We proposed a strategy where students have a QEP-focused experience at each step of their track through the Geology Program in order to address QEP-related outcomes. These include (1) a first-year experience during which students enrolled in the GEOL 150 (Methods in Geology) course attend a weekend field trip to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP) and synthesize geologic concepts, (2) a second-year experience during which students are required to participate in service within the Geology Program, (3) a third-year, one-credit career planning course during which students develop a resume, explore geology careers, learn about graduate school, and plan what to do with their senior capstone experience, and (4) a fourth year experience during which each student, individually or as part of a small team, completes a faculty-guided authentic research project. The capstone project demonstrates to employers and graduate schools the student’s ability to complete a major assignment, to work independently, to analyze and synthesize information, and to write and speak effectively. While we have not yet implemented (2), we have been active in implementing the other three experiences and include observations below.

**Methods in Geology Field Trip to The Great Smoky Mountains National Park** (first year experience) – This trip has been run since fall, 2009 as part of Geology QEP implementation. Since that time around 330 students have taken the course, and we have an average attendance rate of 85% on the field trip (estimate based on a sample of classes). Up to six geology faculty have attended the trip, allowing students to meet different professors in the program. Students are required to answer a series of questions at each stop where they synthesize material covered in the course (lecture and lab) and apply it in a real-world setting. Students hand in their materials at the end of the field trip for assessment and evaluation by the instructor. A sample of 182 of these graded assignments shows an average student score of 83%.

**Geology Careers Seminar** (third year experience) – This course has been taught two times since QEP implementation (fall, 2009) with a total attendance of 19 students. Fourteen outside speakers have been brought in as part of the course and these include alumni, regional geologists, and representatives from graduate programs in the region. All 19 of the students attending the course have developed CVs, resumes, cover letters, as well as 3 year plans, 5 year plans, and end of the semester reflections. It is not possible to present these reflections in a one page summary, but this course clearly addresses at least two QEP outcomes since students: (1) identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations and (2) recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career plans. Students in the course are also required to participate in a networking activity by attending a professional meeting.

**Geology Capstone** (fourth year experience) – Students in the capstone course must recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career plans (QEP learning outcome). All of our graduating seniors have completed a capstone project since implementation of the geology QEP began and have thus done authentic geology research. Twenty four students have completed our capstone course as part of a group investigation, while 8 students have completed a senior thesis project. The capstone is the culmination of the geology degree and requires the application of knowledge and skills towards a geologic investigation and original research project. Students present the results of their research orally to the department as well as in a written report. These capstone projects almost always result in a student presentation at a professional conference in geology. We have had 32 students (total) complete a capstone since implementation of our QEP. In that time, we have had 28 students present research results at either a regional or national geology conference (many of the same students). Although we have individually graded student performance in this course, we are still considering how to evaluate student conceptual and applied learning in the capstone.