyzing quantitative problems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
i. Understanding local, state, and national politics	<input type="checkbox"/>				
j. Learning effectively on your own	<input type="checkbox"/>				
k. Understanding yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>				
l. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>				
m. Solving complex real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
n. Having a developed personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>				
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
p. Having a deepened sense of spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/>				

17 Do you intend to graduate from this college?
 Yes No Uncertain

Additional Information

18 Your sex: Female Male

19 Write in the 5-digit ZIP Code of your home during your last year of high school:

20 How many of your *close* friends will attend this college during the coming year?

None	1	2	3	4 or more
<input type="checkbox"/>				

21 Did at least one of your parents or legal guardians complete a 4-year college degree or more?
 Yes No Uncertain

22 Which of the following best describes you?
 In-state student
 Out-of-state student
 International student (Not a U.S. citizen)

23 Please indicate all of the following members of your family who have attended, or are currently attending, this college: (Mark all that apply)

None
 Mother (or maternal guardian)
 Father (or paternal guardian)
 One or more brothers or sisters
 One or more grandparents

24 At the time that you applied for admission, this college was your:

First choice
 Second choice
 Third choice
 Fourth choice or lower

25 Do you know what your college major will be?
 No
 Yes, specify:
 (For example, Biology, English, History)

26 To what extent have the following influenced your expectations about your experience at this college?

	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	A lot
a. Family members	<input type="checkbox"/>						
b. Friends/students in high school	<input type="checkbox"/>						
c. Friends/students already attending this college	<input type="checkbox"/>						
d. High school guidance counselors	<input type="checkbox"/>						
e. High school teachers/administrators	<input type="checkbox"/>						
f. College recruiters/admissions counselors	<input type="checkbox"/>						
g. College website/materials (brochures, catalogues, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
h. Campus visits (excluding orientation)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
i. College orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
j. External publications (guidebooks, rankings, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
k. Other, specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>						

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS!

Appendix D: NSSE



National Survey of Student Engagement 2006

The College Student Report

1 In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? Mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: or

	Very often	Often	Some-times	Never		Very often	Often	Some-times	Never
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	r. Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Made a class presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	s. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	t. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	v. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Come to class without completing readings or assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g. Worked with other students on projects during class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
k. Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
l. Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
m. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
n. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
p. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
q. Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

2 During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little	
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

9 About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
b. Working for pay on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
c. Working for pay off campus	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
d. Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
e. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
f. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30
g. Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hours per week	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30 More than 30

10 To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Using computers in academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11 To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Acquiring a broad general education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Analyzing quantitative problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Voting in local, state, or national elections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Learning effectively on your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Understanding yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Solving complex real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12 Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?

Excellent
 Good
 Fair
 Poor

13 How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?

Excellent
 Good
 Fair
 Poor

14 If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Definitely yes
 Probably yes
 Probably no
 Definitely no

15 Write in your year of birth:

16 Your sex
 Male Female

17 Are you an international student or foreign national?
 Yes No

18 What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Mark only one.)
 American Indian or other Native American
 Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
 Black or African American
 White (non-Hispanic)
 Mexican or Mexican American
 Puerto Rican
 Other Hispanic or Latino
 Multiracial
 Other
 I prefer not to respond

19 What is your current classification in college?
 Freshman/first-year Senior
 Sophomore Unclassified
 Junior

20 Did you begin college at your current institution or elsewhere?
 Started here Started elsewhere

21 Since graduating from high school, which of the following types of schools have you attended other than the one you are attending now? (Mark all that apply.)
 Vocational or technical school
 Community or junior college
 4-year college other than this one
 None
 Other

22 Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment?
 Full-time Less than full-time

23 Are you a member of a social fraternity or sorority?
 Yes No

24 Are you a student-athlete on a team sponsored by your institution's athletics department?
 Yes No (Go to question 25.)

On what team(s) are you an athlete (e.g., football, swimming)? Please answer below:

25 What have most of your grades been up to now at this institution?
 A B+ C+
 A- B C
 B- C or lower

26 Which of the following best describes where you are living now while attending college?
 Dormitory or other campus housing (not fraternity/sorority house)
 Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within walking distance of the institution
 Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance of the institution
 Fraternity or sorority house

27 What is the highest level of education that your parent(s) completed? (Mark one box per column.)

	Father	Mother	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Did not finish high school
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduated from high school
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attended college but did not complete degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed an associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed a bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed a master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed a doctoral degree (Ph.D., J.D., M.D., etc.)

28 Please print your major(s) or your expected major(s).

a. Primary major (Print only one.):

b. If applicable, second major (not minor, concentration, etc.):

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS!

After completing the survey, please put it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and deposit it in any U.S. Postal Service mailbox. Questions or comments? Contact the National Survey of Student Engagement, Indiana University, 1900 East Tenth Street, Eigenmann Hall Suite 419, Bloomington IN 47406-7512 or nse@indiana.edu or www.nse.iub.edu. Copyright © 2005 Indiana University.

Appendix E: FSSE

Faculty Survey of Student Engagement 2004

Mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: or

1 How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following?

	Very Im- portant ▼	Im- portant ▼	Somewhat Important ▼	Not Im- portant ▼
a. Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Community service or volunteer work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Participation in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Work on a research project with you outside of course program requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Study a foreign language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Study abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Independent study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Self-designed major	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Culminating senior experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Select the box that you believe best represents the quality of student relationships with *other students*.

Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation ▼						Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3 Select the box that you believe best represents the quality of student relationships with *faculty members*.

Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic ▼						Available, Helpful, Sympathetic ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4 Select the box that you believe best represents the quality of student relationships with *administrative personnel*.

Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid ▼						Helpful, Considerate, Flexible ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5 To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

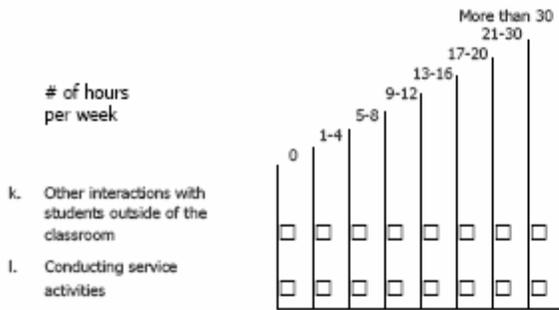
	Very much ▼	Quite a bit ▼	Some ▼	Very little ▼
a. Requiring students to spend significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very much ▼	Quite a bit ▼	Some ▼	Very little ▼
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing students the support they need to thrive socially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Encouraging students to participate in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Encouraging students to attend campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural events, symposia, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Encouraging students to use computers in their academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6 About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

# of hours per week	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-30	More than 30
a. Teaching undergraduate students in class	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Grading papers and exams	<input type="checkbox"/>							
c. Giving other forms of written and oral feedback to students	<input type="checkbox"/>							
d. Preparing for class	<input type="checkbox"/>							
e. Reflecting on ways to improve my teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>							
f. Research and scholarly activities	<input type="checkbox"/>							
g. Working with undergraduates on research	<input type="checkbox"/>							
h. Advising undergraduate students	<input type="checkbox"/>							
i. Supervising internships or other field experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>							
j. Working with students on activities other than course work (committees, organizations, student life activities, orientation, intramurals, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

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Please respond to the following questions based on *one particular undergraduate course section* you are teaching or have taught during this academic year.

7 Level of students in your selected course section:

- Lower division (mostly 1st year students and sophomores)
- Upper division (mostly juniors and seniors)
- Other (Please describe) _____

8 Is your selected course a distance education course (correspondence course, Internet course, telecourse, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

9 How many students are enrolled in your selected course section?

- Fewer than 10
- 10 to 19
- 20 to 29
- 30 to 49
- 50 to 74
- 75 to 99
- 100 to 149
- 150 to 199
- 200 or more

10 Prior to this semester, how many times have you taught your selected course?

- None
- 1 to 3
- 4 to 5
- 7 to 9
- 10 to 15
- 16 to 20
- More than 20

11 What is the general area of your selected course? (Please specify an academic discipline, e.g., Chemistry, Psychology, Theater)

12 About what *percent* of students in your selected course section do the following?

	None	1-24%	25-49%	50-74%	75% or higher
a. Frequently ask questions in class or contribute to class discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Frequently come to class without completing readings or assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Frequently work harder than they usually do to meet your standards	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Occasionally use e-mail to communicate with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Occasionally discuss grades or assignments with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	None	1-24%	25-49%	50-74%	75% or higher
f. At least once, talk about career plans with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. At least once, discuss ideas from readings or classes with you outside of class	<input type="checkbox"/>				

13 How often do students in your selected course section engage in the following?

	Very often	Often	Some-times	Never
a. Have class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Work with other students on projects during class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Participate in a community-based project as part of your course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Use an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Receive prompt feedback (written or oral) from you on their academic performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Have serious conversations in your course with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Have serious conversations in your course with students who are very different from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14 In your selected course section, about how much reading and writing do your students do?

	None	1	2-3	4-6	More than 6
a. Number of assigned textbooks, books, and/or book length packs of course readings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Number of written papers or reports of more than 10 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 10 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>				

15 In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you require students in your selected course section to complete?

	None	1-2	3-4	5-6	More Than 6
a. Number of problem sets that take your students more than one hour to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Number of problem sets that take your students less than one hour to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>				

16 Time students spend preparing for your selected course section:

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	More than 12
a. In a typical 7-day week, about how many hours do you expect your students to spend preparing for your class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, and other activities related to your course)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. In a typical 7-day week, about how many hours do you think your students actually spend preparing for your class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, and other activities related to your course)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

17 In your selected course section, how important to you is it that your students:

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
a. Prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Work on a paper or project that requires integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Discuss ideas or readings from class with others outside of class (other students, faculty members, coworkers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Tutor or teach other students (paid or voluntary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18 In your selected course, on average, what percent of class time is spent on the following?

	0	1-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-74	75 or more
a. Lecture	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Teacher-led discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>							
c. Teacher-student shared responsibility (seminar, discussion, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
d. Student computer use	<input type="checkbox"/>							
e. Small group activities	<input type="checkbox"/>							
f. Student presentations	<input type="checkbox"/>							
g. In-class writing	<input type="checkbox"/>							
h. Testing and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>							
i. Performances in applied and fine arts (e.g., dance drama, music)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
j. Experiential (labs, field work, art exhibits)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

19 Select the box that represents the extent to which your evaluations of student performance (e.g., examinations, portfolio) challenge students in your selected course section to do their best work?

Very little								Very much
<input type="checkbox"/>								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

20 In your selected course section, how much emphasis do you place on engaging students in each of these cognitive activities?

	Very Much	Quite a bit	Some	Very Little
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your course and readings so students can repeat them pretty much in the same form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering its components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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21 To what extent do you structure *your selected course section* so that students learn and develop in the following areas?

	Very Much ▼	Quite a bit ▼	Some ▼	Very Little ▼
a. Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Analyzing quantitative problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Learning effectively on their own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Understanding themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Solving complex real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Acquiring a broad general education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22 During this term, does your institution consider you to be employed part-time or full-time?

- Part-time
 Full-time

23 Write in the total number of courses (undergraduate, graduate) you have taught or are scheduled to teach during the *current* academic year:

24 Which of the following best describes your academic rank, title, or current position? (Mark only one)

- Professor
 Associate Professor
 Assistant Professor
 Instructor
 Lecturer
 Graduate Teaching Assistant
 Other: Specify

25 What is the general discipline of your academic appointment? (Please specify an academic discipline)

26 What is your current tenure status? (Mark only one)

- Tenured
 On tenure track but not tenured
 Not on tenure track, although this institution has a tenure system
 No tenure system at this institution

27 Write in the year that you began teaching at any college/university:

28 What is the highest degree you have earned?

- First professional degree (e.g., M.D., D.D.S., J. D., D.V.M.)
 Doctoral Degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed. D.)
 Master's Degree
 Bachelor's Degree
 Associate's Degree
 Other (write here):

29 Write in the year of your birth:

30 Your sex: Male Female

31 What is your citizenship status?

- United States citizen, native
 United States citizen, naturalized
 Permanent resident of the United States (immigrant visa)
 Temporary resident of the United States (non-immigrant visa)

32 Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes No

33 What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Mark all that apply)

- American Indian or Native American
 Asian American or Pacific Islander
 Black or African American
 White
 Other: Specify

34 How *important* is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following?

	Very Important ▼	Im- portant ▼	Somewhat Important ▼	Not Im- portant ▼
a. Express an opinion about a political or community issue in a public forum (e.g., send a letter or e-mail to the media, contact a government official, make a speech, sign a petition)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Use media sources (e.g., newspaper, radio, television, Internet) to stay informed about local political or community issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Participate in a fundraising event (e.g., phone-a-thon, run, walk, dance marathon)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Attend a rally, vigil, or protest about an issue that is important to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Lead meetings or activities for a local community organization or religious group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS!

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Appendix F – ASSIST Sample by N. Entwistle (2000)

ASSIST

Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students

(Short version)

This questionnaire has been designed to allow you to describe, in a systematic way, how you go about learning and studying. The technique involves asking you a substantial number of questions which overlap to some extent to provide good overall coverage of different ways of studying. Most of the items are based on comments made by other students. Please respond truthfully, so that your answers will **accurately** describe your **actual** ways of studying, and work your way through the questionnaire quite **quickly**.

Background information

Name or Identifier **Age** **years** **Sex** M / F

University or College **Faculty or School**

Course **Year of study**

A. What is learning?

When you think about the term ‘LEARNING’, what does it mean to you?

*Consider each of these statements carefully, and rate them in terms of how close they are to **your own** way of thinking about it. Very Quite Not so Rather Very*

- a. Making sure you remember things well. 5 4 3 2 1
- b. Developing as a person. 5 4 3 2 1
- c. Building up knowledge by acquiring facts and information. 5 4 3 2 1
- d. Being able to use the information you’ve acquired. 5 4 3 2 1
- e. Understanding new material for yourself. 5 4 3 2 1
- f. Seeing things in a different and more meaningful way. 5 4 3 2 1

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Please turn over

B. Approaches to studying

The next part of this questionnaire asks you to indicate your relative agreement or disagreement with comments about studying again made by other students. Please work through the comments, giving your **immediate** response. In deciding your answers, think in terms of **this particular lecture course**. It is also very important that you answer **all** the questions: check you have.

5 means agree (□) 4 = agree somewhat (□ ?) 2 = disagree somewhat (x ?) 1 = disagree (x) .

Try not to use 3 = unsure (??), unless you really have to, or if it cannot apply to you or your course.

- 1. I manage to find conditions for studying which allow me to get on with my work easily. 5 4 3 2 1
- 2. When working on an assignment, I’m keeping in mind how best to impress the marker. 5 4 3 2 1
- 3. Often I find myself wondering whether the work I am doing here is really worthwhile. 5 4 3 2 1
- 4. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn. 5 4 3 2 1

5. I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it. 5 4 3 2 1
6. I find I have to concentrate on just memorising a good deal of what I have to learn. 5 4 3 2 1
7. I go over the work I've done carefully to check the reasoning and that it makes sense. 5 4 3 2 1
8. Often I feel I'm drowning in the sheer amount of material we're having to cope with. 5 4 3 2 1
9. I look at the evidence carefully and try to reach my own conclusion about what I'm studying. 5 4 3 2 1
10. It's important for me to feel that I'm doing as well as I really can on the courses here. 5 4 3 2 1
11. I try to relate ideas I come across to those in other topics or other courses whenever possible. 5 4 3 2 1
12. I tend to read very little beyond what is actually required to pass. 5 4 3 2 1
13. Regularly I find myself thinking about ideas from lectures when I'm doing other things. 5 4 3 2 1
14. I think I'm quite systematic and organised when it comes to revising for exams. 5 4 3 2 1
15. I look carefully at tutors' comments on course work to see how to get higher marks next time. 5 4 3 2 1
16. There's not much of the work here that I find interesting or relevant. 5 4 3 2 1
17. When I read an article or book, I try to find out for myself exactly what the author means. 5 4 3 2 1
18. I'm pretty good at getting down to work whenever I need to. 5 4 3 2 1
19. Much of what I'm studying makes little sense: it's like unrelated bits and pieces. 5 4 3 2 1
20. I think about what I want to get out of this course to keep my studying well focused. 5 4 3 2 1
21. When I'm working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together. 5 4 3 2 1
22. I often worry about whether I'll ever be able to cope with the work properly. 5 4 3 2 1
23. Often I find myself questioning things I hear in lectures or read in books. 5 4 3 2 1
24. I feel that I'm getting on well, and this helps me put more effort into the work. 5 4 3 2 1
25. I concentrate on learning just those bits of information I have to know to pass. 5 4 3 2 1
26. I find that studying academic topics can be quite exciting at times. 5 4 3 2 1
27. I'm good at following up some of the reading suggested by lecturers or tutors. 5 4 3 2 1
28. I keep in mind who is going to mark an assignment and what they're likely to be looking for. 5 4 3 2 1
29. When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here. 5 4 3 2 1
30. When I am reading, I stop from time to time to reflect on what I am trying to learn from it. 5 4 3 2 1
31. I work steadily through the term or semester, rather than leave it all until the last minute. 5 4 3 2 1

32. I'm not really sure what's important in lectures so I try to get down all I can. 5 4 3 2 1
33. Ideas in course books or articles often set me off on long chains of thought of my own. 5 4 3 2 1
34. Before starting work on an assignment or exam question, I think first how best to tackle it. 5 4 3 2 1
35. I often seem to panic if I get behind with my work. 5 4 3 2 1
36. When I read, I examine the details carefully to see how they fit in with what's being said. 5 4 3 2 1
37. I put a lot of effort into studying because I'm determined to do well. 5 4 3 2 1
38. I gear my studying closely to just what seems to be required for assignments and exams. 5 4 3 2 1
39. Some of the ideas I come across on the course I find really gripping. 5 4 3 2 1
40. I usually plan out my week's work in advance, either on paper or in my head. 5 4 3 2 1
41. I keep an eye open for what lecturers seem to think is important and concentrate on that. 5 4 3 2 1
42. I'm not really interested in this course, but I have to take it for other reasons. 5 4 3 2 1
43. Before tackling a problem or assignment, I first try to work out what lies behind it. 5 4 3 2 1
44. I generally make good use of my time during the day. 5 4 3 2 1
45. I often have trouble in making sense of the things I have to remember. 5 4 3 2 1
46. I like to play around with ideas of my own even if they don't get me very far. 5 4 3 2 1
47. When I finish a piece of work, I check it through to see if it really meets the requirements. 5 4 3 2 1
- 48 Often I lie awake worrying about work I think I won't be able to do. 5 4 3 2 1
- 49 It's important for me to be able to follow the argument, or to see the reason behind things. 5 4 3 2 1
50. I don't find it at all difficult to motivate myself. 5 4 3 2 1
51. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments. 5 4 3 2 1
52. I sometimes get 'hooked' on academic topics and feel I would like to keep on studying them. 5 4 3 2 1

C. Preferences for different types of course and teaching

*5 means definitely like (□) 4 = like to some extent (□ ?) 2 = dislike to some extent (x ?)
1 = definitely dislike (x).*

Try not to use 3 = unsure (??), unless you really have to, or if it cannot apply to you or your course.

- a. lecturers who tell us exactly what to put down in our notes. 5 4 3 2 1
- b. lecturers who encourage us to think for ourselves and show us how they themselves think 5 4 3 2 1
- c. exams which allow me to show that I've thought about the course material for myself. 5 4 3 2 1
- d. exams or tests which need only the material provided in our lecture notes. 5 4 3 2 1
- e. courses in which it's made very clear just which books we have to read. 5 4 3 2 1
- f. courses where we're encouraged to read around the subject a lot for ourselves. 5 4 3 2 1

g. books which challenge you and provide explanations which go beyond the lectures. 5 4
3 2 1

h. books which give you definite facts and information which can easily be learned. 5 4 3
2 1

Finally, how well do you think you have been doing in your assessed work overall, so far?

*Please rate yourself **objectively**, based on the grades you have been obtaining*

Very well Quite Well About average Not so well Rather badly

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Thank you very much for spending time completing this questionnaire: it is much appreciated.