



## Recommendation 5

### 3.3.2 Quality Enhancement Plan

The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

#### Findings of the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee

*The QEP topic is clearly related to TWU's mission and connected to its strategic plan. TWU did an excellent job of casting a wide net, getting the campus involved, and then narrowing their QEP options down to a few, and finally to one topic of experiential learning. In that sense it was a focused process. Their ultimate choice is also quite focused, in the sense that it is "all" about experiential learning. TWU's unique student population and institutional focus on student success and persistence and retention is also well connected to and supported in experiential learning literature. However, the plan as submitted was still broad and in many ways lacked specificity. An effort appeared to have been made to try to include all forms of experiential learning. Following discussions with the Interim Director, the Executive Committee, and the Advisory Council we would advise that the institution to consider narrowing the focus to developing new academic experiential learning activities, and excluding various forms of volunteerism.*

*TWU has assigned qualified individuals to administer and oversee the QEP's implementation. In fact, the Committee was impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of the Interim QEP Director, as well as the structure and involvement of the Advisory Committee. However, given the broad-based scope of the QEP, the On-Site Committee feels that TWU has not provided evidence for sufficient financial and personnel resources to initiate, implement, sustain, and complete the QEP. Additionally, the timeline does not include enough details due to the lack of benchmarks and specificity in the implementation plan.*

**The Committee recommends that the institution demonstrate institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP. (Recommendation 5)**

#### TWU Response

In response to the recommendations of the Reaffirmation Committee, TWU modified the QEP in two ways:

1. Narrowed the focus to the development of QEP-designated courses
2. Added \$20,000 to the budget for use at the discretion of the QEP Director

In the original plan, faculty, staff, and student organizations were eligible to develop experiential learning projects. The Reaffirmation Committee recommended narrowing the plan's focus to new experiential learning activities within credit-bearing courses. Therefore,



the central element of the plan shifted from development of QEP enhanced projects to the development of QEP-designated courses [1]. QEP-designated courses (a) ensure students earn course credit for experiential learning activities, b) establish a foundation of core courses from which to continuously expand experiential learning opportunities for students, (c) align with the National Society for Experiential Education's (NSEE) eight principles of good practice [2], and (d) provide a manageable and sustainable means for assessment of QEP goals and student learning outcomes.

In addition to narrowing the focus, TWU increased the overall QEP operating budget [3] and included in-kind support for personnel. The in-kind personnel contribute to implementation, maintenance, and assessment of the plan. A new timeline was developed [4].

The focus on QEP-designated courses, combined with the increased financial resources and inclusion of dedicated personnel in support of the QEP, demonstrate sufficient resources to implement, sustain, and complete the plan. Faculty developing QEP-designated courses and serving as Experiential Faculty Fellows will devote approximately 25% of their time in support of QEP implementation. This contribution of a portion of faculty salaries is presented in the revised QEP budget. In addition to faculty, several individuals collaborate with the QEP Director in direct support of QEP implementation and assessment. These personnel and the salary contribution [5] of each are also noted in the revised QEP operating budget.

The Reaffirmation Committee provided numerous suggestions for strengthening the QEP. Many of these suggestions were incorporated into the narrowed focus and are detailed in the supporting documentation [6]. Gradual growth, increased faculty development, and alignment with NSEE's eight principles of good practice are key elements to maintaining quality experiences for students.

### **Supporting Documentation**

[\[1\] QEP-designated Courses](#)

[\[2\] NSEE Eight Principles of Good Practice](#)

[\[3\] QEP Budget](#)

[\[4\] Implementation Timeline](#)

[\[5\] In-Kind Personnel](#)

[\[6\] TWU Actions to Visiting Committee Suggestions](#)



## Recommendation 6

### 3.3.2 Quality Enhancement Plan

The institution has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

#### Findings of the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee

*The Quality Enhancement Plan as originally provided to the On-site Committee, identified three student learning outcomes and two institutional outcomes. The Committee was initially concerned about the nature of the student learning objectives and the manner set forth to assess the outcomes. The original objectives appeared broad and focused on process as opposed to student learning outcomes. Given that objectives drive the assessment plan, the assessment plan also appeared to be broad in scope and to lack specificity. However, the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee was excited to hear members of the TWU community discussing possible revisions to the objectives that would narrow the focus of the QEP and also more clearly communicate the intended student learning outcomes as opposed to the original objectives' focus on process. Upon review of the original document, the Committee was also concerned regarding the sustainability of the proposed assessment plan given the heavy human resource costs associated with the proposed methods and the oversight of experiential learning courses that could undermine instructional goals in individual courses. Again, the Committee believes that the proposed revisions to the objectives will provide an opportunity for the development of a more sustainable assessment plan.*

**The Committee recommends that the institution identifies a plan to assess its achievement of the goals of the QEP. (Recommendation 6)**

#### TWU Response

The Reaffirmation Committee provided sound guidance and consultations regarding QEP assessment procedures. TWU narrowed the primary focus to the development of QEP-designated courses [1] that align with NSEE's eight principles of good practice [2]. The development of QEP-designated courses provides a streamlined and sustainable means for assessment of QEP goals and student learning outcomes (SLOs). In narrowing the QEP's focus, the goals, SLOs, and assessment procedures were modified.

#### QEP Goals

Guided by the TWU mission and strategic plan, *Pioneering Pathways: Learn by Doing* centers on two revised goals.

**Goal 1.** Integrate into the curriculum practical experiences that focus on preparing students to live, work, and lead in a diverse and complex world



To facilitate meeting Goal 1, TWU provides funds for development of QEP-designated courses and for kick-start projects. To provide quality experiences, QEP-designated courses align with NSEE's eight principles of good practice. Experiential Faculty Fellows complete NSEE's three-day experiential education academy and serve as mentors for other faculty in developing experiential learning opportunities for students.

Progress toward Goal 1 will be measured by two direct methods and one indirect method (Table 3.3.2.A). The number of QEP-designated courses will be tabulated annually.

Nine statements on the student course evaluation that align with NSEE's eight principles are used in comparing students' learning experiences in QEP-designated courses to non QEP-designated courses. In addition, three statements derived from NSEE's principles were added to the student course evaluation for each QEP-designated course [3]. Data from all twelve statements will be aggregated to assess the quality and alignment of QEP-designated courses with NSEE's eight principles of good practice. Additionally, the data will be used to identify areas in need of improvement and to formulate strategies for strengthening alignment with the eight principles.

The number of first-time-in-college (FTIC) and at-risk students engaging in experiential learning projects will also be determined annually.

**Goal 2.** Cultivate and strengthen institutional, civic, and/or business partnerships that increase opportunities for experiential learning

TWU will determine progress toward Goal 2 by use of two direct measures (Table 3.3.2.A) - the number of approved interdisciplinary projects and course-embedded experiential learning projects with civic and/or business partners. The approved projects will adhere to NSEE's principles of good practice [2].

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

TWU revised the QEP SLOs to more clearly communicate the desired outcomes (Table 3.3.2.A). Through participation in a QEP-designated course, students will:

**SLO 1.** Effectively connect classroom theories to real-world experiences through practical application of knowledge

**SLO 2.** Accurately assess knowledge and skills related to personal or professional goals including collaboration, application, and problem-solving

### **Assessments**

In all QEP-designated courses, faculty perform at least one direct assessment of SLO 1. Faculty report the results of the assessment in aggregate form at the conclusion of the course.

All students in QEP-designated courses complete the QEP Student Self-Assessment of Collaboration, Application, and Problem-Solving Skills (S-CAPS) [4]. The student self-assessment functions as an indirect assessment for both SLO 1 and SLO 2. Data for each



construct will be disaggregated in the analysis to identify areas in need of improvement. The Application section of the S-CAPS assesses student application of course theories to practical experiences. The results, in conjunction with the course-embedded direct assessment, will measure student progress toward achievement of SLO 1.

Faculty assess students on the same constructs utilizing the QEP Faculty Assessment of Collaboration, Application, and Problem-Solving Skills (F-CAPS) [5]. Data for each construct will be disaggregated in the analysis to identify areas in need of improvement. The faculty assessment serves as a direct measure for both SLO 1 and SLO 2. The Application section of the F-CAPS is a second direct measure of SLO 1.

**Table 3.3.2.A - QEP Goals and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

QEP Goal/SLO	Required Assessment Measure	Assessment Type
<b>Goal 1:</b> Integrate into the curriculum quality practical experiences that focus on preparing students to live, work, and lead in a diverse and complex world	Number of QEP-designated courses	Direct
	Student Course Evaluation and Alignment with NSEE Principles	Indirect
	Number of FTIC and at-risk students enrolled in QEP-designated courses	Direct
<b>Goal 2:</b> Cultivate and strengthen institutional, civic, and/or business partnerships that increase opportunities for experiential learning	Number of Co-Curricular and Interdisciplinary Projects	Direct
	Number of QEP-designated courses with civic or business partnerships	Direct
<b>SLO 1:</b> Effectively connect classroom theories to real-world experiences through practical application of knowledge	Faculty course-embedded assessment	Direct
	F-CAPS Assessment – Application section only	Direct
	S-CAPS Assessment – Application section only	Indirect
<b>SLO 2:</b> Accurately assess knowledge and skills related to personal or professional goals to include collaboration, application, and problem-solving	F-CAPS Assessment – All sections	Direct
	S-CAPS Assessment – All sections	Indirect

### Supporting Documentation

[1] [QEP-designated courses](#)

[2] [Eight Principles of good practice for experiential learning](#)



[\[3\] QEP-designated course evaluation statements](#)

[\[4\] QEP S-CAPS](#)

[\[5\] QEP F-CAPS](#)