

**QEP Title:** *Pioneering Pathways: Learn by Doing*

**Institution:** Texas Woman's University

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*Pioneering Pathways: Learn by Doing* focuses on enhancement of student learning through engagement in experiential learning. Developed with broad-based input from faculty, staff, students, and alumni, the QEP at Texas Woman's University (TWU) provides a systematic plan for implementing and assessing experiential learning throughout the university. TWU's founders recognized the importance of experiential learning and adopted the University motto, "We learn to do by doing." The QEP represents a renewed commitment to TWU's historical focus on the connection between experience and learning.

Experiential learning at TWU bridges theory with practice, and is a dynamic, engaged form of learning characterized by active collaboration; real-world problem solving; hands-on application of classroom theories; in-depth engagement with content; or simulation of skills external to the classroom. QEP-designated courses that include these elements serve as the foundation for QEP implementation. These courses (a) establish a foundation of core courses from which to continuously expand experiential learning opportunities for students, (b) align with the National Society for Experiential Education's (NSEE) eight principles of good practice, and (c) provide a manageable and sustainable means for assessment of QEP goals and student learning outcomes.

Guided by the TWU mission and strategic plan, the QEP is centered on two student learning outcomes. These include: (SLO 1) effectively connecting classroom theories to real-world experiences through practical application of knowledge; and (SLO 2) accurately assessing knowledge and skills related to personal or professional goals including collaboration, application, and problem-solving.

Student learning outcomes are assessed with both direct and indirect measures. In all QEP-designated courses, faculty perform at least one direct assessment of SLO 1 and report the results 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), which functions as an indirect assessment for both SLO 1 and SLO 2. Data for each construct are 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, 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). 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.

The QEP will enhance student learning by increasing opportunities for students' participation in experiential activities within their academic disciplines. Guided by best practices and grounded in experiential learning theory, the QEP will create a culture of experiential learning at TWU and revitalize the University's dedication to bridge theory with practice and to learn by doing.