Roundtable Forum

on

QEP Initial Proposals

March 4, 2011
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Savannah Ballroom in the Student Union

QEP Proposal Topics

• Student and Faculty Engagement: Mentoring, Discovering and Collaborating for Student Success
• Armstrong + Information Literacy = lifelong learners
• The Three C’s of Student Success: Collaborative Campus Culture
• Community-Based Learning for Responsible Citizenship
• Service Transforms Learning
Contact Information:
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Title of Proposal: 
Student and Faculty Engagement: Mentoring, Discovering and Collaborating for Student Success

Describe a need, preferably based on research or data:
The NSEE (http://nsse.iub.edu/html/annual_results.cfm) benchmarks of effective educational practice include active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction and enriching educational experiences. The retention and graduation rates of our students must be improved. This QEP aims to increase RPG and enrich student experiences via adoption of these best teaching practices and the enhancement of student and faculty scholarly engagement in support of Armstrong’s mission, vision, values (1 and 2) and goals (1 and 2).

Methods of the quality enhancement plan:
This QEP enhances faculty and student academic engagement at all levels (freshmen through seniors). Faculty will participate in development activities designed to incorporate active and collaborative teaching (best practices for student-centered, inquiry learning; integrating experiential activities) into teaching. Year-long development activities (including external and internal speakers/facilitators) will be afforded to all new tenure-track faculty (course releases to participate) and all interested current faculty (via stipends and/or course releases). Faculty and students will be afforded increased opportunities to engage in disciplinary activities outside of class (research, field and service learning).

Expected outcomes:
Development of life-long student and faculty learners in the arts and sciences core and the disciplines (life-long learners). Increased student and faculty learning outcomes in critical thinking, information literacy, communication, writing and quantitative skills. Improved faculty instructional quality and increased student-faculty collaborative scholarly activity. Increased RPG results and increased alumni support of Armstrong after graduation.

Potential assessment:
National benchmarks: NSSE, MAPP and Critical Thinking Assessment tests and others; Local Benchmarks: university: Increased RPG; student satisfaction surveys; college/department: discipline exit exams, numbers of experiential activities (publications, presentations, projects); eFACE; peer-observation of teaching; faculty assessment student learning via instruments such as Student Assessment of Learning Gains (SALG) (http://www.salgsite.org/).

Arbitrarily Assigned Proposal #1
Contact Information:
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Title of Proposal:
Armstrong + Information Literacy = lifelong learners

Describe a need, preferably based on research or data:
Today's students, despite being "digital natives," often fail to think critically as they search for, evaluate, analyze, and incorporate information sources into their work. Two recent national studies found significant shortcomings in student information literacy (IL) skills, and a 2007 library survey of Armstrong students found a strong preference for Google, etc. over library materials. Also, many faculty report that students need instruction in IL.

Methods of the quality enhancement plan:
This QEP would address IL needs systematically and intentionally, putting current efforts into a framework and adding needed pieces, e.g. assessment. With teaching faculty leading, we could start with the first year seminar, adding IL outcomes and assessments. IL components could then go into some core courses, particularly those that require writing and presentation. Majors could build on basic skills, introducing students to the literature of the discipline.

Expected outcomes:
An information literate student will recognize an information need and be able to plan and implement a strategy for meeting that need. She will be able to evaluate retrieved information for authority, currency, and relevance to her needs and will understand that information seeking is an iterative process. Ability to analyze the information, synthesize it with other sources, and integrate it into personal knowledge or new information products is the ultimate goal.

Potential assessment:
Several standardized assessments exist, including the Educational Testing Services’ iCritical Thinking and Kent State’s Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy). These assessments provide essential information both for planning and for comparing students’ performance with their peers in other schools. Feedback from course related assessments will be essential for students refining their skills and for further program development.
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Title of Proposal:
The Three C's of Student Success: Collaborative Campus Culture

Describe a need, preferably based on research or data:
Universities around the US have, for more than 3 decades, developed & expanded FYE programs to improve declining RPG rates. National data demonstrate that the aggregate effect is more predictive of RPG/success than any individual initiative. The collaborative development of “special topics” FY Seminar courses can defragment the campus, improve the culture of student success, and provide the academic literacy our students need to persist and graduate.

Methods of the quality enhancement plan:
Academically-based, 3-credit special topics FY seminar courses will foster critical thinking, information literacy, and civic engagement in our first-year students. Developed and taught by deans, department heads, and faculty from all four colleges & the library, as well as professional staff from academic affairs & student affairs, the seminar will fulfill a core requirement while promoting interdisciplinary studies and research opportunities across campus.

Expected outcomes:
Students will analyze, synthesize, and integrate the liberal arts core and think critically as they move into their upper division courses. In addition to improved student learning and RPG rates, the campus will become more unified from enhanced collegiality and strengthened interdisciplinary connections.

Potential assessment:
During pilots, assess seminar students and general student population for RPG, GPA, & satisfaction comparisons: data sources to include BANNER, and student/faculty surveys. An interdisciplinary committee will develop instruments to measure SLOs for critical thinking, information literacy, and civic engagement, as well as identify standardized assessments such as ETS’s iCritical Thinking and Kent State’s Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy.
Contact Information:
Name: Monica Rausch, Christy Mroczek, and Faculty Reading Group including Beth Howells, Jason Tatlock, Beth Burnett, Jewell Anderson, Jane Rago, Wendy Wolfe, Kathleen Schaefer, and Mark Finlay

Department: Multiple Departments

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Title of Proposal: Community-Based Learning for Responsible Citizenship

Describe a need, preferably based on research or data: The Strategic Planning and Resource Council has identified values Armstrong embraces, and this QEP would address several of those values, including (1) “promoting education that is student-focused, transformative, experiential, and rigorous, leading to student success”; (2) offering “teaching, mentoring, and scholarship”; (3) creating “community engagement through outreach and service”; and (4) building a relationship with the city of Savannah.

Methods of the quality enhancement plan: Involve students in real-world learning opportunities with local organizations through research and writing projects, internships, and freshmen seminar programs. To facilitate these projects and internships, create a community advisory board with representatives from the community and the campus (both faculty and staff). Such a board might also find a pool of community members and staff who could participate in classroom education through guest lectures.

Expected outcomes: Students would gain field-specific knowledge in real-world environments and understand the practices of citizenship and service. Goals: Use critical thinking to explore on-site research questions. Apply and exchange knowledge between the classroom and field. Learn in challenging, ever-changing environments. Connect Armstrong with the local community and strengthen ties within the Armstrong community. Understand and reflect on practices of citizenship.

Potential assessment: Quantitative: survey students before and after the projects or internships to measure learning outcomes. Qualitative: evaluate students’ reflective work (which will be presented in an online or print publication). Projects might also produce presentations that could be shared in an AASU-sponsored Civic Engagement Symposium. This QEP would connect on-going campus projects and internships as well as promote the development of new projects.
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Title of Proposal:
Service Transforms Learning

Describe a need, preferably based on research or data:
Service projects engage, support and enhance excellent, effective teaching, leadership, and learning. Armstrong has an historical, conscientious tradition of faithful moral commitment to the community of Savannah. Armstrong students, faculty, and staff need to participate in, carry on, and move forward in creating and maintaining a living university community within and for the community at large.

Methods of the quality enhancement plan:
1. Establish the Armstrong Community Study Center (renovate the former Central Supply Building). 2. Offer tutorial services targeted at high school students (and adult learners as the QEP unfolds) to prepare them for college learning and establish a personal connection with these community members. 3. Establish support for existing non-profit agencies in Savannah that support tutorial services. 4. Establish leadership programs for current Armstrong students and include the seniors from the Savannah Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS) who have completed the Savannah Leadership Program to participate in the Armstrong Leadership program. 5. Select Armstrong degree programs to incorporate capstone projects in the final year of the degree program.

Expected outcomes:
1. Students, faculty, and staff who engage in service learning have a stronger commitment to enhancing their knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as that of others. 2. Service learning has a direct effect on retention, persistence, and graduation. 3. Service learning has a direct effect on Armstrong’s alumni/alumnae continued involvement in and contributions to the university and the Savannah community or the communities in which they will live.

Potential assessment:
Capstone projects for credit-bearing courses. 2. Tutorial services' data collection to assess for immediate and long-term effectiveness (qualitative and quantitative studies). 3. Effectiveness of academic affairs and student affairs working hand-in-hand on service learning projects assessed through qualitative and quantitative studies completed by Armstrong community and with outside agencies such as Noel-Levitz, National Service Learning Clearinghouse Resources, Southern Association for Institutional Research, and Southern Regional Education Board.

Arbitrarily Assigned Proposal #5